



COVID-19 Q&A Webinar

Additional Questions Posed by the Audience on 8/19/20

Responses Provided by:

Dr. Susan Nelson, Medical Director – Physicians Health Center

Ingrid Ponce, Esq., Labor & Employment Attorney - Stearns Weaver Miller

**The topics reviewed below are constantly changing and evolving and may not reflect current recommendations from the CDC and other Health Officials. Please review current State and Local Guidelines prior to implementing practices.*

- What guidance can you give regarding an employee whose spouse tested positive and had to go to the hospital. The employee quarantined for two weeks, had multiple negative tests and currently shows no symptoms. Do we allow them back to work? Should we wait for spouse to have no symptoms or a negative test?
 - Yes, they are allowed back to work. The 14 day quarantine and negative test is perfect. They don't have to wait for their spouse.

- As you stated CDC has multiple updates. If a first responder has no fever but experiences other symptoms such as lack of taste, smell - and immediately gets a rapid test and the result is negative, what are the requirements now for isolation? Do first responders still isolate after a negative with symptoms and if so, how long?
 - First, I would have them get a PCR test, which is far more accurate. With these symptoms, we have to assume COVID-19, so isolate for 14 days. Depending on the municipality, either the symptom-base or test-based strategy is used for return-to-work.

- Can we write down the employee's temperature next to their names on a sign in sheet when they come to work?
 - You should not. Temperature readings are medical records that must be kept confidential pursuant to the Americans with Disability Act. Noting temperature readings in this manner would likely violate these obligations. Additionally, restaurants in Miami-Dade County are not permitted to keep specific employee temperatures. Rather, restaurants are only permitted to record "Pass/Fail" as to whether an employee has passed/failed the temperature screening.

- Will having Asthma prevent you from returning to work?
 - No. It is a risk factor, but as long as all precautions are in place, there is no reason they cannot work/return to work.

- How do we do contact tracing?
 - You can be contagious 1-3 days before start of symptoms/positive test, so you have to go back and see who the employee was in contact with over that period of time. "In contact" means less than 6 feet apart, unmasked, and for greater than 15 minutes (which shouldn't be happening anyway!) Then these contacts must be quarantined for 14 days then tested. The incubation period is from 2-14 days, so testing before the 14 days is useless.

- If you are positive and it takes longer than 80 hours of the cares act what can you use for payment to employees?
 - After an employee has exhausted his/her 80 hours of Emergency Paid Sick Leave under the FFCRA, then an employee can use any paid time off provided by the employer. If the employee does not have any paid time off available, it is up to the employer as to whether it wishes to continue paying the employee. If the employer has 500 or more employees, then there is no federally mandated paid sick leave available to the employee.

- Is Antigen a nasal or oral swab test?
 - The Antigen test can be either a nasal or a throat swab.

- What is the current thinking regarding glove use for non-medical personnel visiting medical or non-medical settings?
 - Gloves can be used for cleaning or caring for someone who is sick. Wearing gloves outside of these instances (for example, when using a shopping cart or using an ATM) will not necessarily protect you from getting COVID-19 and may still lead to the spread of germs.
- Is it okay for an employee to return to work if it has been 26 days since last day of symptoms but still testing positive but is asymptomatic. Is it ok for them to return to work?
 - Yes. The CDC recommends 10 days since onset of symptoms. Some municipalities are using 21 days, so after 26 days an employee is defiantly no contagious. As long as they are feeling better they may return.
- How do eligible employees apply for the Family 1st Act?
 - Employers are encouraged to develop forms their employees can use when seeking leave under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.
- Where can we find Miami-Dade guidelines for specific industries regarding COVID-19 and protocols?
 - The CDC site is the best source of information, or you can go to [miamidade.gov](https://www.miamidade.gov) and click on the top for “get the latest updates”.