

My employee or child was exposed to COVID-19. What do I do now?

There is much fear surrounding COVID-19 statewide. The question often comes up, “What do I do if my employee or child in daycare/school was exposed to COVID-19?” **You do not need to be a doctor** to know what to do in this circumstance, as long as you follow the process below.

First, find out whether they are a **close contact** of someone with COVID-19? What is a close contact? They are someone who, in relation to a person with *known COVID-19* was:

- Less than 6 feet away for at least 15 minutes over the course of a 24 hour period OR
- Direct exposure to secretions/droplets (kissing, directly coughed or sneezed on) OR
- A household member
- Regardless of whether they or the person they were exposed to was wearing a mask

Note: the close contact needs to have occurred during the COVID-19 positive person’s contagious period, defined as the 2 days prior to symptoms starting and up to 10 days after symptoms start. If it did not occur during this period of time then “close contact” is not considered to have occurred.

Second, if the person is a close contact, do they have symptoms of COVID-19? The symptoms of COVID-19 are as follows:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

If they have any of these **symptoms**, they need to see their doctor to see if a COVID-19 test is right for them. At Family Health Center, we are seeing our established patients and also those wanting to establish care with us indefinitely for their preventative health needs and chronic issues. We are not seeing patients for COVID-19 concerns who already have a Primary Care Provider (PCP) elsewhere.

If your employee is not an essential worker as defined at the “cisa” and CDC links below, your employee (or child in daycare/school) **does** need to self-quarantine in their home for at least 10 days if they indeed were a close contact (as defined above), though ideally 14 days. The 10 day quarantine period starts *after their last contact with the person that is COVID-19 positive*, as long as the COVID-19 positive person was contagious at the time (defined as the 2 days prior to symptoms starting and up to 10 days after symptoms start). If they develop any of the above symptoms then they should be seen by their doctor to determine if a test is needed. Also, if they are a close contact, the State of Texas (Department of State Health Services) or the Health Department should be reaching out to them shortly to review their quarantine process with them. Regardless of when they return, they still need to wear a mask, monitor for symptoms, and report symptoms immediately should they develop.

Finally, see these **important** resources for further information.

<https://covidwaco.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/FAQsforEmployers.pdf>

<https://dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/docs/LettertoTXEmployers.pdf>

<https://www.cisa.gov/identifying-critical-infrastructure-during-covid-19>

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/Essential-Critical-Workers_Dos-and-Donts.pdf

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>