


<b>Title:</b> Return to Work Guidance for Health Care Workers Post Coronavirus Illness	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Procedure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOP
<b>Category:</b> General <b>Sub-category:</b> Occupational Health and Safety	<b>Distribution:</b> Organization Wide		
<b>Endorsed:</b> VP, People and Culture  <b>Signature:</b> 	<b>Approval Date:</b>	Sept 2023	
	<b>Reviewed/Revised Date:</b>	Oct 23, 2023	
	<b>Next Review Date:</b>	Oct 23, 2024	

CROSS REFERENCES: *Sick Leave Management HR-tce-14; Sick Leave HR-cba-02*

## 1. PURPOSE

To ensure consistent practice in relation to recent Ministry of Health Coronavirus Guidance when directing the safe return of workers following an absence related to Coronavirus Illnesses.

## 2. POLICY STATEMENT

The Nurses within the Occupational Health & Safety (OHS) Department will follow the process.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

**Fully Vaccinated Individual:** 14 days or more since an individual has received their second dose of a 2 dose COVID-19 vaccine series or their first dose of a 1 dose COVID-19 vaccine series.

**High Risk Exposure:** Individual who has had an exposure to a positive case, regardless of vaccination status, or has had direct contact with infectious body fluids of a case (less than 2 meters, neither parties wore a mask and had prolonged exposure – greater than 15 minutes).

**Low Risk Exposure:** Individual(s) who was exposed to a positive case during the case's infectious period but consistently and appropriately wore Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the duration of interaction, or the interaction was transient in nature –i.e. walking by a positive case.

HCW: Health Care Worker

RTW: Return to work

RAT: Rapid Antigen Test

## 4. PROCESS

Scenario	Procedure
HCW is symptomatic with a new onset (which is not related to other causes or conditions): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fever/chills</li> <li>▪ Shortness of breath</li> <li>▪ Cough (new or worsening)</li> <li>▪ Sore throat</li> <li>▪ Runny/stuffy nose</li> <li>▪ Active diarrhea or vomiting</li> <li>▪ Extreme fatigue; muscle aches</li> <li>▪ Decrease/loss of taste or smell</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. PCR testing is no longer required, but is still available to staff through the assessment centre. HCW can self-book a test. If the test is positive, please report to <a href="mailto:TBRHSC.OccupationalHealthandSafety@tbh.net">TBRHSC.OccupationalHealthandSafety@tbh.net</a></li> <li>2. If able to work from home with symptoms and have leader approval, remain at home and work. Advise your leader.</li> <li>3. Follow the sick leave process in relation to symptoms.</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. HCW can RTW, when symptoms are improving for 24hrs or 48 hrs if diarrhea or vomiting <b>AND</b> fever free and no additional symptoms have developed.</li> <li>5. Upon RTW, work self-isolation is expected for 10 days from symptom onset. Work self-isolation is defined as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ break in a distanced break space</li> <li>▪ always wear a well-fitted mask (N95 mask when providing direct patient care) for source control except when eating or drinking.</li> </ul> </li> <li>6. If unable to return to work after day 7 contact OHS as per current Sick Leave policies.</li> </ol>
<p>HCW is COVID positive</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Follow steps 1 – 4 above.</li> <li>▪ If asymptomatic or symptoms <u>have significantly improved</u> and fever free for 24hrs for general/respiratory symptoms and 48hrs for gastrointestinal symptoms (not attributable to a pre-existing condition) and fever free can RTW and <b><u>must follow work self-isolation:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ break in a distanced break space.</li> <li>▪ always wear a well-fitted mask (wearing a N95 mask for all patient interactions) for source control except when eating or drinking.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>These protocols are to be followed for <b>10 full days</b> from symptom onset or positive test result.</p>
<p>HCW has been exposed to COVID at work, home or the community and is asymptomatic</p>	<p>For <b>10 days</b> from the last day of exposure, the HCW is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Self-monitor for symptoms for 10 days.</li> <li>▪ Always wear a well-fitted mask (n95 for direct patient care) for source control except when eating or drinking.</li> <li>▪ Break in a distanced break space.</li> </ul> <p>If the HCW becomes symptomatic – follow the guidance above.</p>
<p>COVID-19 workplace outbreak</p>	<p>HCW testing (PCR/RAT) may be considered for workplace outbreaks upon advisement by Public Health, IPAC and OHS</p>

**7. RELATED PRACTICES AND/OR LEGISLATIONS**

Occupational Health and Safety Act  
Public Health Ontario

Ministry of Health, Management of Cases and Contacts of COVID-19 in Ontario, v15.2 September, 2023

Ministry of Health COVID-19 Vaccine Guidance v9.0, October 6, 2023