

COVID-19 UPDATE

UPDATED COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

MESSAGE FROM THE ASSISTANT CEO/HR DIRECTOR

In response to the updated guidance provided by Cal/OSHA on June 17, 2021, the Riverside County Department of Public Health issued updated COVID-19 Protocols effective July 21, 2021 for County Workers, First Responders, and Health Care Personnel in General Acute Care and Acute Psychiatric Hospitals. The purpose of this bulletin is to provide additional clarity regarding the updated COVID-19 Protocols, as well as to further clarify face covering requirements and COVID-19 screening for County employees entering a County building or worksite.

A summary of the updated COVID-19 protocol as it relates to County Workers can be found below. Additional COVID-19 protocols for First Responders and Health Care Personnel in General Acute Care and Acute Psychiatric Hospitals can be found on the Riverside County Department of Public Health [website](#) and direct links can be found in the “Additional Resources” section of this bulletin.

COVID-19 Protocols for County Workers (excluding First Responders and Health Care Personnel in General Acute Care and Acute Psychiatric Hospitals):

- **For an exposed, asymptomatic, fully vaccinated employee, quarantine and testing are not routinely required.**
- **For an exposed, asymptomatic, not fully vaccinated employee, a 10-day quarantine is required with the following measures:**
 - Twice-daily temperature check.
 - Monitor for respiratory and other symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 (e.g., new loss of taste or smell).
 - If source patient tests negative, quarantine can be lifted.
 - If source patient is positive, refer county worker to Occupational Health to coordinate PCR testing if at least 5-7 days since date of exposure.
 - Ten-day quarantine is still required, despite a negative test, if tested prior to the end of the quarantine period.
 - If asymptomatic, can be released from quarantine after 12:01 AM 10th day.
 - If county worker develops ANY symptoms, exclude from work, and refer for PCR

¹ “Exposure” means contact within six feet of an infected person for a cumulative 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.

² “Fully vaccinated” means the employer has documented that the person received, at least 14 days prior, either the second dose in a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine series or a single-dose COVID-19 vaccine.

testing unless tested within 7 days of symptom onset (see below).

· **For an exposed, symptomatic employee, regardless of vaccination status, the following measures are required:**

- Exclude from work, instruct in home isolation.
 - Twice-daily temperature check.
 - Monitor for worsening of respiratory symptoms or development of additional symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 (e.g., new loss of taste or smell).
- Refer to Occupational Health to coordinate PCR testing.
 - While test is pending continue home isolation.
 - If test is negative and no longer symptomatic:
 - If source patient ruled out, discontinue isolation and clear for work.
 - If source patient is positive, complete 10-day quarantine. May return to work after the quarantine period is over, if the person is completely asymptomatic and afebrile for at least 24 hours without taking fever reducing medication.
 - If test is negative, but still symptomatic, an individualized assessment for other potential diagnosis (e.g., flu) is required to determine whether repeat testing is indicated.

· **For symptomatic County Workers with suspected or confirmed COVID-19:**

- Remain on home isolation until all conditions are met:
 - Resolution of fever for at least 24 hours after the last fever spike, without use of fever-reducing medication and improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath; sore throat).
 - At least 10 days have passed since last positive test for at least 90 days (unless known exposure and new symptom).
 - Encourage workers not to retest for at least 90 days (unless known exposure and symptomatic).

· **For County Workers with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 who never had any symptoms:**

- To remain on home isolation until:
 - 10 days have passed since the date of their last positive COVID-19 diagnostic test assuming they have not subsequently developed symptoms. Encourage workers not to retest for at least 90 days (unless known exposure and symptomatic).
 - If they develop symptoms, then the protocol for symptomatic individuals should be used.

In addition to the updated COVID-19 protocols for County Workers, the County is also updating the screening process for County employees accessing a County building or worksite. In an effort to reduce foot traffic at County buildings and worksite entrances as the County continues with its reopening, employees are to self-monitor and self-attest to their current health status as it relates to possible symptoms of COVID-19 or a possible COVID-19 exposure. Prior to entering any County building or worksite, employees should self-screen for the following:

All Employees Regardless of Vaccination Status:

1. Have you taken any medication that might mask the symptoms of COVID-19 or symptoms of any respiratory illness?
2. Do you have any of the following symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 such as a fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, headache or muscle pain, or nausea/vomiting or diarrhea?

Additional Screening Questions for Not Fully Vaccinated Employees:

3. Have you had a close contact exposure with anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 or who is confirmed positive for COVID-19?
4. Are you on quarantine because of an exposure to a positive case of COVID-19?

If an employee answers “Yes” to any of the above questions that are applicable to their vaccination status, we would ask they not enter the building and they contact their supervisor to determine next steps.

Lastly, the revised Emergency Temporary Standards (ETS) set by Cal/OSHA on June 17, 2021 remain in effect. Below is a high-level overview of the changes put forth in the revised ETS including the County’s application related to the ETS. Please note, the ETS do not apply to employees with occupational exposure as defined by section [5199](#) (e.g., Riverside University Health System – Medical Center, or correctional facilities), who will be subject to separate requirements.

- Employers may allow fully vaccinated employees not to wear face coverings indoors. County employees will be asked to disclose their vaccination status and can decline to indicate their status, however, will be treated as unvaccinated and subject to all the rules for unvaccinated individuals.
 - The employer must document and record the vaccination status for any employee not wearing a face covering indoors and this record must be kept confidential.
- Face coverings are required indoors (including elevators) and in vehicles for unvaccinated employees. Exceptions include:
 - When alone in a room or vehicle.
 - When eating and drinking.
 - When an accommodation is required.
 - When job duties make a face covering infeasible or create a hazard.
- No face covering requirements outdoors (except during outbreaks), regardless of vaccination status.
 - Face coverings are recommended for unvaccinated persons outdoors where six feet of physical distancing cannot be maintained.

³ “Face covering” means a surgical mask, a medical procedure mask, a respirator worn voluntarily, or a tightly woven fabric or non-woven material of at least two layers. A face covering has no visible holes or openings and must cover the nose and mouth. A face covering does not include a scarf, ski mask, balaclava, bandana, turtleneck, collar, or single layer of fabric.

- Employers must provide unvaccinated employees with approved N95 or comparable respirators for voluntary use when working indoors or in a vehicle with others (employees must be “fit tested” for an N95 or comparable mask by the Occupational Health Office), upon request.
- Employers are required to communicate about transmittable particles and the use of N95’s or comparable respirators to the unvaccinated.
- Employers may not retaliate against vaccinated employees for voluntarily wearing face coverings.
- No physical distancing or barrier requirements regardless of employee vaccination status with the following exceptions:
 - Employers must evaluate whether it is necessary to implement physical distancing and barriers during an outbreak (3 or more cases in an exposed group of employees).
 - Employers must implement physical distancing and barriers during a major outbreak (20 or more cases in an exposed group of employees).
 - Physical distancing is not required in elevators; however, elevator load limits should be followed.
- Employers must evaluate ventilation systems to maximize outdoor air and increase filtrations efficiency and evaluate the use of additional air cleaning systems.
- Fully vaccinated employees without symptoms do not need to be tested or quarantined after close contacts with COVID-19 cases unless they have symptoms.
- Employers must offer testing at no cost to employees during paid time to:
 - Symptomatic unvaccinated employees, regardless of whether there is a known exposure.
 - Unvaccinated employees after an exposure.
 - Vaccinated employees after an exposure if they develop symptoms.
 - Unvaccinated employees in an outbreak.
 - All employees in a major outbreak.

Please note, in the event of an outbreak, additional precautions as stated in the ETS will be implemented.

Some important requirements from the November 2020 COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standard that remain in the June 17, 2021 revised ETS include:

- Employers must establish, implement, and maintain an effective written COVID-19 Prevention Program that includes:
 - Identifying and evaluating employee exposures to COVID-19 health hazards.
 - Implementing effective policies and procedures to correct unsafe and unhealthy conditions.
 - Allowing adequate time for handwashing and cleaning frequently touched surfaces and objects.
- Employers must provide effective training and instruction to employees on how COVID-19 is spread, infection prevention techniques, and information regarding COVID-19-related benefits that affected employees may be entitled to under applicable federal, state, or local laws.

- Employers must exclude employees who have COVID-19 symptoms and/or are not fully vaccinated and have had a close contact from the workplace and, if that close contact is work related, ensure continued wages.

We encourage each of you to continue to protect yourselves by practicing physical distancing, washing, and/or sanitizing your hands regularly and taking good care of yourselves during these challenging times.

Thank you for your service and your assistance in keeping both yourself and others safe.


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Additional Resources:

Protocol for County Workers

<https://www.rivcoph.org/Portals/0/Documents/CoronaVirus/July2021/HealthProvider/Protocol%20for%20County%20Workers%207.%2014.%202021.pdf?ver=2021-07-21-123053-637×tamp=1626895876078>

Protocol for First Responders

<https://www.rivcoph.org/Portals/0/Documents/CoronaVirus/July2021/HealthProvider/Protocol%20for%20First%20Responders%207-14-2021.pdf?ver=2021-07-21-123053-667×tamp=1626895873945>

Protocol for Health Care Workers (HCW) in Acute Care Hospitals

<https://www.rivcoph.org/Portals/0/Documents/CoronaVirus/July2021/HealthProvider/Protocol%20for%20Health%20Care%20Workers%20in%20Acute%20Care%20Hospitals%2007-14-2021.pdf?ver=2021-07-21-123053-653×tamp=1626895871429>

Proposed Revisions to the COVID-19 Prevention Emergency Temporary Standards Frequently Asked Questions

<https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/coronavirus/Revisions-FAQ.html>

What Employers Need to Know About the Recommended Revisions

https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/dosh_publications/06-16-21-ETS-Revisions.pdf

Cal/OSHA Proposed Text for Readoption (approved 6-17-21)

<https://www.dir.ca.gov/oshsb/documents/Jun172021-COVID-19-Prevention-Emergency-txtbrdconsider-Readoption.pdf>

Cal/OSHA Proposed Text for Readoption (approved 6-17-21, showing changes from previous guidance)

<https://www.dir.ca.gov/oshsb/documents/Jun172021-COVID-19-Prevention-Emergency-txtcourtesy-Readoption.pdf>