

Fall 2022 to Winter 2023 COVID-19 Guidance for Employers*

Employers play an important role in preventing the spread of COVID-19. To keep employees, clients and customers safe, and your business open, put policies in place that encourage COVID-19 prevention measures, and make sure employees are aware of them.



Vaccination

COVID-19 vaccination is the best way to protect employees from COVID-19. It reduces the risk of infection, severe illness, hospitalization and death. Encourage employees to be up to date with their COVID-19 vaccines (including getting a new COVID-19 booster shot):

- Share accurate information about COVID-19 vaccines. Visit nyc.gov/covidvaccine and cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html.
- Build COVID-19 vaccine messaging into regular communications with employees.
 - With their permission, share employee photos or stories of them getting vaccinated.
 - Set aside time at team meetings to talk about vaccination and answer questions.
- Make sure employees know about available paid leave to get themselves and their children vaccinated.
 - Employers must provide employees with up to four hours of paid leave time (for each dose, including boosters) to get vaccinated.
 - Employers must allow employees to use accrued sick leave to recover from vaccination side effects.
 - For more information, visit ny.gov/COVIDpaysickleave.
- Partner with a pharmacy or hire a vendor to offer vaccination on-site or nearby. Consider offering both the new COVID-19

booster and flu shot – it is safe to get them at the same time.

- Direct employees to a nearby vaccination site. To find a vaccination site near you, visit nyc.gov/vaccinefinder or call 877-VAX-4NYC (877-829-4692).
- Partner with your employer health plan to create incentives for employees to get vaccinated, or offer incentives yourself (such as extra hours of vacation time).
- Require employees to be up to date with their COVID-19 vaccines as a condition of employment.



Staying Home When Sick

Encouraging employees to stay home when sick is critical to preventing the spread of COVID-19 (and other illnesses, such as the flu) at work and elsewhere:

- Follow New York State (NYS) Paid Sick Leave law requirements.
 - Paid sick leave is available to employees who have COVID-19 or to care for a dependent child with COVID-19 so they or their child can isolate. Paid sick leave requirements vary depending on the size of your business and other factors. For more information, visit paidfamilyleave.ny.gov/covid-19-paid-leave-guidance-employers.
- Make sure employees who have COVID-19 are excluded from work.

*This guidance is not intended for health care and certain group residential settings, which may have different COVID-19 prevention requirements.

- NYS follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) isolation guidance, which instructs people who have COVID-19 to isolate for at least five days and to continue to wear a mask for at least 10 days. For more information, visit coronavirus.health.ny.gov/isolation and cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/isolation.html.
- Have sick leave policies in place that enable employees to stay home when sick or to care for sick family members (in addition to NYS Paid Sick Leave law requirements).
- Allow employees who are recovering from COVID-19 or another illness but are well enough to work, or who must stay home to care for a sick family member, to work from home.
- Have flexible documentation requirements, such as allowing employees to provide a photo of at-home test results.
- Make sure employees know about these policies and how to claim benefits.



Masking

Face masks are a simple way to prevent the spread of COVID-19, the flu and other respiratory illnesses. Masks protect both the wearer and the people around them. Encourage employees to wear a mask:

- Post signs reminding employees, clients, customers and visitors to wear masks. For signs and materials, visit nyc.gov/health and search for **COVID-19: Posters and Flyers**.
- Require employees who are leaving isolation or were recently exposed to COVID-19 to follow CDC and NYS masking guidance:
 - People returning to work after isolating due to COVID-19 should wear a mask through Day 10 after their symptoms began or positive test date (if they had no symptoms).
 - People who were exposed to someone with COVID-19 should wear a mask for 10 days following their most recent exposure.

- Require people to wear masks when around others or in certain settings (such as in-person meetings and on elevators).
- Provide employees with high-quality masks, such as N95, KN95 or KF94 masks, and offer masks to visitors.



Testing

Regular COVID-19 testing, especially when sick or recently exposed, reduces the risk of spreading the virus in the workplace. It can also allow someone who has symptoms caused by another illness to return to work sooner. Encourage employees to get tested for COVID-19:

- Offer on-site testing, or provide employees with at-home test kits.
- Direct employees to local testing sites by calling 212-COVID19 (212-268-4319), texting “COVID TEST” to 855-48 or visiting nyc.gov/covidtest.
- Share the latest testing guidance at nyc.gov/health/testingtips, which includes guidance about at-home tests and when repeat testing is needed.