



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS**  
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**TO:** All staff

**FROM:** Jamison Roberts, Emergency Operations Center Manager

**DATE:** Sept. 17, 2020

**SUBJECT: COVID-19 Return-to-Work Criteria and Guidance**

The purpose of this communication is to share updated guidance, approved by the Washington Department of Health (DOH), for employees returning to work after being screened out of the office for COVID-19 related symptoms or for testing positive.

**Return to Work Criteria**

When you're screened out due to COVID-19 related reasons, the secondary screening nurses will discuss your specific situation and determine your ability to return to work.

If you are screened out of work due to symptoms of COVID-19 or being exposed to someone confirmed with COVID-19, your return to work will be provided as follows:

- **COVID-19 positive or experiencing symptoms:** An employee may return to work after being out of work for symptoms related to COVID-19 or testing positive for COVID-19 when:
  - At least 14 days have passed since the symptoms first appeared

**AND**

  - They no longer have a fever of 100.4 or above for at least 72-hours (without the use of fever reducing medication) and other symptoms have improved.

**OR**

  - They have a confirmed NEGATIVE test for COVID-19 and they self-quarantine for 72 hours after they are symptom-free without the assistance of medication.

***Exception:** Employees returning after a severe case of COVID-19, or employees who are severely immunocompromised and returning after a confirmed case of COVID-19, may need to isolate for more than 20 days after symptom onset, as recommended by a healthcare provider or infection control expert. Refer to the CDC's return to work [guidelines](#), adopted by DOH, for more information.*

- **Close contact exposures:** An employee may return to work after being out of work for

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exposure to someone symptomatic or positive for COVID-19 when the employee is at or beyond the 14-day quarantine period and has remained symptom-free.

### **Updated Resources**

We are continuing to manage our response to COVID-19 and as a result, we are reviewing and improving processes as needed. Accordingly, we have updated our guidance for employees ([Return to Work - Employee Guidance](#)), as well as the supervisor guidance ([Return to Work - Supervisor Guidance](#)).

If you have any questions regarding your leave, please work with your supervisor and local HR office.