

# COVID-19 Testing Requirements

Cal/OSHA's COVID-19 regulations require employers to make testing available at no cost and during paid working hours to **unvaccinated employees** who have symptoms of COVID-19, had close contact with a [COVID-19 case](#) in the workplace, or during workplace outbreaks. A COVID-19 case is defined as a person who has tested positive for the virus, has a positive COVID-19 diagnosis from a healthcare professional, is under a state or local order to isolate, or has died from COVID-19.

**NOTE ON EMPLOYEES THAT ARE VACCINATED OR FULLY RECOVERED FROM COVID-19 WITHIN THE LAST 90 DAYS:** Testing only needs to be offered to these employees when they have COVID-19 symptoms in the following situations: after close contact to a COVID-19 case or when part of an exposed group during a workplace outbreak. These employees will be offered testing when part of an exposed group during major outbreaks regardless of symptoms. See table below.

COVID-19 Testing Frequency				
	<b>Unvaccinated Employees with Symptoms of COVID-19</b> – fever ≥ 100.4°F, chills, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle aches, new loss of taste or smell, etc.	<b>Unvaccinated Employees with Close Contact to COVID-19 Case</b> – within 6’ of case for cumulative 15 minutes in a 24-hour period during “high-risk exposure period”.  See NOTE above for vaccinated and COVID-recovered employees	<b>Workplace Outbreak*</b> – 3 or more cases within 14-day period in an “exposed group” or identified by local health department as location of outbreak.  *See NOTE above for vaccinated and COVID-recovered employees	<b>Major Workplace Outbreak*</b> – 20 or more cases within a 30-day period in an “exposed group”. Applies to all employees regardless of vaccine status.
Make testing available	X	X	X	X
Repeat testing after one week			X	
Once a week testing for employees who remain at the workplace			X	
Twice a week testing for employees who remain at the workplace				X
Additional testing if recommended by local health department or Cal/OSHA			X	X

\*Testing requirements during outbreak incidents apply to employees in the exposed group present in the workplace during the defined outbreak period and can be ended once no new COVID-19 cases have been detected in the exposed group for a 14-day period.

Testing is **required** at least weekly for employees not wearing a face covering or a non-restrictive alternative due to a medical/mental health condition or disability if they are not fully vaccinated and cannot maintain 6 feet of separation from other persons. Employers should research local testing options so they can inform employees of how they can get tested if the need arises.

Negative Test Results - A negative test result does not allow employees to return to the workplace if they have been excluded due to close contact with a COVID-19 case or if they contract COVID-19. They still need to meet the return to work criteria in the regulation.

## Definitions

### High-risk exposure period

- For individuals showing COVID-19 symptoms, the high risk exposure period is from 2 days before symptoms developed until 10 days after symptoms first appeared, as long as 24 hours have passed without fever (without use of fever-reducing medications) and symptoms have improved. Those who still have a fever 10 days or more after symptoms first appeared are still in the high-risk period and will remain high risk until 24 hours have passed without fever (without the use of fever-reducing medications) AND symptoms have improved.
- For employees who test positive but do not develop symptoms, the high risk period is from 2 days before until 10 days after the specimen for their first positive test was collected.

### Exposed group –

This group consists of all persons at a work location, working area, or a common area at work, where a COVID-19 case was present at any time during the high-risk exposure period with these exceptions:

- Places where people momentarily pass (hallways, aisles, etc) while everyone is **wearing face coverings** are not considered a work location, working area, or common area to determine the exposed group.
- Employees who are not present in the workplace at the same time as a COVID-19 case (e.g. separate shift that don't overlap) are not part of the exposed group. Only employees who were present at the same time as the COVID-19 case are part of the exposed group.
- If the COVID-19 case visited a work location, working area, or a common area for less than 15 minutes and all persons were wearing face coverings when the COVID-19 case was present, the people at those locations are not part of the exposed group.

*The above evaluations and/or recommendations are for general guidance only and should not be relied upon for medical advice or legal compliance purposes. They are based solely on the information provided to us and relate only to those conditions specifically discussed. We do not make any warranty, expressed or implied, that your workplace is safe or healthful or that it complies with all laws, regulations or standards.*

For more information, visit: [www.SafeAtWorkCA.com](http://www.SafeAtWorkCA.com)