



Q: What should we do if an employee has been exposed to the Coronavirus?

A: If an employee reports being exposed, or is diagnosed with the Coronavirus, the response should be swift, conservative, and non-punitive.

1: Send the employee home immediately. If an employee exhibits known symptoms of the Coronavirus—including respiratory illness, fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath—or is diagnosed with the virus, you should send them home immediately, and encourage them to self-isolate and contact their healthcare provider as soon as possible.

2: Determine who else may have exposed. Before the infected employee leaves the workplace, ask for the names of any employees, clients, customers, or others they were in close physical proximity to at work over the last few days.

3: Notify the potentially exposed individuals, and the employee’s coworkers—sensitively. Contact people individually to notify them of their possible direct exposure to the Coronavirus. Be prepared for a variety of reactions, including shock, fear, sadness, or anger. Don’t share any private information regarding the infected employee. Inform the remaining employees in that location of the situation and remind them to stay home if they are sick, and to contact their healthcare provider and the company if they exhibit [symptoms of the Coronavirus](#). Always remember to keep the private health information of the infected and exposed employee(s) confidential.

4: Record any Coronavirus diagnosis per [OSHA instructions](#).

5: Keep questions to a minimum. Limit the amount of personal information you ask employees to provide. Remember, employers can encourage—but not require—employees to contact the health department, seek medical attention, or get tested for the Coronavirus.

5+: Ensure employees stay home when they’re sick. Two of the most common reasons nonexempt (hourly) employees don’t stay home when they’re sick are the loss of needed income and pressure from their supervisor (fear of losing their job). To help minimize workplace exposure to the Coronavirus, employers should implement policies to pay nonexempt employees who are sent home or stay home when they are sick. In addition, notify supervisors that encouraging or coercing employees to report to work when they’re sick puts everyone at risk, will not be tolerated, and will result in disciplinary action.