



200 E. Berry Street ♦ Suite 360 ♦ Fort Wayne, IN 46802

Phone: (260) 449-7561 ♦ Fax: (260) 449-3010 ♦ www.allencountyhealth.com

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*Deborah A.  
McMahan, MD*

*Department  
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*Mindy Waldron,  
REHS, CFSP*



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**MISSION:**

In support of Allen County and its municipalities, the Fort Wayne-Allen County Department of Health strives to promote the health, safety, and well-being of all residents. With guidance from the Indiana State Department of Health and support from our many partnering agencies, we endeavor to have a model public health infrastructure that provides professional, responsive, and cost-effective services to the community.

March 24, 2020

## COVID-19 Ill Employee Recommendations

As COVID-19 continues to spread in our community and testing capabilities remain limited we appreciate that employers are faced with several new challenges regarding employee illness policies. Please see recommendations below from the Department of Health to help you and your employees address common medical situations.

### **An employee or their household family member tested positive for COVID-19:**

If you have an employee that tested positive for COVID-19, they must stay home from work until they have been:

#### **Fever free for 72 hours AND at least 7 days have passed since the onset of their symptoms**

- Any other employees who had direct contact with the infected employee (within 6 ft for greater than 5 minutes) should also stay home from work until 14 days have passed since their last exposure.
- All other employees in the building who may have had low-risk contact with the case should self-monitor with twice daily fever and symptom checks for 14 days.
- If an employee has a *household family member* who tested positive for COVID-19, your employee must stay home and complete a 14-day quarantine period to ensure they are not infected with the virus before returning to work per Department of Health.

### **An employee or their household family member was evaluated by a physician and told they could not be tested; however, they were presumptively diagnosed with COVID-19:**

If an employee has been evaluated by a doctor and told they likely have COVID-19 even without laboratory diagnosis, *we would recommend you act as if the patient is infected with COVID-19*. Please have the employee stay home until they are:

#### **Fever free of for 72 hours AND at least 7 days have passed since the onset of their symptoms.**

- In this situation, we would recommend all other employees practice self-monitoring which includes twice daily fever and symptom checks for 14 days past the last day of exposure.
- If an employee has a household family member who was evaluated by a doctor and told they presumptively have COVID-19 without laboratory testing, for all practical purposes this person has COVID-19 and *the employee should stay home and complete a 14-day quarantine period*.

- However, if this will cause severe staffing shortages and they are critical to the operation, although not ideal, the employee may be able to return to work if they are not experiencing any symptoms. However, they should practice self-monitoring and should keep their distance from others in the office or facility.

**An employee or their household family member is sick with respiratory illness but has not been evaluated by a physician:**

If an employee has been experiencing cough, fever or shortness of breath, but has not seen a doctor, please encourage them to do so. If their illness has not been diagnosed by a physician, *they must stay home at least 24 hours after fever has resolved before returning to work.* Other employee contacts should self-monitor for symptoms out of extreme caution. If an employee's household family member is ill with respiratory symptoms but has not seen a physician, the employee can return to work but should self-monitor for symptoms and practice social distancing at work.

We hope these guidelines are helpful and please know that we do understand the hardship this can cause in terms of staffing.

Sincerely,



Deborah A. McMahan, MD  
Health Commissioner



Mindy Waldron, REHS CFSP  
Department Administrator



Erika Pitcher, MPH  
Community Health  
Case Mgmt Director