

“Critical Infrastructure Employers Take Note of New CDC Guidance”

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The CDC has issued new guidance for critical infrastructure workers who may have had exposure to a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19. The potential exposure may have come from a household member contracting COVID-19 or coming within 6 feet of an individual who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19. The time frame includes the period of time 48 hours before the individual became symptomatic. Information on identifying critical infrastructure during COVID-19 can be found on the Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency, of US Homeland Security Agency. Critical infrastructure segments include communications, healthcare, first responders, transportation systems, critical manufacturing, defense, food or agriculture, energy, emergency services, government, resources, and others.

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

In order to ensure the continuity of essential functions, the CDC advises that critical infrastructure workers be permitted to work under these circumstances, with certain safety precautions, as long as they are asymptomatic. The recommended safety measures include health screening (temperatures and assessment of symptoms); self-monitoring for 14 days following the potential exposure; use of a mask; social distancing; and regular cleaning and disinfecting of offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment, and other high touch areas.

If the employee becomes sick during day, the employee should be sent home immediately. Surfaces and workspaces should be cleaned and disinfected. The employer should use contact tracing to include co-workers who have had contact with the ill employee when symptomatic and two days prior. Co-workers who were in close contact with the employee (meaning within 6 feet) should be considered exposed and this new guidance applied to these workers as well.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/critical-workers/implementing-safety-practices.html>