

COVID-19 Return to Work Guidelines

Catholic Charities employees are **required** to adhere to the following guidelines for a staff member to return to work. This guidance was adapted from the NC Department of Health and Human Services ChildCareStrong NC Public Health Toolkit published March 23, 2020; Updated December 10, 2020.

Transmission and Symptoms of COVID-19:

COVID-19 is mostly spread by respiratory droplets released when people talk, cough, or sneeze. It is thought that the virus may spread to hands from a contaminated surface and then to the nose or mouth, causing infection. Therefore, personal prevention practices (such as handwashing and staying home when sick) and environmental cleaning and disinfection are essential for the safety of staff, volunteers and families that we serve.

COVID-19 symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure (being within 6 feet of someone diagnosed with COVID-19 for 15 minutes or more to the virus). People with COVID-19 have reported a wide range of specific and non-specific symptoms of COVID-19. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19 (this list does not include all possible symptoms):

- Fever - determined by a measured temperature of 100.4 °F or greater, or feels warm to the touch, or says they have recently felt feverish.
- Chills
- New cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congesting or runny nose

Other less common symptoms have been reported, including gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

Steps to take if Exposed to or Experiencing Symptoms of COVID-19:

Staff are encouraged to utilize the CDC's most up-to-date quarantine recommendations which can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>. Quarantine refers to an individual who has been in close contact (within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes cumulatively over a 24-hour period) of someone who is positive with COVID-19.

- CDC continues to recommend quarantine for 14 days after last exposure. However, as of December 2, 2020, the CDC has offered options to reduce the duration of quarantine in either of the following two scenarios:
 - 10 days of quarantine have been completed and no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring.
 - 7 days of quarantine have been completed, no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring, and the individual has received results of a negative antigen or PCR/molecular test on a test taken no earlier than day 5 of the quarantine.
- If quarantine is discontinued before day 14, the individual must continue to monitor symptoms and strictly adhere to all non-pharmaceutical interventions (e.g. wear a mask, practice social distancing) through 14 days after the date of last exposure.
- Follow the recommendations of your local public health department if someone at your place of work must quarantine. Local public health authorities make the final decisions about how long quarantine should last in the communities they serve, based on local conditions and needs.



Exclusion Category	Scenario	Criteria to return to work
Diagnosis	Person has tested positive with an antigen test but does not have symptoms of COVID-19.	If the person takes a repeat PCR test performed in a laboratory within 24-48 hours of the positive antigen test, and that PCR test is negative, the positive antigen test can be considered a false positive and the person can immediately return to work; OR If the person does not take a repeat PCR test or takes one within 24-48 hours and it is also positive, the person can return to work when they complete 10 days of isolation. Isolation should begin starting from the date of their first positive test.
Diagnosis	Person has tested positive with a PCR test but the person does not have symptoms.	Person can return to work when he/she completes 10 days of isolation. Isolation should begin starting from the date of the first positive test.
Symptoms	Person has symptoms of COVID-19 and has tested positive with an antigen test or PCR test .	Person can return to work when <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The person completes 10 days of isolation. Isolation should begin starting from the first day of symptoms; AND ▪ It has been at least 24 hours since the person had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine); AND ▪ Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving.
Symptoms	Person has symptoms of COVID-19 but has not been tested for COVID-19 nor has visited a health care provider. Therefore, the person who has symptoms is presumed positive.	Person can return to work when <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The person completes 10 days of isolation. Isolation should begin starting from the first day of symptoms; AND ▪ It has been at least 24 hours since the person had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine); AND ▪ Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving.
Symptoms	Person has symptoms of COVID-19 but has visited a health care provider and received an alternate diagnosis that would explain the symptoms of fever, chills, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, new cough or new loss of taste or smell, and the health care provider has determined COVID-19 testing is not needed.	Person can return to work when <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It has been at least 24 hours since the person had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine); AND ▪ They have felt well for at least 24 hours. <p>Note: The health care provider is not required to detail the specifics of the alternate diagnosis.</p>
Exposure	Person has been in close contact with someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19.	Person can return to work after completing up to 14 days of quarantine. The quarantine time clock begins after the last known close contact with the COVID-19-positive individual.
Household Member, Exposure	Person is a household member (e.g. a spouse or child) of someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19.	Person can return to work after completing up to 14 days of quarantine. The quarantine time clock begins at the end of the 10-day isolation of the person with COVID-19 .
Household Member, Symptoms	Person is a household member (e.g. a spouse or child) of someone who has symptoms of COVID-19 but who has not been tested for COVID-19, nor has visited a health care provider; therefore, the person who has symptoms is presumed positive.	Person can return to work after completing up to 14 days of Quarantine. Because COVID-19 was not ruled out, presumption is that person may remain infectious for up to 10 days after symptom onset. The quarantine time clock begins at the end of this 10-day isolation period.
Household Member, Symptoms	Person is a household member (e.g. a spouse or child) of someone who has symptoms of COVID-19 but has visited a health care provider and received an alternate diagnosis that would explain the symptoms of fever, chills, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, new cough or new loss of taste or smell, and the health care provider has determined COVID-19 testing is not needed .	Person can return to work when household member receives their alternate diagnosis. Note: The health care provider is not required to detail the specifics of the alternate diagnosis.

Catholic Charities Requirements:

- Managers should not require documentation of a negative COVID-19 test before allowing an employee to return to work. Please follow the return to work guidelines outlined above.
- Please follow the return to work policy as outlined in the Catholic Charities Employee Handbook under Paid Sick Leave.
- To protect the privacy of employees and volunteers, please limit the use of names and identifying information when sharing information related to the handling of suspected, presumptive or confirmed positive cases of COVID-19.
- Employees and volunteers may not be mandated to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.