

February 1, 2023

The five day isolation period for health care workers who test positive for COVID-19 remains [provincial policy](#). However, it is important to remember that the majority health care workers with respiratory symptoms do NOT need to test for COVID-19, and can return to work when their fever is resolved and they feel well enough to work.

Testing is recommended for health care workers who are themselves at risk of severe disease and would be eligible for treatment, who are pregnant or who are hospitalized. Please read: [When to get a COVID-19 test \(bccdc.ca\)](#). Otherwise, COVID testing for HCW **is not recommended**.

Staff who do test positive for COVID-19 may be able to return to work *before* five days if their fever is resolved, they feel well enough to work and their manager or medical staff leader has determined they are required for safe operation of the service. They should adhere to these return to work precautions:

- Always wear a medical mask in all areas of the workplace, including when their routine work environment does not require PPE. They must also wear all other PPE as advised by provincial or health authority guidance.
- Conduct duties virtually whenever possible.
- To the extent practical, reduce close contact with other HCWs by respecting personal space and avoiding shared spaces (e.g., break rooms).
- Where possible, be restricted from contact with severely immunocompromised patients and those who are at risk of developing more severe disease or outcomes from COVID19, until 10 days after last known exposure/onset of symptoms or until mild symptoms resolve.
- Adhere diligently to hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene and other infection prevention and exposure control measures of the workplace.
- Avoid greetings that require physical contact, such as shaking hands.
- Avoid close contact with others when travelling to and from work and between shifts.
- Continue to self-monitor daily for signs and symptoms of illness.

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