

**CITY OF LOS ANGELES**  
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

Date: July 20, 2020

To: ALL GENERAL MANAGERS  
City of Los Angeles

From: WENDY MACY, General Manager   
Personnel Department

Subject: **NOTIFICATION AND CLEANING PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES AND FAQs  
RELATED TO COVID-19 - Version 1.2**

The health and well-being of our employees is of paramount importance to our City leaders. Every employee deserves a safe and supportive workplace. The Personnel Department's Medical Services Division (MSD), in conjunction with the City Attorney's Office and Department of General Services (GSD), has established the following notification and cleaning procedures, guidelines and FAQs, to assist Departments responding to positive cases of COVID-19 in the workplace. **Note:** Please check with LAPD and proprietary departments for their internal process for cleaning and notifications.

On April 1, Mayor Garcetti issued new guidance on the importance of wearing face coverings in public. Face coverings are another way to limit the spread of respiratory droplets that may be infected with COVID-19 and provide an extra layer of protection. City employees **are required** to comply with the Mayor's direction and wear a face mask when coming in to work.

In the event of a positive COVID-19 case, the following steps should be taken by a supervisor after learning a City employee has received a positive COVID-19 diagnosis from a test result:

1. The supervisor should verify that the COVID-19 positive employee is no longer in the workplace. If not, the employee should be sent home immediately.
2. The supervisor should immediately notify their HR section and provide the following:
  - a. A timeline of when the employee was last at work (which is critical for the custodial services crew to commence the cleaning procedure).
  - b. A list of coworkers the employee had close physical contact with up to 2 days before symptoms appeared. Close physical contact is defined by LA County Public Health as *being within 6 feet of a person who has, or likely has, COVID-19 for more than 15 minutes, or unprotected contact with the bodily fluids and/or secretions of such person (such as being coughed or sneezed on, sharing utensils or saliva or providing care), while not wearing appropriate personal protective equipment, including within 48 hours before such person's symptoms began.* Close physical contact does not include merely passing the diagnosed employee in a hallway, sharing the same office floor with the employee, or other incidental association.
  - c. The date the employee first began to experience symptoms (to the extent possible).

3. The supervisor should close off the employee's office or workstation, to the extent possible.
4. The HR section should immediately contact MSD for next steps using [this link](#). All positive COVID-19 cases must be reported, per the Mayor's Office direction, immediately via email to Joanne O'Brien and Deborah Caruso.
5. MSD will provide further guidance to Departmental Personnel Officers on COVID-19 issues and what sanitary measures need to be taken at which specific locations and by whom. This guidance will be based on their clinical judgement and CDC guidelines, dated April 10, 2020. GSD Custodial Services will follow the cleaning direction provided by MSD and the Department Personnel Officers.
6. MSD will also provide recommendations regarding what City employees, contractors, facility residents, or building tenants should be notified about a positive test result. If the diagnosed employee developed symptoms in the office, Department Personnel Officers must ensure employees and contractors are notified of any positive COVID-19 cases. Departmental Personnel Officers must also ensure the custodial staff who clean the diagnosed employee's work area are notified. In certain circumstances, GSD may also be instructed by Department Personnel Officers to notify all tenants of the floor or the building where the employee works and/or make further notifications.
7. The employee's name cannot be disclosed in any notification, except to the Department's HR Section, LA County Health, the Center for Disease Control or through the Mayor's Office direction to report all positive cases to the Personnel Department's points of contact, Joanne O'Brien and Deborah Caruso. Department Personnel Officers shall work with department management to notify employees in a timely manner of any positive COVID-19 cases in the workplace while ensuring confidentiality of the affected employee(s).
8. Employees who test positive for COVID-19, and those who are told by a clinician they are presumed to be positive for COVID-19, are required by LA County Health Order to self-isolate and stay home for at least 10 days AND at least 3 days (72 hours) after symptoms have passed. The order requires individuals in isolation to remain in their homes for the required period, except as needed for medical treatment.

Supervisors should consult with their Department Personnel Officer to discuss specifics and further guidance.

**For your convenience, the Personnel COVID-19 Reporting Process is available in a printed version and can be shared using this [link](#).**

**Below are FAQs to assist departments with commonly asked questions:**

**What is considered an “exposure” to a positive COVID-19 case?**

An exposure is close physical contact with someone who has received a positive COVID-19 test or is likely to have COVID-19. Close physical contact is defined by LA County Public Health as being within 6 feet of a person who has or likely has COVID-19 for more than fifteen minutes, starting 48 hours before your symptoms began until your isolation period ends, or unprotected contact with the bodily fluids and/or secretions of such person (such as being coughed or sneezed on, sharing utensils or saliva or providing care), while not wearing appropriate personal protective equipment, including within 48 hours before such person’s symptoms began. Close physical contact does not include merely passing an infected employee in a hallway, sharing the same office floor with the employee, or other incidental association.

**What cleaning steps should be taken when someone in the workplace tests positive for COVID-19?**

Upon confirmation of a positive COVID-19 test, a supervisor should isolate the area where the sick employee was normally present and contact the department’s administrative services group who will work with the Department Personnel Officer to determine sanitary measures.

Typically, the affected areas, along with key common areas (such as bathrooms and lunch rooms) and frequently touched areas (such as main doors and elevator buttons) will be disinfected using products approved by the EPA-registered disinfectant approved for emerging pathogens by GSD Custodial or contractor. After the sick employee has left the workplace, CDC recommends waiting 24 hours or as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfecting.

MSD may recommend a cleaning protocol that requires a specialized custodial or contract crew to provide the service using full PPE (Personal Protective Equipment). MSD will provide departments and GSD guidance through the Personnel Department Officer on what sanitary measures should be taken at which specific locations and on necessary notifications.

**Do we need to disinfect the work areas if the employee who tests positive for COVID-19 is not actively in the workplace?**

It depends. Per the CDC<sup>1</sup>, if it has been more than 7 days since the person with suspected/confirmed COVID-19 visited the workplace, no cleaning is necessary.

If the employee was in the workplace within the previous 3 days, then the employee’s primary work area, along with key common areas and frequently touched areas should be disinfected using products approved by the EPA for eliminating or killing the virus on surfaces by GSD Custodial or the contractor. This cleaning should be done after regular business hours or at the end of the day (if possible). Employees should not remain in the area while the disinfecting is being completed.

The virus is not viable on surfaces after 7 days. Routine cleaning using products approved by the EPA for eliminating or killing the virus on surfaces will be provided by GSD Custodial or contract vendor.

MSD will provide departments and GSD guidance, through Personnel Department Officers, on what sanitary measures should be taken at which locations and necessary notifications.

**Are leased buildings also following the cleaning procedures?**

Yes. Once MSD provides guidance to departments and GSD, through Department Personnel Officers, on what sanitary measures should be taken, GSD will provide the scope of work to the leased facility building management and request the service.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.google.com/url?q=https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html&sa=D&ust=1592514101239000&usg=AFQjCNHBv8CuCFJtqXdM4yT9WepABV9DhA>

**If an employee tests positive or is awaiting results, should they continue to use Timecode 19 or use SK time?**

Timecode 19 was created to compensate employees who are or may be infected with COVID-19. Once a test is administered and the test results are positive or the employee is awaiting results after being placed off of work, the employee should be off using the Timecode 19.

**Can I ask an employee if they have tested positive for COVID-19?**

It depends. During a pandemic, employers may ask employees if they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19. These include symptoms such as fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, or sore throat. Employers must maintain all information about employee illness as a confidential medical record in compliance with the ADA. If you have any concerns or need guidance, please discuss with your HR Section.

**Can we take employees' temperatures before they enter the workplace?**

Generally, measuring an employee's body temperature is a medical examination. Because the CDC and state/local health authorities have acknowledged community spread of COVID-19 and issued attendant precautions, employers may measure employees' body temperature. However, employers should be aware that some people with COVID-19 do not have a fever.

**Does family and medical leave apply to absences?**

Yes. Regular FMLA provisions continue to apply for personal illness and/or family illness, including caring for family members.

**Is the City complying with the new federal legislation Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) which is effective on April 1, 2020?**

Yes, for information on how the City is complying with FFCRA, please use [this link.](#)

**Do we need to report positive COVID-19 cases to Cal/OSHA?**

Each department has a Cal/OSHA reporting requirement for a positive test result for COVID-19 when a City employee is exposed through their employment. The reporting requirement arises when it can be determined that the exposure to the virus was work related. Under circumstances where the exposure was work related, the City is required to report the incident within 24 hours after the City is made aware of the employee's medical treatment or hospitalization.

If an employee has a confirmed (positive test) case of COVID-19 that is considered work related, an employer must report the case to Cal/OSHA if it results in a fatality or in-patient hospitalization of one or more employees. It is important to note, however, that the reporting obligation is time limited. Thus, if a fatality due to COVID-19 occurs after 30 days from the workplace incident leading to the illness, an employer is not required to report it. Similarly, if the in-patient hospitalization occurs more than 24 hours after the workplace incident leading to the illness, an employer is not required to report. In-patient hospitalization, for purposes of COVID-19, includes when the City or a health care agency requires an employee to isolate from work (as opposed to self-quarantine).

**Is COVID-19 testing available?**

Yes, Mayor Garcetti announced the expansion of a free testing program. Now, residents of L.A. County can schedule a test. To make an appointment, go to [Coronavirus.LACity.org/Testing.](https://www.lacounty.gov/coronavirus/testing)

**What else can we do to protect our employees?**

As an added reminder, employees are encouraged to take proactive measures to avoid being exposed to the virus including: frequently wash your hands with soap for 20 seconds; avoid close contact with people; stay home if you are sick; cover coughs and sneezes; and clean and disinfect surfaces often.

Also, all employees should be reminded to refrain from touching any centrally-located items (such as elevator buttons, counters, doors, etc.) with their bare hands whenever possible.

Additional resources are available on the Centers for Disease Control and Preventions and Los Angeles County, Department of Public Health websites.

- <https://www.cdc.gov/>
- <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/>

If you have any questions, please contact Joanne O'Brien, Medical Services Division, at [joanne.obrien@lacity.org](mailto:joanne.obrien@lacity.org) or Asst. General Manager Deborah Caruso at [deborah.caruso@lacity.org](mailto:deborah.caruso@lacity.org).