



## What do you do if one or more of your employees has contracted the Coronavirus or might have been exposed to it?

According to the TN Department of Health, if an employee tests positive for COVID-19, your facility does not have to shut down. For management of personnel, this is the CDC's recommendation:

- **Separate sick employees.** Employees who appear to have [symptoms](#) (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath) upon arrival at work or who become sick during the day should immediately be separated from other employees, customers, and visitors and sent home.
  
- **Tell your team about possible exposure.** If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19 infection, employers should inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The fellow employees should then self-monitor for [symptoms](#) (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath). Reference: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>
  
- **Clean, clean, clean.** You should continue to clean and sanitize your facility, especially if one of your employees has a confirmed case of COVID-19. There is no state or federal requirement to have your facility inspected before resuming operations once you have thoroughly cleaned your facility. For cleaning and maintenance, this is the CDC recommendation:
  - Maintain regular housekeeping practices, including routine cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces, equipment, and other elements of the work environment. When choosing cleaning chemicals, employers should consult information on Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved disinfectant labels with claims against emerging viral pathogens. Products with EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens claims are expected to be effective against SARS-CoV-2 based on data for harder to kill viruses. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for use of all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, PPE). Reference: <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>



- **Actively encourage sick employees to stay home.** Employees who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness are recommended to stay home and not come to work until they are free of signs of a fever and any other symptoms of COVID-19 for at least 24 hours.
- **Emphasize hand hygiene.** Instruct employees to clean their hands often with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60%-95% alcohol or wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty.
- **Perform routine environmental cleaning.** Employers should routinely clean all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops and doorknobs.
- **Can employers require employees to undergo medical examinations?** As stated in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, “Pandemic Preparedness in the Workplace and the Americans with Disabilities Act,” employers may not require medical examinations under the ADA unless the medical exam is job-related and consistent with business necessity. Whether a medical exam is job-related and consistent with business necessity depends upon the facts presented (e.g., what are the employee’s symptoms, where has the employee been, etc.) and the latest CDC guidance on coronavirus.
- **Actions employers can take during a pandemic:** In the case of a pandemic, employers have the right to send employees home if they show coronavirus-like symptoms at work. Also, employers may enquire if employees are experiencing coronavirus-like symptoms as long as they are mindful of confidentiality obligations. Finally, if an employee returns from traveling during a pandemic, an employer may ask the employee whether they are returning from a location where that individual may have been exposed to the virus.

### What are the Frequently Cited Standards Related to COVID-19 Inspections?

In conducting COVID-19-related inspections, OSHA has frequently cited employers for violating certain standards. Click the link below to access *Lessons Learned: Frequently Cited Standards Related to COVID-19 Inspections*.

[VIEW OSHA'S CITED STANDARDS LIST](#)



In addition to following the CDC's [interim guidance](#), employers should consider the following best practices to help prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Educate employees on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and the precautions that can be taken to minimize the risk of contracting the virus, without causing panic.
- Appoint a single individual or department as the point of contact within your organization for employee questions about COVID-19.
- Review safety programs and emergency action plans to ensure that they include infectious-disease protocols.
- Implement travel guidelines and procedures for approving travel to and from China.

Employers should closely monitor the [CDC](#) and [WHO](#) websites for the latest and most accurate information on COVID-19.