

## COVID-19: What to do if you are a health care worker

COVID-19 is spreading in Vermont communities. While all Vermonters are at risk for exposure, we recommend that health care workers take specific precautions to protect themselves and their patients. This guidance is for people who work in health care settings and have the potential to be exposed to patients or infectious materials. For this purpose, clinical laboratory workers are not included.

### **Make sure that you are not sick before going to work.**

One way to do this is by taking your temperature. Stay home if you have a temperature of 100° F and above. If you don't have a fever, but you feel ill, or have a cough or shortness of breath, stay home from work and call your employer. Some workplaces have symptom screening protocols before starting a shift; check with your employer about their protocols.

### **Know what to do if you start feeling sick while at work.**

If you start feeling ill while at work, we recommend putting on a mask right away, notifying your supervisor, and making a plan to leave as soon as possible. Check with your employer about the specific protocol at your workplace.

### **Know how you will get notified if you have been exposed to a confirmed case.**

The Department of Health is reaching out to health care facilities that have provided care to people with COVID-19 to discuss next steps as recommended by CDC. Reach out to your facility's occupational health program, infection prevention program, or the appropriate administrator to discuss their plan to notify employees in the event that staff at your facility provided care for someone with COVID-19. Consider asking about their plans for exposed employee exclusion from work or return to work criteria.

### **If you have been exposed somewhere other than the workplace:**

Talk with your employer about your exposure and if you should stay out of work, or what additional measures to take before going to work.

### **If you have ongoing exposures, such as providing care for someone with COVID-19 who is hospitalized:**

Always follow standard and transmission-based precautions, including use of eye protection, facemask or respirator, gown, and gloves. It's especially important to monitor yourself for symptoms regularly and to exclude yourself from work if you develop cough, fever, or shortness of breath.

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Please note that your employer may choose to supersede this guidance.

For more information, visit: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assesment-hcp.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assesment-hcp.html) and [www.healthvermont.gov/COVID-19](http://www.healthvermont.gov/COVID-19)