

**Covid-19 in the Workplace:
Updated Safety Measures
&
What is to Come**

Quarantine vs. Isolation

Quarantine

- **Applies if an employee is a close contact with a COVID-positive individual (i.e., within 6 feet for cumulative period of 15 minutes in a 24 hour period).**
- If vaccinated and asymptomatic: No quarantine necessary unless individual develops symptoms, but must mask for 14 days in indoor public spaces.
- If unvaccinated, or vaccinated and symptomatic: Normally must quarantine for 10 days, but can return after 7 days *if* the employee produces a negative Covid-19 test result from a sample taken on or after day 5 of the quarantine period.

Isolation

- **Applies if an employee returns a positive COVID-19 test result, or is diagnosed as a suspected case of COVID-19.**
- Same isolation procedures apply regardless of vaccination status.
- Employee can return to work:
 - At least 10 days from the date of onset of symptoms, or if unknown, from the date of the sample that yields positive results; *and*
 - At least twenty-four (24) hours after end of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms.

Isolation period begins according to the guidelines listed above, not at the beginning of the quarantine period.

President Biden's September 9th Executive Orders

Vaccine Mandate for Federal Contractors

- Applies to new contracts, solicitations for new contracts, extensions or renewals of existing contracts, and exercised options on existing contracts for most procurement, services, construction, or real property leases issued after October 15, 2021**.
 - Does not apply to grants or contracts / subcontracts with a value equal or less than the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$250,000), and some other specialized contracts.
- More details will be available when the Federal Acquisition Regulation implementing the rule is published.

Vaccine Mandate for Medicare & Medicaid Recipients

- The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is taking action to require vaccination for workers in most health care settings that receive Medicare or Medicaid reimbursement.
 - Some healthcare employers were already covered by an Emergency Temporary Standard released by OSHA on June 10, 2021 that did not require vaccination.
 - CMS is expected to issue a proposed regulation in October.

New OSHA Rule

- OSHA has been instructed to prepare an Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) requiring all employers with 100+ employees to either:
 - require employees to vaccinate; or
 - require submission of weekly Covid-19 testing results.
- The timeframe for publication of the rule is unknown.

Updated Masking Requirements in the Workplace

Non-Healthcare Employees

- CDC recommends fully vaccinated individuals to wear masks in indoor public spaces in counties that it classifies as substantial or high transmission.
 - Currently, all of PA is classified as high transmission.
 - Masking requirements in most non-healthcare workplaces is up to the discretion of the employer.
- OSHA recommends non-vaccinated employees remain masked in non-healthcare settings in accordance with CDC guidelines.

PA Rules

- The PA Department of Health (DOH) lifted the universal mask mandate on June 28, 2021. Unless there is a specific requirement put forth by employers, masking is no longer formally required in the workplace by DOH.
 - The DOH recommends that workplaces and businesses continue to follow the CDC guidelines on masking for employees and patrons.
- Masking is required in PA schools for all children and employees. This order took effect on 12:01 am on Tuesday, September 7th, 2021.

Healthcare Employees

- Under the COVID-19 ETS OSHA published on June 21, 2021, healthcare employers must provide, and ensure that employees wear facemasks.
 - Employees in healthcare facilities are required to mask at work regardless of vaccination status.
- Healthcare employers are also subject to other workplace mitigation standards.

Questions?