

Updated Recommendations for Healthcare Workers and First Responders with Potential Exposure to COVID-19

(Updated 3/6/20)

Community transmission of COVID-19 has been confirmed in multiple areas of the United States, including Maricopa County, Arizona. This development means previously recommended actions, such as quarantining all potentially exposed healthcare personnel, are impractical for healthcare facilities.

In the setting of community transmission, all healthcare personnel and first responders are at some risk for exposure to COVID-19, whether in the workplace or in the community. Devoting resources to contact tracing and retrospective risk assessment diverts resources from patient care and other important infection prevention and control activities.

Due to community transmission in Maricopa County, Arizona, recommendations for potentially exposed healthcare personnel have changed.

Healthcare facilities should shift their emphasis to more routine practices:

1. Ask healthcare personnel to report known COVID-19 exposures to the appropriate healthcare facility personnel (Occupational Health or Infection Control).
2. Develop a system to regularly monitor all healthcare personnel for **fever and any respiratory symptoms**. (For example, healthcare personnel could be expected to monitor their temperature and any symptoms twice a day or before working a shift.)
3. Reinforce that healthcare personnel **should not report to work when ill**.

If healthcare personnel have a known exposure to COVID-19, healthcare facilities should:

1. Allow asymptomatic healthcare personnel to continue to work after consultation with their occupational health program.
2. If the healthcare facility has a sufficient supply, healthcare personnel with a known exposure could be asked to wear a facemask while at work for the 14 days after the exposure.

If healthcare personnel develop any symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (fever or respiratory symptoms), they must:

1. **Cease** patient care activities.
2. **Put on a facemask** immediately (if not already wearing).
3. **Notify** their supervisor or occupational health services prior to leaving work.