

COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Fairfield County Employees

(To accompany the Fairfield County COVID-19 Employee Safe Work Practice Guidance)

These FAQs have been developed to answer questions about the Fairfield County Safe Work Practice Guidance.

1) **What is coronavirus disease (COVID-19)?**

COVID-19, or coronavirus disease 2019, is a respiratory disease caused by one of the seven coronaviruses known to infect humans. The virus that causes COVID-19 is called SARS-CoV-2.

2) **What can I do to protect myself and others from COVID-19?**

The following actions help prevent the spread of COVID-19, as well as other coronaviruses and influenza:

- Stay home except for essential activities.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Avoid shaking hands.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with your arm or inner elbow.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using household cleaners and EPA-registered disinfectants that are appropriate for the surface, following label instructions.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
 - If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol (see below for guidance if you do not have a sink or hand sanitizer available).
 - Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

3) Who is at higher risk for becoming seriously ill from COVID-19?

Though no one is invulnerable, older adults are at increased risk for severe illness or death from COVID-19. Underlying conditions, including heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, and compromised immune systems, increase risk even further in those who are older. In addition, anyone with an underlying medical condition, regardless of their age, faces increased risk of serious illness.

4) When is someone defined as Quarantined or in Isolation?

- a. **Isolation** is reserved for those who have **tested positive or been clinically diagnosed with COVID-19**. It keeps infected people away from healthy people to prevent the sickness from spreading. Isolation time frame is determined by the Fairfield County Health Department.
- b. **Quarantine** in general means the separation of a person or group of people reasonably believed to have been *exposed to a communicable disease, but not yet symptomatic*, from others who have not been so exposed, to prevent the possible spread of the communicable disease.
- c. COVID-19 symptoms include: Fever $\geq 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$, dry cough, shortness of breath, and difficulty breathing.

5) When do symptoms appear?

Symptoms generally appear 2-14 days after exposure. You are most contagious when exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.

6) How does COVID-19 spread?

COVID-19 is believed to spread mainly from person to person between people who are in close contact (within about 6 feet) from one another and through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It also may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

7) Can I get tested for COVID-19?

Testing supplies are limited all around the country. The vast majority of people who get sick with COVID-19 do not need testing. Currently, testing is limited to Ohioans who are the sickest, the most at risk of developing severe symptoms, and professionals who provide care for the ill. This will allow providers to immediately and aggressively act to treat these at-risk patients and to take safety precautions to prevent spread of the disease. Testing is not recommended for people without symptoms or people who have mild-to-moderate symptoms and NO risk factors for becoming seriously ill.

8) What if I have had a lingering cough? Should I be concerned I have COVID-19?

- a. You should reach out to your primary care provider if you are concerned you have symptoms of COVID-19. **Do not report to work** if you have symptoms of COVID-19. Follow your healthcare provider's guidance about what to do next.
- b. If you do not have a healthcare provider, you can call the Fairfield County Wellness Clinic at 740-689-4404 or call the Fairfield County Health Department at 740-652-2800.

9) How should I clean my work vehicle?

- a. You should clean and disinfect your work vehicle both before and after use, particularly if it is a shared vehicle. Keep in mind, the areas of the vehicle that you should focus on when cleaning are the areas you will be touching with your hands. Do not forget to include key fobs and key boxes when performing disinfection related to vehicle use. These items are constantly touched and should be disinfected between uses as best you can.
- b. Ensure the disinfectant is suited for the material on which it is being used.
- c. Utilize disposable, nitrile gloves and safety glasses or goggles during disinfection.
- d. Clean commonly used areas where dirt or mud is present with a wet towel prior to disinfection. This is an important step to ensure efficacy of the disinfectant.
- e. Spray disinfectant on all areas used during the shift. (Note: Ensure that the area where disinfection will occur has proper ventilation.) Areas to clean includes, but are not limited to, the:
 - Cab/driver's areas and all components. Ensure steering wheel, gear shifter, radio, armrest, power window buttons, seatbelt buckles, door handles and other areas regularly touched are sprayed.
 - Exterior door handles.
 - Vehicle mounted toolbox handles and doors.
 - Tools (hand tools, power tools, ladders, carts etc.).
- f. Allow disinfectant spray to self-dry or ensure 10-minute contact time prior to drying the surface
 - If drying the area, use a clean towel and a new pair of nitrile gloves.
- g. Dispose of nitrile gloves in a trash receptacle after use.
- h. Conduct proper hand washing as soon as feasible after disinfecting a vehicle.

10) When should I return to work following a reported illness?

We actively encourage sick employees to stay home until they are free of fever (without the use of medication) for at least 72 hours (three full days) AND symptoms have improved for at least 72 hours AND at least seven days have passed since symptoms first began.

We do not now require a healthcare provider's note to validate the illness or return to work if employees are sick with acute respiratory illness; healthcare provider offices and medical facilities may be extremely busy and not able to provide such documentation in a timely way.

11) What if my job involves handling mail? Should I take any extra precautions?

COVID-19 is mainly spread person-to-person via respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. However, it may be possible that a person can be infected when touching a surface with the virus and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes. To minimize the risk employees can use the following steps:

- Wear disposable nitrile or vinyl gloves when handling mail
- Never re-wear a pair of gloves you have previously taken off
- Always wash hands with soap and water immediately after removing gloves
- Surfaces that have contact with mail should be disinfected regularly
- Avoid touching your face
- Follow any additional guidance or procedures provided by your department

12) Do I need to wear a cloth face covering to work?

Face masks are recommended for County employees at this time. You can refer to the Fairfield County COVID-19 Safe Work Practices Guidance (most recent version) for further guidance on what a cloth face covering is, how to wear it, how to care for it, and its limitations. Reusable cloth face coverings are being provided.

We are also securing a supply of disposable masks for the public.

For more information:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>
- Ohio Department of Health
 - <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/Novel-Coronavirus>