



Return to Work Guidelines Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

Revised 17 April 2020 (*changes in red are updated guidance*)

To help prevent the spread of 2019 coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in the community, Department of Defense (DoD) Commanders in coordination with medical experts have instituted transmission-based precautions. Transmission-based precautions include stay home from work policy, restriction of movement (ROM), quarantine, and isolation. Personnel who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness should notify their supervisor and avoid going to work. Personnel who have a high risk exposure to COVID-19 or who have traveled **internationally or to U.S. states with CDC's domestic travel advisory** should be placed under quarantine/restriction of movement (ROM). Personnel who are found to be infected with COVID-19 should be placed under isolation at a healthcare facility, home, or another designated isolation facility.

The decision to discontinue transmission-based precautions and allow personnel to return to work (RTW) is based on balancing the potential benefits of decreasing transmission with minimizing social disruption. This guidance will be updated as more information becomes available.

Quarantine / ROM

- After **travel to a high risk location** (per local policy¹) or **close contact² with COVID-19** positive case (or suspected case when operationally feasible), individuals should be placed on ROM / quarantine for **14 days**.
- Personnel may RTW if no symptoms develop after **14 days** since the date of departure from high risk location or the last date of contact with the individual with COVID-19, if they remain free of symptoms. One **cannot test-out** of ROM and you must complete the full 14-day period.
- Individuals with **close contact with a patient under investigation (PUI)** for COVID-19 do not need to be placed on 14-day ROM unless result of PUI's lab test is confirmed to be positive. While awaiting results, commanders may temporarily restrict close contacts of PUIs from work. Commanders should consult with medical staff and balance the likelihood of a PUI becoming a positive case versus mission requirement when making their decision.
- **Some personnel who are considered mission critical may complete modified quarantine/ROM requirements. Commanders should conduct a risk assessment in consultation with medical staff and decide if certain critical personnel can RTW with strict active or self-monitoring that includes: pre-screening, daily monitoring, wearing a cloth face cover, social distancing and frequent cleaning/disinfecting of work spaces.**

¹ Personnel living within high risk locations per CDC THIN are not subject to domestic ROM policy and should follow local guidance on ROM.

² Close contact is defined as a) being within 6 feet of a COVID-19 case for a prolonged period (>10 minutes); close contact can occur while caring for, living with, or visiting a COVID-19 case; or, b) having direct contact with infectious secretions (e.g., being coughed on).

Patient Under Investigation (PUI)

A PUI is defined as a symptomatic individual with either a pending COVID-19 test OR for whom a test would have been ordered/conducted had one been available. Personnel identified as a PUI are undergoing a medical evaluation and **may not RTW** until cleared by their medical provider. The medical provider will make a determination whether the PUI is: a confirmed COVID-19 case based on testing, or a **probable case based on clinical presentation**, or considered to have another acute respiratory illness.

COVID-19 Case (**Confirmed** or **Probable** COVID-19 Case)

After being diagnosed as having COVID-19 (**confirmed or probable**) by a clinician, personnel may RTW using one of the following clearance criteria:

1. **Non-testing method (preferred method):**
 - At least **72 hours** have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement of **other symptoms of illness** (e.g., cough, shortness of breath, **loss of smell, headache, etc.**); **and**
 - At least **14 days** have passed since symptoms first appeared.
2. Using a FDA Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) approved test:
 - Resolution of fever, without use of fever-reducing medication (e.g. acetaminophen, etc.); **and**
 - Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); **and**
 - Negative results from at least two consecutive nasopharyngeal swab specimens collected ≥ 24 hours apart (total of two negative specimens)

Other Acute Respiratory Illness (i.e. flu and influenza like illnesses):

Stay Home from Work

Personnel who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness are recommended to stay home and not report to work until **7 days** has passed since symptoms first appeared **and 72 hours** has pass since the following are met, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines:

- Resolution of fever (subjective or measured) or fever symptoms (shivering, chills, body aches, etc.)
- Improvement of other illness symptoms (sore throat, persistent cough, sinus congestion, fatigue, etc.)



Return to Work (RTW) Flowchart Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

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