




COVID-19 Test Results Frequently Asked Questions



Edmonton

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The best place to find the most up to date self isolation and COVID-19 testing criteria is the [Alberta Health Services website](#). Completing the [AHS Self-Assessment](#) online is a quick and easy way to determine if testing and self isolation is required for your situation.

While awaiting direction from Alberta Health Services (AHS) regarding a COVID-19 test, should an employee come to work or self-isolate?

The first step of determining if someone should be at home self-isolating is always to complete the online [COVID-19 Self Assessment](#) from AHS. The Self-Assessment will give clear direction as to if the individual requires a follow up with AHS Health Link (811). There are a few general rules to determine if an employee should self isolate while they wait for direction from AHS - if they travelled outside of Canada, if they have symptoms or have been in close contact with a confirmed case.

NOTE: *Anyone who is self-isolating while they wait for direction from AHS who is feeling well is encouraged to work with their supervisor to work from home whenever possible. See the Work from Home Arrangement in the COVID-19 Employee Guide.*

What to do when waiting for a COVID-19 test result?

Anyone who is waiting for a COVID-19 test or test result who is not hospitalized should self-isolate until they have received notification from AHS with the results of their test. Individuals waiting for a test or test result should not visit any other healthcare facilities, including outpatient imaging or labs unless they are being admitted to hospital. They may work from home with approval from their supervisor if they are feeling well while they wait, and can return to their usual activities when advised to do so by AHS. Supervisors are required to report the result of COVID-19 test results. For more information, see the [COVID-19 Compensation and Leave FAQ](#).

One of my employees tested positive for COVID-19. What do they do now?

If an employee's test results for COVID-19 are positive, they MUST continue to [self-isolate](#).

- Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 are legally required to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the time their symptoms start to the time they have resolved (whichever is greater).
- Individuals who test positive for COVID-19, but **have not had any symptoms**, are legally required to [isolate](#) for 10 days from the date they were tested; the 10 days will reset should they develop symptoms during this period and they must self isolate until their symptoms have fully resolved even if the 10 days have passed.

- Self-isolation prevents the spread of COVID-19 by lowering the chance the virus could spread to others.
- Self-isolation means to avoid situations where they could infect other people such as through social gatherings, work, school/university, child care, athletic events, faith-based gatherings, health care facilities and public transportation.
- The employee* must remain on their own property during their isolation, unless they require medical attention.
- If you live in an apartment building or highrise, you must stay inside and cannot use elevators or stairwells to go outside. If your balcony is private and at least 2 metres away from your closest neighbors, you may go outside on the balcony.

*Employees who are considered Health Care Workers (HCW), are required to remain off work for 14 days from the onset of symptoms or until symptoms resolve (whichever is longer) in addition to concurrently completing the 10 days of self-isolation at home. Therefore the 10 days of self-isolation will overlap with the 14 days of time off work for HCWs, resulting in an additional 4 days where the HCW is not required to self-isolate but still remain off work. Members of Fire Rescue Services are considered HCW's.

One of my employees tested positive for COVID-19. Should the rest of my team self-isolate and get tested?

When an individual tests positive for COVID-19, the individual is responsible for identifying their own "[close contacts](#)". In the workplace, the employee will work with their supervisor to identify workplace close contacts. This identification process is done through assessment with the employee, getting an understanding of the nature of the work environment and any close contact interactions. This assessment will determine if any specific co-workers are considered to be a close contact and employees will be required to follow the self isolation protocols outlined by AHS.

What steps are taken after the City of Edmonton is informed that an employee is a confirmed COVID-19 Case?

Based on process changes from AHS, individuals are now responsible for identifying their own close contacts and using the online AHS contact notification system. Employees are required to report to their supervisor when they have a positive COVID-19 test and together they will identify any workplace close contacts. The process used when there is a City of Edmonton positive COVID-19 case is outlined in the following [Supervisors toolkit](#).

One of my employees was self-isolating while awaiting results of the COVID-19 test and they were symptomatic when they were tested. They have NOT had contact with a known case of COVID-19 AND have NOT returned from travel outside of Canada AND NOT a close contact of an ill person who has returned from travel outside of Canada within the last 14 days. The test is negative - can they return to work?

If they experienced one or more of the primary 5 symptoms of COVID-19 outlined in the Chief Medical Officer of Health Order (CMHO) 05-2020 (fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose, or shortness of breath) the employee must self isolate for 10 days after the onset of symptoms or until they are symptom free, whichever is longer, before they may return to work even after a negative COVID-19 test. However, if they had another symptom, that was not one of the primary 5 from the Order, they can return to work after a negative test, as long as their symptoms have resolved.

One of my employees was self-isolating while awaiting results of the COVID-19 test and they were symptomatic when they were tested. The employee had contact with a known case of COVID-19 OR returned from travel outside of Canada OR had close contact with an ill person who had returned from travel outside of Canada within the last 14 days. The test is negative- can they return to work?

The employee must self-isolate for a minimum of 14 days from their last exposure/when they returned from travel, or until symptoms resolve, whichever is longer.

One of my employees went into self-isolation because they were showing acute respiratory illness symptoms which may or may not be related to COVID-19, but were not directed by AHS to be tested. When can they return to work?

Employees ill with acute respiratory illness symptoms must stay home until symptoms resolve. This employee should also complete the AHS self assessment to ensure they are not required to be tested for COVID-19.

One of my employees went into self-isolation because they were in contact with a known case of COVID-19, OR they have returned from travel outside of Canada OR they are a close contact of an ill person who has returned from travel outside of Canada within the last 14 days. They are not symptomatic and their COVID-19 test results were negative.

The employee may return to work after they have completed the minimum 14 days of self-isolation from when they came into contact with the known COVID-19 case. The employee must self-isolate for a minimum of 14 days from their last exposure/when they returned from travel.

One of my employees tested positive for COVID-19. How can I support the rest of my team? What should I say?

Please review the [Employee Guide](#) and help to answer any questions the employee may have around COVID-19, the City resources that are available, and how they can protect themselves.

Supervisors will work with their employees to conduct the internal workplace contact tracing process for employees. If an employee tests positive for COVID-19, close contacts at work will be notified, but the individual is responsible for notifying any others in their personal and social network ([Contract Tracing Notification Process](#)). For more information about supervisor responsibilities and the required steps after a positive case in the workplace please see the [COVID-19 Communications Toolkit: Positive Case Checklist](#).

One of my employees tested positive for COVID-19, other members of my team now want to self-isolate. Is this allowed?

It may not be required for others in the workplace to self-isolate after a positive COVID-19 test of a co-worker. The [COVID-19 Positive Case: Supervisor's Checklist](#) will walk a supervisor through the process for assessing the risk of workplace transmission and determining who else in the workplace needs to self isolate.

One of my employees tested positive for COVID-19, how can I protect their privacy while still continuing to communicate regularly with the rest of my team?

During the COVID-19 response, individuals are self-isolating for many reasons and will not always be a positive case for COVID-19. Supervisors are not required to, and should not disclose to others at the workplace information about another employee's absence. Co-workers should respect the employee's privacy and should not share any information regarding the employee to others. Speculation regarding the identity of the employee should be avoided and gossiping about those who are off work for any reason would be considered a breach of our Respectful Workplace Directive.

My employee has a family member/household contact at home self-isolating, do they also need to self-isolate?

Household contacts should complete the AHS COVID-19 Self-Assessment tool, and follow the direction provided through this tool. Completing this tool will evaluate the household contacts specific risk factors for having potentially contracted COVID-19, and ensure these risk factors are managed to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

I have an employee who has a family member who tested positive for COVID-19. Should the employee also self isolate?

If the employee is able to self isolate in the same household, where they have separate bathrooms and bedrooms from the person with COVID-19, they may self isolate for 14 days from their last known contact with that individual.

If they are unable to isolate in the household using separate bathrooms and bedrooms, they must start their own isolation period after the confirmed COVID-19 case isolation period has ended. If COVID-19 symptoms develop the person should seek testing and must comply with AB Health guidelines (i.e. 10 days or until symptoms resolve, whichever is longer). As an example - if a spouse tests positive the employee must wait 10 days from the spouse's first symptom and then isolate for 14 days from that date if they have not been able to isolate in the household.

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