

# CDC Updates Recommendations for When COVID-19-Positive Employees May Return to Work

The CDC has revised its recommendations regarding when an employee with a confirmed case of COVID-19 can end isolation and return to work. The change comes as accumulating evidence supports ending isolation using a symptom-based, rather than test-based, strategy. This change will limit unnecessary prolonged isolation and also reduce unnecessary testing related to the CDC's previous recommendations, which permitted individuals to end isolation after two negative COVID-19 tests 24 hours apart.

Under the CDC's new recommendations, employees diagnosed with COVID-19 and showing symptoms can return to work after:

- at least 10 days since symptoms first appeared;
- at least 24 fever-free hours without the use of fever-reducing medication; and
- symptoms have improved.

Employees diagnosed with COVID-19 but not showing symptoms can return to work after 10 days have passed since the date of their positive COVID-19 test.

These recommendations are for individuals with mild to moderate cases of COVID-19. Severe cases may warrant extending the duration of isolation up to 20 days after symptom onset. Health care providers also may provide different recommendations for persons with a weakened immune system and employees should follow that guidance.

The CDC's updates do not change the recommendation that employees self-quarantine for 14 days after exposure to COVID-19.

Employers should stay apprised of changes as the pandemic continues and incorporate these revised recommendations into their infectious disease response plans, including this recent change that affects when employees can return to work.

If you have questions about the CDC's new recommendations, or other COVID-19 issues affecting your workplace, contact Brittany Lopez Naleid, [Shannon \(Toole\) West](#) or your Reinhart attorney.

Please visit Reinhart's [Coronavirus Resource Center](#) for up-to-date information.

## POSTED:

Jul 30, 2020

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