



CANADIAN
MANUFACTURERS
& EXPORTERS

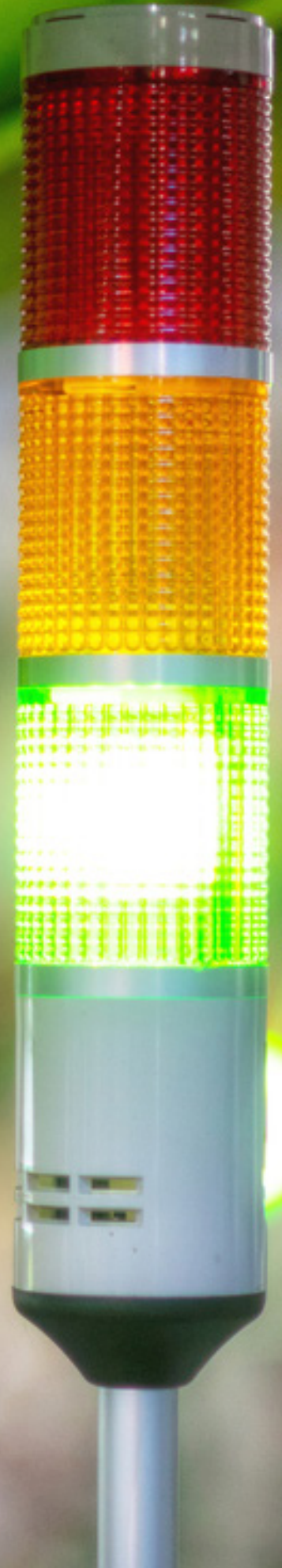


MADE SAFE™

COVID-19: EMPLOYEE POSITIVE TEST RESULTS

PROTOCOLS AND GUIDELINES

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EMPLOYEE COVID-19 POSITIVE TEST RESULT:

PROTOCOLS AND GUIDELINES FOR MANUFACTURING OPERATIONS

The health and safety of employees is paramount during COVID-19. Business continuity remains a critical concern, but employee wellness remains the most important issue facing manufacturers in these challenging times. For leaders, one question looms larger than all others as we prepare to weather the crisis: What do we do when one of our people tests positive?



CME and our health and safety experts at Made Safe have prepared the following recommendations to guide manufacturers through the necessary steps and operational decisions that follow a positive COVID-19 diagnosis. It is important to note that the employee should advise their employer immediately upon first suspicion that they may be infected. This action will minimize the spread and impact at its earliest stage and puts next measures in place from investigation, to benefit plans and payments and more. It is important for manufacturers in every jurisdiction to understand the steps to take in order to get tested.

Manufacturers may choose to take additional precautions to assist their employees in seeing early signs and symptoms (such as temperature monitoring or other daily self-assessments). Many Canadian provinces have introduced online self-assessment tools, including [Manitoba](#), [BC](#) and [Ontario](#). Any indication of infection, as outlined by regional health authorities, should trigger an immediate ban from entering the workplace, followed by the steps below.

HEALTHY & SAFETY GUIDELINES

STEP-BY-STEP PROCEDURES FOLLOWING A COVID-19 DIAGNOSIS

1. EMPLOYEE SELF-QUARANTINE

Health officials will direct any infected employee to stay home for a minimum of 14 days - during which they must self-quarantine. Any person who has been tested for COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) must be in self-isolation while awaiting the test results. Remind any employees who have been tested that they should not be in the workplace.

- Employers should encourage their employees to contact a qualified health care provider, as determined by their local public health authority, to ensure that a 14-day self-quarantine is sufficient, depending on the particular facts and circumstances.
- Employers who are able to offer support to their employee during quarantine should do so, including work from home provisions if this is an option. Employee Assistance Plans and regular touchpoints with the employee's manager, as in any short-term disability claim, can be helpful for the employee's mental health and readiness to return to the workforce. Be mindful that not all employees will have a support system in place. Some provinces have also introduced services to match community volunteers with impacted citizens who may need additional supports should they be unable to leave their homes for basic tasks such as grocery shopping. [Manitoba's Help Next Door](#) is one such app.
- The Government of Canada has rolled the previous CERB program into the regular EI program with benefits for those impacted by COVID-19 shutdowns, those filling a caregiver role or those who have become ill with COVID-19 or another illness that a medical provider has determined makes the worker more susceptible for COVID-19.

Last updated on November 17, 2020.

IMPORTANT NOTE: This information is intended as best practice guidance, not as medical or legal advice. Information about the Coronavirus changes rapidly. Always refer to a public health authority for medical advice, and consult legal counsel regarding legislative concerns.

2. RESPECT CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality matters. Ensure that your infected employee understands that they will not be identified by name to their co-workers as having contracted the virus, in compliance with the various pieces of legislation that covers personal health privacy information across Canada.

- While you are required to take steps to investigate who else your infected employee may have come in contact with, keep in mind that this is a medical diagnosis and should be treated as confidential medical information. Legislation allows for fines as a result of releasing confidential medical information, but the financial impact is secondary to creating a climate of candour and trust. If your employee's diagnosis is released to their co-workers, it is unlikely that other infected employees will be willing to disclose their positive test results to the company, resulting in greater risk to workers and the company itself.

3. INVESTIGATION

Work with the affected employee on contact tracing. Begin with the date on which the employee experienced symptoms, regardless of the positive test positive date.. That date will determine - at a minimum - the window of time for you to be concerned with:

- Persons infected with COVID-19 may be contagious for up to three days prior to experiencing their first symptoms, and in fact, may be most contagious in the 48 hours after symptoms appear. Any person who had a total of 15 minutes of cumulative close contact in any 24 hour period over the three days prior to the onset of symptoms, whether they wore a mask or not, should be instructed to self isolate and contact the local public health authorities for more information. **This underscores why physical distancing is critical in your facility. Appropriate physical distancing measures might mean the difference between five workers sent home and 15. Statistics suggest the average infected person will transmit the virus to two others, allowing for an exponential increase. Physical distancing limits the spread and may be the difference between a limited or full shutdown, which will certainly impact the operation short term and potentially long term as well.**
- Any employee sent home to self isolate will need to contact regional public health authorities for more direction. The baseline guidance is that persons self-isolating will need to do so for 14 days or until they have been symptom free for 24 hours, whichever is longer. The length of this leave will depend on current recommendations from Health Canada and or a medical professional: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/symptoms.html>

4. DISINFECTION

Work with the affected employee to make a list of all areas they have physically been over the three days prior to the onset of symptoms.

- Close these areas off using plastic sheeting, if feasible, and ventilate the area to the outside. Operate as if there was a hazardous chemical spill that you are trying to contain in this area and exhaust out of your facility. Quarantining the area is important prior to beginning your cleaning operation.
- If closing off the exposed areas is not possible, the facility should close until the areas in which the infected worker was present are disinfected. Follow these guidelines when disinfecting hard surfaces in your facility: <https://cme-mec.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/CME-Made-Safe-COVID-19-H-S-Safety-Tips-Disinfection-High-Touch-Areas-FINAL-WEB.pdf>
- If possible, contact a professional cleaning service to disinfect the impacted areas. Identifying and vetting a cleaning company prior to needing services will make scheduling and executing the process faster.
- Ensure that the products your cleaning service intend to use are effective on the coronavirus family of viruses. Misinformation abounds. For clarity, follow the [list of disinfectant proven against the COVID-19 virus](#) (SARS-CoV-2) from Health Canada.

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5. CONTACT TRACING

Once an employee receives a positive COVID-19 test result, public health authorities will work diligently to trace their movements. They will identify anyone with whom the infected individual may have come into close contact with and will notify those individuals directly. Manufacturers should support and comply with any requests of the public health official(s), and conduct a complementary investigation of their own. Work with your employee to make a list of each person with whom they have been within six feet of in the workplace at any point during three days prior to the onset of symptoms. This may include others outside of your organization, including suppliers and vendors if you have not yet restricted visitor access.

- You will need to contact each of these individuals to let them know that they have been in contact with a person who is infected with COVID-19 and that they should consult with their physician or public health authority, the latter of whom will reach out to them directly.
- Each person must also be advised to stay away from the workplace for the next 14 days. Assistance with filing for immediate EI coverage can be found here <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/notices/coronavirus.html>
- Each person should also be advised to self-isolate. If the company has the ability and a program in place to assist the person with getting the essential supplies necessary offer that assistance. For information on how to properly self-isolate at home, follow this link: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/coronavirus-disease-covid-19-how-to-self-isolate-home-exposed-no-symptoms.html>
- Be aware that you may have employees who become uncomfortable working in an area, office or facility where someone who tested positively for the virus worked, out of fear of also contracting the virus. When an employee refuses to work in these areas, they are exercising their right to refuse dangerous work (in good faith). While the right to refuse work is generally under provincial legislation, most jurisdictions follow similar guidelines. Manitoba's guidance on how to respond can be found here: https://www.gov.mb.ca/asset_library/en/coronavirus/workplaces-right-to-refuse-dangerous-work.pdf

6. COMMUNICATION

Communicating with your team throughout this process will be key, long before you begin operations again.

- As a matter of best practice, ensure that you are communicating openly and transparently throughout the process while still respecting medical confidentiality. This includes not only individual communication with affected employees, but proactive, all-employee communications outlining your business continuity plan for next steps following a positive diagnosis, the steps the organization has taken towards disinfecting impacted units, any additional health and safety measures to be implemented and even links to supports, including counselling resources or an employee assistant program (EAP). Communicate with empathy and authority. Be mindful that misinformation abounds and direct employees to sources like Health Canada and the provincial health authority for news and information.
- As you prepare to ramp back up again, it will be important to let your people know that they will be expected to come back to work with advance notice so that they can make the necessary arrangements in their personal lives.
- Inform your suppliers that your order levels will be returning to pre-positive test levels, so they can prepare to provide materials and services at the necessary levels.
- Communicate what steps were taken to disinfect the facility to your team, along with what to do if they have concerns. Ensuring that they are aware of what's been done to protect them will help manage their concerns.
- Be prepared to provide support through your Employee Assistance Program.

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REDUCE THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 BEST PRACTICES

To help reduce the spread of communicable diseases and viruses, including COVID-19, prevention is the best medicine. Post these guidelines and encourage workers to follow them. Create a culture and business processes that support compliance:

- Encourage employees to NOT come to work if they are feeling unwell (e.g., coughing, sneezing, fever or runny nose).
- Review sick-leave policies and encourage employees to stay home when ill. This will help reduce transmission to other coworkers and clients.
- Review requirements for medical (sick) notes to reduce the burden on the health care system and additional exposure to ill individuals.
- Provide clean handwashing facilities and alcohol-based hand cleansers in multiple locations throughout the building (e.g., entrances, boardrooms and break rooms).
- Post signage in the workplace in multiple languages, encouraging proper cough etiquette and hand hygiene. Shared Health MB has [cough etiquette signage](#) available for download in 32 languages.
- Regularly clean shared surfaces and high touch areas with disinfectants.
- When physical distancing is not possible, masks must be worn; However, a mask should not be considered as effective as physical distancing.
- Provide boxes of tissues and encourage their use.
- Remind staff to avoid sharing cups, glasses, dishes or cutlery. Ensure cups, glasses, dishes, and cutlery are thoroughly cleaned using soap and warm water after each use, or placed in the dishwasher for cleaning.
- Remove magazines, papers and other objects that cannot be cleaned from common rooms, such as cafeterias, kitchens, break rooms and waiting areas; and
- Ensure ventilation systems are working properly, in accordance with ASHRAE standard 62.2. Key points to consider are:
 - Six air changeovers per hour;
 - The volume of clean, fresh air that can be provided should be set to maximum;
 - Eliminating stagnant air zones in all occupied spaces should be a focus;
 - Relative humidity indoors of 40%-60% may make the virus unstable and prevent transmission;
 - RH of 20% may result in the virus being stable and remain in the air longer, and result in more infections.This humidity level must be avoided.



ACCESS TO EXPERTS

CME AND MADE SAFE ARE HERE TO HELP

Our team is dedicated to helping manufacturers through the COVID-19 pandemic, with resources that run the gamut from national advocacy to local shop floor solutions. Contact our team of health and safety experts for manufacturing-specific insights and supports:

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