



## **Protocol for Responding to Self-Reported COVID-19 Positive Case**

This document is meant to provide guidance from the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) to City departments and sister agencies and establish a process for when an employee or other member of your department's community self-reports that they have tested positive for COVID-19. These guidelines do not apply to higher-risk settings like residential congregate settings and healthcare facilities. Departments with first responders should follow the more specialized guidance being given to them.

This is a high-level starting point in approaching these cases. City departments and sister agencies are asked to designate a safety officer who will be the primary liaison to work with CDPH for more tailored consultation on specific situations and to serve as the point of contact for updated public health guidance from CDPH as the response to COVID-19 evolves.

### **Current State of COVID-19 in Chicago and CDPH's Response**

There is currently community-wide transmission of COVID-19 in Chicago. Healthcare providers and labs are required to report positive COVID-19 cases in City of Chicago residents to CDPH. However, individuals are often made aware that they have tested positive for COVID-19 before CDPH is notified by their healthcare provider or lab.

Given the departments' access to employee records and the need to quickly respond to COVID-19 cases within the workplace, City departments and sister agencies are best positioned to conduct the workplace contact tracing. CDPH will continue serving as a resource for City departments and sister agencies through consultation and to advise communication about COVID-19 to internal and external audiences.

### **Preparation Steps for Departments and Agencies**

1. Carefully review the [guidance for City of Chicago employees](#), which includes important information about minimizing transmission in the workplace and responding to employees who present as sick at work.
2. Communicate general guidance to your employees, contractors, and others working in your facilities about how your organization is responding to COVID-19. Require people to stay home if they are sick and to self-report if they are diagnosed with COVID-19, so that you can take the necessary steps to ensure the safety of others.
3. Designate a person in your administration to receive these self-reports.
  - a. Create a procedure so that if others in your department get a self-report of a positive case, the reports are directed to this designated person, either directly by or with the consent of the positive case.
  - b. Ensure this designated person has access to accurate staff and contractor contact lists. Ensure that you follow all City and departmental privacy rules regarding protection of personnel records.



4. Designate a person in your administration to be your department's safety officer. This person will serve as the primary liaison to CDPH who will contact CDPH for consultation and receive updated guidance from CDPH as it becomes available.
5. Each department's human resources or medical staff should serve as the primary contact and resource for employees with personal COVID-19 questions that do not directly affect other individuals in the department
6. If the human resources or medical staff are unable to answer the questions, refer the individual to contact CDPH at [coronavirus@chicago.gov](mailto:coronavirus@chicago.gov).

### **What to Do if You Get Notification of a Self-Reported Positive Case**

1. Upon receipt of a self-reported positive case, inform your liaison in the Mayor's Office and include the information in your daily essential functions report along with the location where the employee worked
2. Contact the Department of Assets, Information, and Services ("DAIS") or the appropriate vendor to conduct a thorough cleaning of the employee's work location(s) and, if applicable, City vehicle(s).
  - At DAIS, contact [Julie.Bedore@cityofchicago.org](mailto:Julie.Bedore@cityofchicago.org) and [Claudine.Parra@cityofchicago.org](mailto:Claudine.Parra@cityofchicago.org) to initiate enhanced cleaning of facilities and vehicles.
3. Interview the employee by telephone and complete the Contact Tracing Tool. Questions to ask include:
  - The last day they were at work.
  - The first day of their symptoms, or for asymptomatic individuals, their test date.
  - The names of individuals at work with whom they had close contact (within 6 feet for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period, for example sharing a desk or workspace, or sitting closely within a vehicle or breakroom) starting 2 days prior to their first day of symptoms (or for asymptomatic individuals, their test date) through their last day of work.
4. Contact the individuals identified by the employee as having been close contacts at work.
  - For employees who can telework:
    - Instruct them to telework for 14 days from the last day of contact with the person who self-reported (do not reveal the identity of the positive case).
  - For employees who cannot telework:
    - Instruct them to self-quarantine for 14 days from the last day of contact with the person who self-reported (do not reveal the identity of the positive case).



- For mission critical essential employees who cannot telework and for whose role there are no other staffing options, follow this [CDPH Guidance for Critical Infrastructure Workers](#):
    - The department must consult with CDPH and their Mayor's Office liaison prior to allowing an asymptomatic exposed essential worker to continue working.
    - The employee should wear a face mask or cloth face covering at all times while in the workplace for 14 days after last exposure.
    - The department should institute formal symptom checks prior to the start of the shift for these employees for the 14-day period after the last day of contact with the positive case. A supervisor or other designated person should ask the questions below. If the employee answers yes or the symptom is observed by the screener, the employee must go home.
      - Have you had a fever (temperature over 100 deg F) or have you used a fever-reducer in the past 24 hours?
      - Do you have a new cough that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
      - Do you have a new sore throat that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
      - Do you have new shortness of breath that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
      - Do you have new loss of taste or smell?
      - Do you have muscle aches or body aches?
      - Do you have vomiting or diarrhea?
      - Do you have new congestion or runny nose?
    - The department should also institute formal temperature checks prior to the start of the shift as outlined in the Symptom and Temperature Check Protocols. Ensure temperature checkers have appropriate PPE per CDPH guidance.
    - Advise the exposed employees to immediately notify their supervisor and go home if they develop any symptoms, no matter how mild, while at work.
    - Emphasize the importance of physical distancing and hand hygiene while at work
    - Refer them to the [CDPH Guidance for Critical Infrastructure Workers](#).
  - Advise all close contacts to notify their department IOD coordinator to document the incident.
5. Test results do not need to be confirmed by CDPH.
- It is advised that during your interview with the individual you verbally confirm whether they were tested for COVID-19 and had a positive result or whether



they were diagnosed by a medical provider. Keep in mind that this is not required for COVID-19-related leave.

- You may ask, but should not require, the individual to share documentation of their result or a healthcare provider's note confirming their diagnosis, if they have it.
6. Ensure the employee is aware that they should stay home and away from others for at least 10 days since their symptoms first appeared and at least 1 day (24 hours) with no fever (without using fever-reducing medications) and improved symptoms, whichever is longer. Refer them to [CDPH guidance on what to do if you are sick](#).
  7. Ensure the positive employee advises members of their immediate household and others outside of the workplace with whom they have had close contact to self-quarantine for 14 days from day of last exposure.
  8. Consult with CDPH if any questions or concerns arise. See below for the CDPH liaisons.

### **Communication Regarding COVID-19 Cases Within Your Department or Agency**

In the event there is a reported case in the workplace, departments must notify close contacts (defined as those who have been within 6 feet for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period) and give them the instructions as detailed above. You should also work with your Mayor's Office liaison to determine if other communication needs to be sent out to a broader audience.

1. Communication should originate from and be drafted by the City department or sister agency.
2. Caution must be exercised to ensure that information that would enable identification of the positive case is excluded.
3. CDPH is available to review draft communications to ensure accuracy of public health guidance but this is not required if using CDPH-provided templates.
4. See below for a template letter, understanding that the guidance may change as the COVID-19 response continues to evolve.

It is recommended to include CDPH's COVID-19 website ([www.chicago.gov/coronavirus](http://www.chicago.gov/coronavirus)) on all communications to ensure your department or agency community has the most up-to-date information.

### **CDPH Liaisons**

Should you require any assistance or consultation on self-reports of positive cases or other matters that broadly affect your department or agency, please send an email to both of the following CDPH liaisons:

1. Jennifer Seo, Medical Director, [jennifer.seo@cityofchicago.org](mailto:jennifer.seo@cityofchicago.org)
2. Rachel Bernard, Medical Director, [Rachel.bernard@cityofchicago.org](mailto:Rachel.bernard@cityofchicago.org)



Employees or others with questions about individual exposures that cannot be answered by your department or agency's human resources or medical staff should be directed to email [coronavirus@chicago.gov](mailto:coronavirus@chicago.gov).

#### INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Subject: Confirmed COVID-19 Case in \_(DEPARTMENT)\_ Employee

Dear Staff,

We are writing to update you on a recent development regarding the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). We have learned that a \_(DEPARTMENT)\_ employee \_ [at (LOCATION)- only to be included if relevant to the scope of your response and if it can be done without obviously identifying the individual] \_ has been diagnosed with COVID-19.

[The employee was last at the worksite/office on (DATE, and SHIFT if applicable) ) - only to be included if relevant to the scope of your response and if it can be done without obviously identifying the individual] To ensure the health and safety of our employees, under the Chicago Department of Public Health's (CDPH) guidance, the \_(DEPARTMENT)\_ [will ensure/has conducted] a thorough cleaning and disinfecting at the employee's work location.

Employees who have been identified as having been in close contact with this individual [will be/have been] notified via a separate communication. As a reminder, close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. Those who had brief, casual contact with an infected individual are not considered at great risk of transmission and, for most people, the illness is generally mild and can be safely managed at home. As always, all employees should monitor their health and stay at home if they develop symptoms. Anyone who develops severe symptoms should seek medical care immediately.

We continue to work closely with CDPH and follow the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines as we ensure proper protocols and preventative measures are in place for the health and safety of our staff and personnel throughout the City.

#### **Public Health Guidance**

Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever (temperature greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit), chills, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle/body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea. If you develop symptoms of COVID-19, please contact your medical provider to discuss whether you need to be evaluated in person or tested.



If your symptoms are severe, such as difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion or difficulty waking up, or bluish lips or face please seek the closest emergency department or call 9-1-1 immediately.

Any individuals who are sick or exhibiting symptoms must stay home from work. Stay home and away from others for at least 10 days since your symptoms first appeared and at least 1 day (24 hours) with no fever (without using fever-reducing medications) and improved symptoms, whichever is longer.

For any additional COVID-19 questions or support, please visit [www.chicago.gov/coronavirus](http://www.chicago.gov/coronavirus) for the most reliable information. If you do not find the information you need on the website, email [coronavirus@chicago.gov](mailto:coronavirus@chicago.gov). We will continue to ensure all of you receive regular updates.

The health and wellness of our staff are the highest priority of the \_(DEPARTMENT)\_. Thank you all for your continued and dedicated service to the City of Chicago and its residents.

Sincerely,

SIGNATURE

(COMMISSIONER NAME)