

The guidance in this document is to clarify when critical infrastructure workers can continue to work if they have symptoms of COVID-19. The guidance should only be applied when their roles cannot be filled in other ways. While it is advised that anyone showing signs of possible illness should not go to work, there may be times when critical infrastructure workers need to perform job duties while they are symptomatic.

Many illnesses have similar symptoms to COVID-19. Excluding workers from critical functions due to newly developed symptoms may cause challenges in maintaining emergency response and continuity of function.

However, reintegrating critical infrastructure workers who have not been tested for COVID-19 and who are experiencing symptoms into onsite operations should be used as **a last resort and only in limited circumstances**, such as when cessation of operation of a facility may cause serious harm or danger to public health or safety.

Prior to allowing critical infrastructure workers to work following the guidance below, mitigation measures should be implemented first, including pre-emptively cross-training staff to allow for continuation of critical services. Healthcare workers who are symptomatic or quarantining due to crisis staffing mitigation should follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [Strategies to Mitigate Healthcare Personnel Staffing Shortages](#).

For situations not covered within this guidance or workplaces that are unable to comply with the Work Inclusion Requirements, call the Health Department at 802-863-7240 to discuss with the Outbreak Response Team.

Scope of Symptomatic Critical Infrastructure Worker Inclusion Guidance

Who is not eligible for the following guidance?

Critical infrastructure workers who are required to [isolate](#) due to a positive COVID-19 test or required to [quarantine](#) due to a [close contact](#) exposure **are not** eligible for the following restricted work guidance. They must follow isolation or quarantine requirements and [return-to-work guidance](#) for all Vermonters.

Who is eligible for the following guidance?

Critical infrastructure workers who are required to quarantine due to recent travel and who have not developed symptoms **are** eligible for the following guidance.

Which critical infrastructure workers are covered by this guidance?

KEY POINTS

- **The guidance in this document applies to non-health care critical infrastructure workers who provide an essential function.**
- **This guidance should only be applied in situations where critical services will not be covered due to lack of a qualified workforce.**

- **Energy:** Workers that support and are responsible for the transportation, operations, protection, and maintenance of systems and assets within the energy sector including operators, engineers, technicians, line workers, and those involved in the transportation of energy assets.
- **Communications:** Workers tasked with the maintenance of communications infrastructure such as operators, engineers, technicians.
- **Support for People with Disabilities:** Workers responsible for ensuring that persons with disabilities have access to and the benefits of various communications platforms.
- **Transportation:** Workers supporting or enabling transportation and logistics functions, such as emergency road management personnel, plow drivers, tow truck drivers, railroad engineers and safety personnel, maritime safety professionals, and air safety personnel.
- **Water:** Workers needed to operate and maintain drinking water and wastewater and drainage infrastructure, such as water, wastewater, and drinking water operators, engineers, and technicians.
- **Health care:** Workers required for effective clinical, command, infrastructure, support service, administrative, security, and intelligence operations across the direct patient care and full healthcare and public health spectrum.
- **Cyber security:** Workers needed to preempt and respond to cyber incidents involving critical infrastructure.
- **Information technology:** Workers who support information technology command centers.
- **Farming:** Farmers and individuals who support farming operations.
- **Dams:** Dam owners, operators, and engineers.
- **Production:** Workers supporting the production of protective cleaning and medical solutions, PPE, chemical consumer and institutional products, disinfectants, fragrances, and packaging that prevents the contamination of food, water, medicine, among others essential products.
- **High-risk facility operations:** Workers supporting the operation and maintenance of facilities (particularly those with high-risk chemicals and sites that cannot be shut down) whose work cannot be done remotely and requires the presence of highly trained personnel to ensure safe operations, including plant contract workers who provide inspections.
- **Heating and cooling:** Workers distributing, servicing, repairing, installing residential and commercial HVAC systems, building transportation equipment, boilers, furnaces and other heating, cooling, refrigeration, and ventilation equipment.
- **Public safety:** Workers involved in public safety, first responders, dispatch, etc.

- **Other services:** Workers such as plumbers, electricians, exterminators, builders (including building and insulation), contractors, HVAC Technicians, technicians for elevators, escalators and moving walkways, landscapers, and other service providers who provide services, including temporary construction, that are necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences, businesses, and buildings.

Worker Prioritization

Mitigate staffing shortages by implementing the following, in this order:

1. The affected worker performs all-remote work, if possible.
2. Exclude the affected worker from work and provide support or backup workers who are not required to isolate or quarantine.
3. Include [Tier 1](#) workers.
4. Include [Tier 2](#) workers.

Exclude [Tier 3](#) workers and workers who:

- Are required to isolate due to a positive COVID-19 test.
- Are required to quarantine due to close contact exposure to an individual with COVID-19.
- Perform a critical function, but whose job responsibilities and requirements can be adequately performed by another worker.

Inclusion or Exclusion among Critical Infrastructure Workers

	Symptoms/Condition	Work Modifications
Tier 1	<p>Workers who don't have symptoms and are quarantining due to travel or multiple household gathering.*</p> <p>*Those quarantining due to close contact exposure to a confirmed case of COVID-19 are not eligible.</p>	<p>These workers may work if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there are no other options to fill critical positions and • they are able to follow the work inclusion requirements listed below.
Tier 2	<p>Workers who have one or more of the following symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fatigue • Sore throat • Runny nose • Headache • Nausea 	<p>These workers may work if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there are no other options to fill critical positions and • they are able to follow the work inclusion requirements below and • they consult with a health care provider as soon as possible to be evaluated.

Tier 3	<p>Workers with one or more of the following symptoms that are new and otherwise unexplained:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever over 100.4° • Cough • Shortness of breath • Loss of taste or smell • Vomiting • Diarrhea 	<p>Exclude these workers from work.</p> <p>It is recommended to consult with a health care provider as soon as possible to be evaluated.</p>
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Work Inclusion Requirements

To qualify for work inclusion on-site, employers must be able to fulfill **all** of the following requirements. If all of these requirements are not able to be fulfilled completely, worksites must consult with the Health Department Outbreak Response Team prior to including workers on-site.

- Workers with any symptoms of COVID-19 must consult with a primary care provider as soon as possible to ensure that appropriate testing and medical consultation has been considered.
- Always maintain at least 6-foot distance from any other people.
- Wear a mask continuously while in any workspaces, except when in a workplace that is only used by that worker (e.g., personal truck).
- Have a dedicated workspace where it is possible to be the only one in the space (e.g., a truck, an office with a door, etc).
- Limit the equipment and surfaces touched to only those necessary to the work performed.
- Maintain a log of when the worker worked, what equipment was used while working, and when they left.
- Wipe down and disinfect any surfaces that may be touched by any other people within 24 hours of the worker's use. This includes steering wheels, door handles, faucets, etc. Disinfection of surfaces should follow [disinfection guidance](#).
- Maintain a log of when equipment is cleaned and sanitized.