NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY. Department of Health

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Protocols for Essential Personnel to Return to Work Following COVID-19 Exposure or Infection

Public and private sector organizations that provide essential services or functions where personnel are needed to perform critical functions, including infrastructure, public safety, and other essential operations, may allow personnel who were exposed to or are recovering from COVID-19 to work in the workplace setting, if needed to maintain essential operations. Essential services or functions include but are not limited to public health personnel, utility and water operators, skilled manufacturers and supporting supply chains, transportation infrastructure, law enforcement, and emergency response personnel.

Essential personnel who have **been exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19** can be permitted to work in the required workplace setting if all of the following conditions are met:

1. Working from home would not be feasible for job duties;
2. Personnel are **asymptomatic**;
3. Personnel quarantine themselves when not at work;
4. Personnel undergo temperature monitoring and symptom checks upon arrival to work and at least every 12 hours while at work, and self-monitor (i.e. take temperature, assess for symptoms) twice a day when at home;
5. Personnel required to interact with individuals within 6 feet should wear a facemask[1] while working for 14 days following the last exposure;
6. Personnel whose job duties permit a separation of greater than 6 feet should have environmental controls in place to ensure adequate separation is maintained, and do not need to wear a facemask;
7. If personnel develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (e.g., fever, cough, or shortness of breath) while working, they should immediately stop work and isolate at home; and
8. Testing will be arranged for any personnel with symptoms.

Essential personnel with **confirmed or suspected COVID-19** can be permitted to work in the required workplace setting if all of the following conditions are met:

1. Working from home would adversely impact essential services or functions, including critical public health and public works infrastructure in New York or the response to the COVID-19 public health emergency;
2. Personnel have maintained isolation for at least 7 days after illness onset (i.e. symptoms first appeared) and have not had a fever for at least 72 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medications, and with other symptoms improving;
3. Personnel who are recovering from COVID-19, according to the above condition, must wear a facemask[1] for 14 days following onset of illness.

[1]*For the purposes of this guidance, a facemask is a well-secured mask that covers the mouth and nose. No personal fit testing is necessary for a facemask.*

Additional Resources:

New York State Department of Health's Novel Coronavirus Hotline:
1-888-364-3065

New York State Department of Health's COVID-19 Webpage:
https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home

Local Health Department Contact Information:
https://www.health.ny.gov/contact/contact_information/index.htm

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Webpage:
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/