Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

For the most complete and up-to-date information on novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19), please visit the Department of Public Health (DPH) website at http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus.

Managing Symptoms and Concerns in the Workplace

What do I do when my employee shows up to work ill, even if their symptoms are mild?

If one of your employees comes to work ill, they should be directed to go home. If they are having trouble breathing or cannot keep fluids down, have them contact their doctor right away. Remind your employees that COVID-19 is primarily a respiratory illness, but it is not the only one. Keep in mind that we are still in the regular cold and flu season, and COVID-19 symptoms are very similar to the symptoms seen in a typical cold or flu, but it is best to be cautious. Take care not to over-react in order to prevent panic among your team.

Consider alternative work options like teleworking if your employee is well enough to do so.

Our employees are concerned that a co-worker who is out on leave may have exposed them to COVID-19. What steps do I need to take?

Remind staff that an employee can be out or working remotely for a number of reasons and that no one should jump to the conclusion that COVID-19 is the reason for their being on a telework assignment or on-leave. Encourage employees to refer to the brochure issued by the Department of Public Health titled "What If I Am Exposed" found at http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/FAQ-Exposure.pdf and by the Departments of Mental Health and Public Health titled **"Coping with Stress During Infectious Disease Outbreaks"** found at http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/Media/coronavirus.

How can I deal with visitors or customers who are exhibiting symptoms of illness, such as coughing or sneezing?

You and your employees should follow social distancing guidance that is provided on the DPH website for COVID-19. Encourage staff to maintain at least a 6- foot distance when assisting customers that are having symptoms. If your employee must be closer to the customer, advise them to minimize time spent with symptomatic customers to less than 10 minutes, if possible.

Be sure to provide the public with tissues and trash receptacles. Have a no-touch hand sanitizer dispenser near customer entrances, if feasible.

One of our employees just tested positive for COVID-19. What should I do?

Instruct the patient to stay home and self-isolate. They should not return to work for at least 7 days after symptoms first started **and** 72 hours after fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medicines **and** symptoms have improved, whichever is longer. Offer telework assignments if the employee is well enough to work.

IMPORTANT: You must protect the confidentiality of your employee. Legally, you cannot identify the employee by name.

DO NOT disclose to other staff or third persons the name or other personal or health information of the employee who tested positive for COVID-19.

Thoroughly clean and disinfect equipment and other elements of the work environment of the employee along with frequently touched surfaces and objects such as doorknobs/pushbars, elevator buttons, restroom doors, etc. Use cleaning chemicals with EPA-approved disinfectant labels with claims against emerging viral pathogens.

If the employee had been working while ill, identify those co-workers and individuals that the employee may have come into contact with while ill and advise them to quarantine themselves for 14 days. A contact is defined as *those individuals who had been within 6 feet of the affected employee for greater than 10 minutes while the employee had symptoms.*

One of our employees has a "suspected" (but unconfirmed) case of COVID-19. Should I send everyone home?

You would follow all of the same steps outlined above for an employee who tested positive for COVID-19.

Identify those co-workers and individuals that the employee may have come into contact with while ill and advise them to quarantine themselves for 14 days. A contact is defined as *those individuals who had been within 6 feet of the affected employee for greater than 10 minutes while the employee had symptoms.*

One of my employees has self-reported that they came into contact with someone <u>believed</u> to be positive for COVID-19. What should I do?

Review the nature of the exposure. If the contact occurred within 6 feet of the ill individual for more than 10 minutes, than the employee should stay home in quarantine for 14 days from the date of the contact. Offer telework if feasible. Also refer to the Department of Public Health' guidance which is updated periodically: http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/FAQ-Exposure.pdf.

One of our employees just found out that they were exposed to COVID-19 after interacting with a member of the public (or vendor, or contractor). What steps do I take?

Review the nature of the exposure. If the contact occurred within 6 feet of the ill individual for more than 10 minutes, than the employee should stay home in quarantine for 14 days from the date of the contact. Offer telework, if feasible.

Check to see if other employees may also have had similar exposure to the ill individual. If so, they should be quarantined for 14 days, as well.

Also, refer to the Department of Public Health' guidance, which is updated periodically:
http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/FAQ-Exposure.pdf

When can my employee come back to work if they have been ill or had an exposure?

Employees who have been ill with symptoms of an upper respiratory illness (fever and cough or shortness of breath) can return to work 7 days after symptoms started and 3 days after fevers have resolved without the use of fever reducing medications and symptoms improved whichever is longer.

Employees who have been contacts to a suspect or known case of COVID-19 should be in quarantine at home for 14 days. If they develop symptoms while in quarantine, then they should follow the return to work guidelines noted above (7 days after symptoms started and 3 days after fevers have resolved and symptoms improved whichever is longer).