



## Houston County Employee Guidelines and Reminders

07/08/22

2:00 pm

### **Our numbers for Covid-19 cases are beginning to increase.**

Employee and public safety are our top priority. Please follow all workplace and personal safety protocols. If you have a workplace safety concern, please contact your supervisor or the Personnel Department.

➤ **Workplace Protocols have been modified. Effective July 8, 2022 as follows:**

- **Home Tests** – We will no longer accept home test results. Covid testing results must be confirmed by a healthcare provider of testing facility. This decision was made for the following reasons:
  - a) We have had several employees that tested negative at home and then positive the same day at the doctor. One employee that it happened to tested at AFC yesterday. He told the doctor that he tested negative at home that morning. The dr. told him that he had tested about twenty patients in the last two days with the same problem. He said the results from home tests they are seeing are running about 40-50% accurate most likely due to improper testing by the patient or not following directions. He also said that the ones mailed by the Government had been warehoused in extreme heat and they are only accurate about 30% of the time.
  - b) After speaking with other healthcare professionals, they all concurred that their clinics are experiencing the same type results.
  - c) Testing facilities are readily available at this time.
  - d) Copied form the FDA website: "In addition, long exposure to high temperatures may impact the test performance. If your test has been left in a high temperature environment beyond the normal shipping time to be delivered to you, such as being left outside in the heat for several days, the FDA recommends considering using a different test."

As a reminder, I have listed the protocols we established on June 16, 2022.

➤ **Workplace Protocols have been modified. Effective June 16, 2022 as follows:**

➤ **TRACKING CASES: This will continue until further notice.**

- Employees who appear to have symptoms upon arrival at work or who become sick during the day should immediately be separated from others, and sent home with instructions and guidance on how to follow-up with their health care professional. If you have questions, please call Personnel.
- Employees should report to Personnel if they or anyone in their household are symptomatic, in quarantine, under testing and/or evaluation. Each case must be evaluated on several factors prior to returning to work. Employees should not return to work until they have been cleared to work by Personnel.

➤ **QUARANTINES/RETURN TO WORK GUIDELINES:**

See tracking cases above. Please contact Personnel if you have any employee experiencing any symptoms commonly associated with COVID-19 infections. If you have been instructed to self-quarantine, this means you are confined to your home. Do not enter any county-owned building before, during, or after hours. Do not come to work. Effective June 16, 2022, the following quarantine requirements and return to work guidelines will be adhered to:

- **Employees that can't find a testing facility** – Call Sheri (334-618-5600) or email [Sgarner@houstoncountyal.gov](mailto:Sgarner@houstoncountyal.gov) . You will get a response on how to proceed.
- **Positive test result - Day 1 is the day your test specimen was collected.** We will change the policy of ten (10) days quarantine from the date of the positive test to five (5) days. The employee may return to work with a mask on the next scheduled shift following the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) day of quarantine, and 24 hours with no symptoms or as healthcare provider ordered, whichever is longer.
- **Negative test result** – we will reduce the quarantine period to 24 hours with no symptoms. The employee may return to work on the next scheduled shift following a full 24 hours without symptoms.
- **Primary Exposure** – **The date of your exposure is considered day 0. Day 1 is the first full day after contact with a person who has COVID-19.**
  - ✓ **Primary Exposure** – You may work with a well-fitting mask for at least five (5) days after the last exposure. Watch for symptoms until 10 days after you **last** had close contact with someone with COVID-19. If you develop symptoms, isolate immediately and get tested.
  - ✓ **Living with a positive** - Stay home and quarantine for at least 5 full days. You do not need to test **unless** you develop symptoms. Wear a well-fitted mask if you must

be around others in your home and for five (5) additional days after your return. Watch for symptoms until 10 days after you **last** had close contact with someone with COVID-19. If you develop symptoms, isolate immediately and get tested. Continue to stay home until you know the results. Wear a well-fitted mask around others.

- **Employees that call out sick** – We do not want employees to come to work sick or stay at work sick. If you have any illness that prevents you from being at work or you become sick at work, you need to see a healthcare provider. Your healthcare provider will determine if you need to be tested and Personnel will determine your return to work date based on your healthcare provider’s opinion and your symptoms.

**What counts as close contact?**

- You were within 6 feet of someone who has COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more. **Close contact** is someone who was less than 6 feet away from an infected person (laboratory-confirmed or a clinical diagnosis) for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. For example, three individual 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes.

The safety of our employees and the public is a serious matter. Failure to follow workplace protocols may result in disciplinary action.

**PLEASE NOTE**

**These guidelines are subject to change without notice at any given time.**

As always, if you have any questions, please call: Sheri 677-4778  
Anisa 677-4736  
Kristin 677-4777

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