

# Guidance for Daily COVID-19 Symptom Screening of Staff and Guests

The Washington State Department of Health recommends employers use this guidance to screen staff and guests (but not customers in retail) at the start of each shift or visit to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

## What is symptom screening?

Symptom screening is a way employers can lower the chance of COVID-19 transmission in the workplace. Screening will not identify people not showing symptoms yet, or who may be infected but show no symptoms. [Infection prevention in the workplace](#) is important to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

## Who should be screened?

Screen staff and guests who enter the workplace. This does not include customers who are in a public-facing area (for example, customers at a restaurant or supermarket).

## When should a business screen staff and guests?

Screen staff and guests at the start of every shift or visit.

## How should a business set up symptom screening?

- If you plan in-person health checks, do them safely and respectfully. Employers may use social distancing, barriers or walls, or personal protective equipment (PPE) to protect the screener. Using PPE alone is not as good as using social distancing, and users need to be trained to use it. It can also be hard to find and should ideally be reserved for medical professionals.
- Give screening information in languages that staff understand.
- Do health checks in a way that helps keep people from crowding, such as offering more than one screening entrance into the building.
- To prevent stigma and discrimination, make staff health screenings as private as you can. Do not judge staff based on race or country of origin.
- Keep medical status and history safe from others. Follow guidance from the [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#) for safekeeping of medical records from health checks.
- Keep a record of daily symptom screening results for each employee for at least 28 days.
- An example of an online screening tool is available here: <https://www.cdc.gov/screening/index.html>

## How to screen for COVID-19

Ask these questions.

1. Do you have any of these [symptoms](#) that are not caused by another condition?
  - Fever or chills
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Fatigue
  - Muscle or body aches
  - Headache
  - Recent loss of taste or smell
  - Sore throat
  - Congestion
  - Nausea or vomiting
  - Diarrhea
2. Within the past 14 days, have you had contact with anyone that you know had COVID-19 or COVID-like symptoms? Contact is being 6 feet (2 meters) or closer for more than 15 minutes with a person, or having direct contact with fluids from a person with COVID-19 (for example, being coughed or sneezed on).
3. Have you had a positive COVID-19 test for active virus in the past 10 days?
4. Within the past 14 days, has a public health or medical professional told you to self-monitor, self-isolate, or self-quarantine because of concerns about COVID-19 infection?

**See next page for flow chart for responding if staff or visitors answer yes to any of these questions.**

# What should a business do if staff or visitors answers “yes” to these questions?

Do you have any of these symptoms that are not caused by another condition?

Within the past 14 days, have you had contact with anyone that you know had COVID-19 or COVID-19-like symptoms?

Have you had a positive COVID-19 test for active virus in the past 10 days?

Within the past 14 days, has a public health or medical professional told you to self-monitor, self-isolate, or self-quarantine because of concerns about COVID-19 infection?

**IF YES:**

- **Don't let staff or visitors enter the workplace.**
- **Immediately separate them from other people and arrange a ride home or to a medical facility, if needed.**

- Instruct staff to call their healthcare provider for further instructions, including about COVID-19 testing.\*
- Offer this guidance document: [What to do if you have COVID-19 symptoms but have not been around anyone diagnosed with COVID-19](#)

- Recommend that staff get tested for COVID-19, but no sooner than 48 hours after exposure.
- Quarantine at home or other site until 14 days after last exposure\*\*.
- Offer this guidance document: [What to do if you were potentially exposed to someone with COVID-19](#)

- Instruct staff to isolate at home or other site.
- Offer this guidance document: [What to do if you have confirmed or suspected COVID-19](#)

- Instruct staff to follow the advice provided by the public health or medical professional.

\*If employee or visitor does not have a healthcare provider: there is free or low-cost testing at many locations to anyone, no matter their immigration status. You can use the [WA State COVID-19 Help Hotline](#) to talk to someone.

\*\*Employees working in [essential businesses](#) may return to work provided they do not have symptoms and the workplace received permission from the local health department. Contact your local health department for more information.

## More COVID-19 Information and Resources

Stay up-to-date on [COVID-19 in Washington](#), [Governor Inslee's proclamations](#), [symptoms](#), [how it spreads](#), and [how and when people should get tested](#). Visit [Frequently Asked Questions](#) for more information.

A person's race/ethnicity or nationality does not, itself, put them at greater risk of COVID-19. However, data are revealing that [communities of color are impacted greater by COVID-19](#). This is due to the effects of structural racism that leaves some groups with less chance to protect themselves and their communities. Stigma will not help to fight the illness. Share only facts with others to keep rumors and myths from spreading.

- [WA State Department of Health 2019 Novel Coronavirus Outbreak \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [WA State Coronavirus Response \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [CDC Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Stigma Reduction Resources](#)

**Have more questions about COVID-19?** Call our hotline: **1-800-525-0127**, Monday – Friday, 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., Weekends: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. For interpretative services, **press #** when they answer and **say your language**. For questions about your own health, COVID-19 testing, or testing results, please contact a health care provider.