



Information for Employers: When an Employee Tests Positive for COVID-19

If an employee tests positive for COVID-19 via a PCR or home test:

- **The employee should isolate.** The employee should follow isolation protocols, which involves masking for 10 days and isolating at home for at least 5 days. The Cambridge Public Health Department (CPHD) recommends that the individual take a rapid antigen test (home test) and receive a negative result before ending home isolation after day 5. If the individual has COVID symptoms, CPHD recommends that they continue to stay home. More detailed information about isolation guidelines can be found [here](#).

Note: CPHD does NOT recommend requiring a negative PCR test to return to work. (This is because a person can test positive with a PCR test for up to 3 months even though they are no longer contagious.)

- **You (the employer) should inform close contacts in the workplace.** A close contact is someone who was within 6 feet of an individual with COVID-19 for at least 15 cumulative minutes over a 24-hour period during the 2 days before the individual with COVID-19 either tested positive or experienced symptoms, whichever came first. Tell close contacts that they may have been exposed to COVID-19 without identifying the person who has COVID. It is important to protect employee confidentiality.

All close contacts should wear a high quality mask for 10 days and get a test on day 5 after exposure, if possible. Additional guidance for close contacts varies depending upon their vaccination status; people who are not up to date on vaccinations should quarantine at home. Detailed isolation and quarantine guidelines can be found [here](#).

- **You should recommend to the employee that they inform their close contacts** outside of the workplace.
- **You should report a positive case(s)** to the Cambridge Public Health Department via its [Business Establishment Case Reporting Form](#). Please note that while CPHD staff review all case reports, you will not be contacted unless staff have follow-up questions.

Please continue to remind your employees of the best ways to slow the spread of COVID-19:

- Get vaccinated and boosted.
- Wear a high-quality mask.
- Get tested if you have symptoms or are exposed to someone with COVID-19.
- Reconsider hosting or attending indoor social gatherings.
- Follow isolation and quarantine guidance.

Questions? Contact the Cambridge Public Health Department at covid19inquiries@challiance.org or call 617-665-3800 and leave a message.