

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)
UCSF CONTINUE TO WORK - RETURN TO WORK GUIDELINES FOR STAFF ⁽¹⁾
May 6, 2024. Replacing guidance from October 12, 2024

New Update:

As of May 1, at UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland and May 6 at UCSF West Bay campuses, face masks are no longer routinely required across all areas of the University. Face masks are required *only* in areas where direct patient care is delivered during the following time periods:

- During the annual respiratory viral season, from November 1 to April 30 and
- During sustained periods of high community transmission of respiratory viruses, such as COVID-19, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and influenza.

Outside of these periods, wearing face masks is optional in areas where patient care is delivered. UCSF Fresno should follow its local or institutional policies for masking.

Continue to take the [Digital Screener](#) if you have:

- Symptoms
- COVID-19 Exposure
- A COVID-19 Positive Exposure (Reporting Required)

READ the **Automated Clearance Email**

FOLLOW the **Testing and Return to Work Guidance**

Symptom/Exposure Review	Can I Work Today?	Do I Need to Stay at Home? <i>Additional actions</i>	When Can I Return to Work? <i>Complete Symptom Resolution required for staff working on *High Risk Units²</i>
+Symptom/Exposure Review	Can I Work Today?	Do I Need to Stay at Home?	When Can I Return to Work?
<p>1. In the past 10 days, have you had one or more of these symptoms, which is new or not explained by a pre-existing condition?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fever, chills, or shivering/shakes (≥ 37.8°C / 100°F) Cough Sore throat Runny or congested nose (not related to allergies) Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath. Unexplained muscle aches Feeling unusually weak or fatigued Loss of sense of smell or taste Diarrhea (defined as ≥ 3 stools in 24 hrs.) Eye redness +/- discharge ("pink eye," not related to allergies) 	<p>No, stay at home.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with your medical provider as needed or if symptoms worsen. For guidance, see far right column. 	<p>YES, stay at home.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with your medical provider as needed or if symptoms worsen. <u>Please use Digital Screener for guidance</u> 	<p>If you have had COVID symptoms during the previous 10 days, you should perform a COVID test using one of the two options below before entering health care facilities:</p> <p>Home Antigen, 2 - Test Option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First antigen test performed after symptoms have started, and 2nd antigen test at least 48 hours after the 1st antigen test. Can return to work after first negative test with masking indoors if meeting symptom-eligible criteria below. <p>PCR or other nucleic acid amplification test, 1-Test Option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negative test result after symptoms started and before returning on-site if meeting symptom-eligible criteria below. <p>SYMPTOMS ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If COVID-negative, PLEASE CONFIRM YOU MEET ALL THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA BEFORE RETURNING TO WORK: Fever-free for 24 hours without use of a fever-reducing medication. Diarrhea-free for 48 hrs. (when not part of a pre-existing condition) Symptoms have significantly improved, OR I work in a high-risk unit (Mission Bay: C3 ICN, C6BMT, C6 Heme/Onc, Birth Center and Parnassus 11 and 12 Long) and my symptoms ARE GONE. You have communicated with your supervisor about your negative result and meeting criteria above.
	Cont. on pg. 3		

			<p style="text-align: center;">-</p> <p>If COVID-positive: Take the Digital Screener and report that you tested positive for COVID-19. You will receive an automated Clearance Email with Return-to-Work Instructions.</p> <p>If recent COVID infection:</p> <p>If you are having NEW COVID SYMPTOMS within 28 days of a Covid-19 infection, (this includes rebound symptoms after Paxlovid treatment) you should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take the Digital Screener and await a phone call from an RN. • Restart your isolation based on your new symptom onset date (or new positive test date whichever is first). • Isolate at least 5 days from new symptom onset date (or new positive test date whichever is first). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employees eligible for early return to work may complete home antigen testing between day 5-10. Once negative and you meet symptom criteria, you may self-clear back to work on day 6 or later. • If your new symptoms are > 28 days from a previous Covid-19 Infection, take the Digital Screener to report new symptoms and follow automated email guidance provided by the Digital Screener. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Avoid PCR testing until > 90 days from initial Covid Infection. • If you tested COVID POSITIVE AND it has been >28 days since a previous Covid-19 Infection, report your new Positive Result on the Digital Screener for Return-to-Work Clearance/Guidance.
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Symptom/Exposure Review	Can I Work Today?	Do I Need to Stay at Home?	When Can I Return to Work?
<p>2. In the past 10 days, have you had unprotected, prolonged close contact³ (or Aerosol Generating Procedure (AGP) of any duration) with someone with confirmed/diagnosed COVID-19?</p> <p>Unprotected³ includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The exposed Individual not wearing an approved facemask or covering. The exposed Individual wearing a mask but not wearing eye protection, if the person with COVID-19 was not wearing a cloth face covering or facemask. The exposed individual not wearing all recommended PPE while performing aerosol-generating procedure for any time- period of exposure Recommendation – The exposed individual had an on-going exposure, not wearing all recommended PPE while an aerosol-generating procedure was in progress. <p>Prolonged, close contact defined as within 6 feet for 15 mins or longer.</p>	<p>Possibly, if <i>asymptomatic</i> and you complete the UCSF Digital Screener and agree to testing protocol and conditions for continuation/return to work. (See far right column).</p> <p>NO, if symptomatic. Please use Digital Screener for guidance.</p> <p>*If you develop symptoms, immediately cease patient care or other work activities, notify supervisor, go home, retake the Digital Screener</p>	<p>Not usually. Please use Digital Screener for guidance.</p> <p>Stay home if symptomatic.</p> <p>If asymptomatic, see far right column.</p>	<p>CONDITIONS FOR CONTINUING OR RETURNING TO WORK ARE BASED ON COVID-19 EXPOSURE RISK ASSESSMENT. THE DIGITAL SCREENER WILL PROVIDE CONTINUATION AND RETURN TO WORK GUIDANCE.</p> <p>Persons with High Risk COVID - 19 exposure who are asymptomatic may return to work if they have a negative COVID test result prior to entering campus/hospital, and agree to a testing protocol in the Digital Screener for the High-Risk Exposure</p> <p>TESTING PROTOCOL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st test: Negative COVID test is required prior to entering campus/hospital 2nd Test 3 days after if < 10 days since exposure 3rd Test 5 days after if still < 10 days since exposure Symptom monitor for 14 days from initial exposure. <p>MASKING REQUIREMENT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>All persons returning to work must mask in all indoor settings until reaching 10 days since exposure.</u> <p>Acceptable Tests if outside UCSF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home-based Antigen Test (BiNax Now, iHealth, Abbott Now, FlowFlex, QuickView) Reverse-transcriptase PCR (RT-PCR) PCR Nucleic acid amplification (NAAT) excludes Abbott ID Now Transcription-mediated amplification (TMA) Loop-mediated amplification (LAMP) <p>SYMPTOM MONITORING All persons must complete symptom monitoring for 14-days.</p>

Symptom/Exposure Review	Can I Work Today?	Do I Need to Stay at Home?	When Can I Return to Work?
<p>3. Do you live with someone (Household member) who is waiting for COVID test results* due to COVID type symptoms?</p> <p>-</p> <p><i>*If household member has COVID compatible symptoms and does not test for COVID, See the last column for guidance</i></p>	<p>Possibly, if <i>asymptomatic</i> and you complete the UCSF Digital Screener and agree to testing protocol and conditions for continuation/return to work. (See far right column).</p> <p>NO, if symptomatic. Please use Digital Screener for guidance.</p> <p>*If you develop symptoms, immediately cease patient care or other work activities, notify supervisor, go home, retake the Digital Screener</p>	<p>Not usually. Please use Digital Screener for guidance.</p> <p>Stay home if symptomatic.</p> <p>If asymptomatic, see far right column.</p>	<p>If household member's result returns NEGATIVE for COVID-19, you may return to work.</p> <p>If household member's result returns POSITIVE for COVID-19, take the Digital Screener, and report a High-Risk Exposure, or call the Occupational Health Services - Covid Response Team (415.514.7328) for assessment and further instructions.</p> <p>Employees who have a POSITIVE Household Member, and are <i>asymptomatic</i> may return to work if they have a negative COVID test result prior to entering campus/hospital, testing protocol in the Digital Screener for the High-Risk Exposure</p> <p>TESTING PROTOCOL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st test: Negative COVID test is required prior to entering campus/hospital • 2nd Test 3 days after if < 10 days since exposure • 3rd Test 5 days after if still < 10 days since exposure • Symptom monitor for 14 days from initial exposure. <p>If your household member <u>DECLINES TESTING</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue/return to work if asymptomatic. • Employee COVID testing on day 3-and day 5 after initial exposure. • Symptom monitor for 14 days after initial exposure. <p>If your household member <u>HAS A TEST PENDING</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue/return to work if asymptomatic. <p>If the test pending has not resulted within 5 days of symptoms onset, then Employee COVID test after day 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symptom monitor until test results.

Symptom/Exposure Review	Can I Work Today?	Do I Need to Stay at Home?	When Can I Return to Work?
4. Have you been diagnosed with COVID-19 infection in the past 10 days (or 20 days if you have been told by a provider you are immunocompromised)?	NO, YOU MAY NOT WORK UNTIL YOU RECEIVE AN EMAIL CLEARANCE LETTER FROM THE COVID RESPONSE TEAM.	<p>YES, stay at home and inform your manager that you will not be going to work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To report your COVID illness or positive test... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ UCSF Employees: Complete Digital Screener or call Occupational Health Services - Covid Response Team (415.514.7328) to report your COVID-positive illness and receive follow-up instructions. ○ Students call SHCS at 415-476-8736 ○ BCH Oakland Enterprise Health at 510-428-3620 • Self-monitor⁴ • Home Isolation instructions⁵ • Limit travel outside of the home • Consult with your primary care doctor about possible Paxlovid or other COVID treatments. • If you are hospitalized, please have a family member call to report on your behalf. 	<p>COVID RESPONSE TEAM CLEARANCE EMAIL LETTER IS REQUIRED BEFORE RETURNING TO WORK. CLEARANCE EMAIL LETTER TO BE SENT ONCE POSITIVE TEST IS REPORTED AND CONTACT TRACING SURVEY IS COMPLETED VIA THE DIGITAL SCREENER</p> <p>Asymptomatic or Mild-Moderate Illness^{5a} Complete the Digital Screener and follow Clearance Email Guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return to work <i>after 5 days</i> since positive test (if asymptomatic) or since first day of symptoms, if the following criteria are met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Home Based rapid antigen test is negative. ○ At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications (e.g., acetaminophen, ibuprofen, aspirin); AND 48 hours have passed since last episode of diarrhea, AND ○ Symptoms have significantly improved, OR I work in a high-risk unit (Mission Bay: C3 ICN, C6BMT, C6 Heme/Onc, Birth Center and Parnassus 11 and 12 Long) and my symptoms ARE GONE, AND ○ No concurrent immunocompromising conditions (see Page 8) ○ Agree to wear a well-fitted mask through 10 days. • Return to work after 10 days with no testing if other criteria above are met. <p>Severe or Critical Illness^{5b}</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return to work after 20 days since first day of symptoms, if the following criteria are met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications (e.g., acetaminophen, ibuprofen, aspirin); AND 48 hours have passed since last episode of diarrhea, AND ○ Symptoms are improving. <p>Immunocompromising Conditions^{5c}</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Return to work clearance provided after 20 days since symptom onset, or as indicated by your primary health provider and agreed upon by the UCSF Occupational Health Services COVID Response Team. Examples of immunocompromising conditions are listed below^{5c}. ○

⁽¹⁾ Staff includes all employees, faculty, temporary workers, trainees, volunteers, students, and staff who provide services to or work in UCSF patient care or clinical areas.

⁽²⁾ UCSF High Risk Units or Areas

1. **Mission Bay: C3 ICN, C6 BMT, C6 Heme/Onc, and the Birth Center**
2. **Parnassus: Units 11L and 12L**

• During critical staffing periods:

- Employees/providers without symptoms after single/brief high-risk exposures and not immunocompromised may return to work with a COVID test result pending.
- Employees/Providers with On-Going/Prolonged HRE may return to work if asymptomatic with testing protocol (see High Risk Exposure Module in Digital Screener)
- **High Risk Populations:** defined as immunocompromised patients (*Solid organ transplant (SOT), SOT listed, SOT evaluation in process, primary immunodeficiency, and receiving immunosuppressants including chronic high-dose steroids, chemotherapy, biologics*)

⁽³⁾ **UCSF exposure definitions for testing & return to work decisions** [Click here](#) (Also accessible on pg. 8 of this document)

⁽⁴⁾ **Coronavirus Symptom Self-Monitoring:**

- Manual monitoring form can be found [Here](#)

⁽⁵⁾ **Home Isolation Instructions** from CDC found [Here](#)

^(6a) **Mild Illness:** Individuals who have any of the various signs and symptoms of COVID 19 (e.g., fever, cough, sore throat, malaise, headache, muscle pain) without shortness of breath, dyspnea, or abnormal chest imaging. **Moderate:** Individuals who have evidence of lower respiratory disease by clinical assessment or imaging and a saturation of oxygen (SpO₂) ≥94% on room air at sea level.

^(6b) **Severe Illness:** Anyone requiring hospitalization or supplemental O₂. **Critical Illness:** Individuals who have respiratory failure, septic shock, and/or multiple organ dysfunction.

^(6c) **Immunocompromising conditions** may include (adapted from CDC guidance):

1. Receiving current chemotherapy for malignancy
2. Having a hematologic malignancy that may be suppressing the immune system.
3. Untreated HIV infection and CD4 T lymphocyte count < 200
4. Primary severe immunodeficiency disorder
5. Solid organ or hematopoietic stem cell (bone marrow) transplant recipient
6. Receipt of prednisone 20 mg/day or the equivalent for more than 14 days, or treatment with other high-risk immunosuppressive medications
7. The determination of whether persons with these conditions should return to work at 10 vs. 20 days should be made by the person's health care provider.

Commented [NW1]: This link is dated to archived material. considering that the footnote is attached to COVID positive home isolation it may be best to link to SFDPH Guidance on isolation for Healthcare personnel [AFL 21-08 \(ca.gov\)](#) otherwise [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) | CDC](#) offers general information

(3) UCSF EXPOSURE DEFINITIONS FOR TESTING & RETURN TO WORK DECISION

Infectious Period

COVID + Individual	Infectious Period Begins
Asymptomatic	2 days before COVID positive test collection
Symptomatic	2 days before date of symptom onset OR 2 days before COVID positive test collection- whichever came first

Exposure Risk Level	Direct Contact with a COVID + individual during infectious period*	Length of time within 6 feet of COVID + individual	PPE of COVID + individual	PPE of employee
No Exposure	No	0-2 minutes of cumulative** contact at any proximity	Any or none	Any or none
Lower Risk Exposure	Yes	15 or more minutes of cumulative** contact	At least a surgical mask	At least a face covering (Regardless of if eye protection is worn)
Lower Risk Exposure	Yes	15 or more minutes of cumulative** contact	None	Face covering + Eye protection
Higher Risk Exposure	Yes	15 or more minutes of cumulative** contact	At least a surgical mask	None
Higher Risk Exposure: Non-Household Contact	Yes	15 or more minutes of cumulative** contact	None	Not wearing a face covering and/or not wearing eye protection
Higher Risk Exposure: Household Contact	Does not have to be direct contact, but more than 24 hours of time spent in the same household with person with confirmed COVID-19 during infectious period	Length of time is not relevant for household contacts- it is assumed to be ongoing given potential for droplet and surface exposures	Any or none	Any or none
Higher Risk Exposure: Aerosol Generating Procedure	Yes	Any length of time during the AGP or within 1 hour afterwards in non-OR setting at any proximity within the room/general vicinity. Depending on air turnover, OR suites are either 15- or 30-minute conversions- HEIP can provide info to make this determination.	Any or none	Anything less than eye protection + fit-tested N95 or PAPR

***To determine cumulative contact time, this could refer to a single 15-minute exposure to one infected individual or several briefer exposures to one or more infected individuals adding up to at least 15 minutes during a 24-hour period. However, the presence of extenuating factors (e.g., exposure in a confined space, performance of aerosol-generating procedure) could warrant more aggressive actions even if the cumulative duration is less than 15 minutes.*