

COVID-19 - Return to Work Policy

April 6, 2020

Although not every absenteeism from work because of illness is related to COVID-19, it is important to ensure that both Walinga and their Employees is doing everything possible to ensure we help prevent the spread where employees have experienced COVID-19 and are now returning to work.

Currently, information indicates that to be cleared of the virus, two additional tests must be conducted at least 24 hours apart and come back negative. Unfortunately the provinces do not have the capacity at this time to conduct the additional testing, so the all-clear from your physician or health care provider is critical and should be provided to the employer before a return is approved. Where an employee is unable to provide a medical certificate, additional measures have been implemented to help ensure the health and safety of everyone in the workplace.

For individuals that are required to self isolate as a result of a person in their household being in isolation due to experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or having tested positive for COVID-19:

You may return to work following the 14 day self-isolation period, in which you have not experienced any COVID-19 symptoms and the individual(s) in the household experiencing symptoms or actually having COVID-19 are 48 hours post symptomatic.

For individuals who have had COVID-19 symptoms and were directed to self-isolate at home by Public Health (having completed the self assessment and identified to have even one symptom) AND HAVE NOT BEEN TESTED must continue to self-isolate for the period of time that is the latest of the following:

- a. At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since complete resolution of all symptoms, including fever **AND** respiratory symptoms (e.g. shortness of breath, cough) without the use of fever-reducing medications (i.e. Acetaminophen [Tylenol]); **and,**
- b. **At least 14 days** have passed **since symptoms first appeared.**

For individuals who have had COVID-19 symptoms and were directed to self-isolate at home by Public Health AND HAVE BEEN TESTED may discontinue self-isolation based on the following conditions:

- a. Complete resolution of all symptoms, including fever **AND** respiratory symptoms (e.g. shortness of breath, cough) without the use of fever-reducing medications (i.e. Acetaminophen [Tylenol]); **and,**
- b. Negative COVID-19 results from at least two consecutive nasopharyngeal swab specimens collected at least 24 hours apart (total of two negative specimens).

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When the employee is unable to provide negative test results, Walinga has implemented an additional measure requiring a leave of absence from work for an additional seven days post symptomatic.

Again, It is critical that if you or someone in your household have one symptom of COVID-19 (fever, cough or difficulty breathing), or even mild symptoms, you leave the workplace and avoid spreading illness to others. It is also important to consider the use of any painkillers while experiencing influenza, such as Ibuprofen and acetaminophen, as it can relieve cold-related symptoms making you feel better while masking your symptoms. If you are administering painkillers for other than chronic pain, we ask that you stay home and self monitor using the Health Canada Self Assessment Link.

Health Canada Self Assessment link:

(<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>).

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in this.

Stay well, and kind regards,

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