



THE STEPPING STONES GROUP

Transforming Lives Together



COVID-19 FAQs

Updated August 2021



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDC 24/7: Saving Lives. Protecting People™

EMPLOYEE-RELATED QUESTIONS:	Linked Resources:
<p>1. WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19?</p> <p>People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Please click on the link to the right for more information.</p> <p><i>Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus.</i></p>	<p>CDC Guidance: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html</p>
<p>2. I HAD CLOSE CONTACT WITH SOMEONE WITH COVID-19, WHAT SHOULD I DO?</p> <p>It is important to remember that *anyone who has had close contact (defined as within 6ft for at least 15 minutes) with someone infected with COVID-19 should stay home and quarantine after that exposure.</p> <p>(*If someone has had COVID-19 or has been fully vaccinated, please see Questions #15 and #16)</p> <p>Per the CDC, the optimal quarantine period after a confirmed exposure continues to be 14 days based on the time it may take for symptoms of illness to first appear. Effective December 4, 2020, new options to reduce the burden of a</p>	<p>CDC Guidance: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html</p> <p>Employee Fitness for Service Attestation for STAR of CA & NEABA: https://starofca.formstack.com/forms/covid19_fitness_f_or_service_attestation_employee</p>



lengthy quarantine period against allowing a slight (1-5%) increased risk of spreading the virus were provided.

Reduced quarantine period options require that the individual is symptom-free, and includes:

- #1 - Stopping the quarantine period after day 10 without testing (~1% increased risk)
- #2 - Stopping the quarantine period after day 7 and upon receiving a negative test result. *The test must occur on day 5 from date of exposure or later to avoid testing too soon (~5% increased risk).
- Anyone who chooses a reduced quarantine period option should continue to monitor for symptoms until 14 days after exposure.
- If you develop symptoms, immediately self-isolate and contact your local public health authority or healthcare provider.

After an exposure, you will need to update your **Fitness for Service Attestation and notify your Clinical Manager**. Being exposed to someone with COVID-19 does not involve an employee's health information, and therefore, consent is not required to share this info with clients and other employees.

Employees may choose to quarantine for the full 14 days, or follow one of the reduced options described above if symptom-free.

**If a service provider or client opts to use a reduced quarantine period, all parties involved in service delivery should be notified and informed of the slight increased risks, and all must confirm



<p>they are comfortable with the reduced quarantine before resuming in-person services.</p>	
<p>3. I HAD CLOSE CONTACT WITH SOMEONE WHO WAS IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH ANOTHER PERSON WITH COVID-19. DO I NEED TO QUARANTINE?</p> <p>Our employees and clients are still fit for service as long as they did not come into close contact with someone with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 in the past 2 weeks. If you can still answer “NO” to the fitness for service questions about having active symptoms of illness and coming into close contact with someone with COVID-19, you are still ok to deliver in-person services.</p>	<p>You can reference the Employee Fitness for Service Attestation questions here:</p> <p>https://starofca.formstack.com/forms/covid19_fitness_f_or_service_attestation_employee</p>
<p>4. DO I NEED TO WEAR A FACE MASK?</p> <p>Face masks will help protect you and your client. We will provide face masks if you need them, please follow your local office protocol for obtaining supplies such as face masks, sanitizing wipes, etc.</p> <p>All employees are required to wear face masks when delivering in-person services regardless of vaccination status.</p> <p>If you have concerns with wearing a face mask, employees can speak with their Clinical Manager, or consult with Risk Management by emailing riskmanagement@starofca.com.</p>	<p>CDC Guidance:</p> <p>https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html</p>



<p>5. WHAT DO I NEED TO DO IF I PLAN TO TRAVEL?</p> <p>Be aware that travel increases your chances of getting and spreading COVID-19. Please check your state or local guidance prior to traveling for updated information on risks, restrictions, or requirements. If you are aware of any travel requirements that will impact your fitness for service or ability to return to work (e.g. the need to quarantine upon return from a certain location), please notify your Clinical Manager. If local/state guidance defers to CDC guidance on travel requirements, then please follow CDC guidance.</p>	<p>CDC Guidance: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-during-covid19.html</p> <p>CA.GOV Guidance: https://covid19.ca.gov/search/?q=travel</p> <p>MASS.GOV Guidance: https://search.mass.gov/?q=travel</p> <p>TEXAS.GOV Guidance: https://www.texas.gov/covid19/</p>
<p>6. WHEN DO I SELF-QUARANTINE vs SELF-ISOLATE?</p> <p>According to the CDC:</p> <p>Quarantine is used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others. You would be expected to quarantine when exposed to someone who is positive for COVID-19.</p> <p>Isolation is used to separate people infected with the virus (those who are <i>sick</i> with COVID-19 and those with no symptoms) from people who are not infected.</p>	<p>CDC Guidance: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine-isolation.html</p>
<p>7. I NOTICED THAT RECOMMENDED QUARANTINE PERIODS ARE DIFFERENT. HOW DO I KNOW HOW LONG I NEED TO QUARANTINE FOR?</p> <p>The difference is based on whether someone was just exposed to someone with COVID-19, versus someone who is actually ill or tested positive with COVID-19.</p>	<p>CDC Guidance: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html</p>



Confirmed Exposure:

For optimal safety, it is recommended that individuals who have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 quarantine for 14 days because that's how long it could take for symptoms to first appear. Effective December 4, 2020, options to reduce the quarantine period after a confirmed exposure are now available (see question #2 or CDC guidance).

Reduced quarantine period options require that the individual is symptom-free, and includes:

- #1 - Stopping the quarantine period after day 10 without testing (~1% increased risk)
- #2 - Stopping the quarantine period after day 7 and upon receiving a negative test result. *The test must occur on day 5 from date of exposure or later to avoid testing too soon (~5% increased risk).
- Anyone who chooses a reduced quarantine period option should continue to monitor for symptoms until 14 days after exposure.
- If you develop symptoms, immediately self-isolate and contact your local public health authority or healthcare provider.

Tested Positive or Has Symptoms:

Per the CDC, individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19, or have symptoms that indicate they might have COVID-19, should quarantine for 10 days and wait until the following criteria have been met before they are fit for service again:

- The individual is fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
- Other COVID-19 symptoms have improved (for example, cough, shortness of breath).



8. WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I AM SICK WITH SYMPTOMS CONSISTENT WITH COVID-19?

If you have a fever, cough or other symptoms related to COVID-19, **you are not considered fit for service and should update your fitness for service attestation.**

You must meet all of the following criteria before being considered fit for service again:

- 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared **and**
- You are fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
- Symptoms have improved (for example, cough, shortness of breath)

*Employees who are experiencing COVID-19 related symptoms may voluntarily seek COVID-19 testing. If testing comes back negative and the employee’s symptoms have improved, then the employee is eligible to return to work and this situation would be treated similar to a common cold/flu.

CDC Guidance:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>

CDC Guidance:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

Employee Fitness for Service Attestation:

https://starofca.formstack.com/forms/covid19_fitness_f_or_service_attestation_employee

9. WHAT IF I GET SICK AND TEST POSITIVE FOR COVID 19?

You would need to quarantine, and per the CDC, should isolate for 10 days. You must meet all the following criteria before being considered fit for service again:

CDC Guidance:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/index.html>



- 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared **and**
- You are fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
- Other COVID-19 symptoms have improved (for example, cough, shortness of breath)

Follow Up Procedures for Risk Mitigation:

Upon getting sick, **you would need to update your fitness for service attestation and pause on delivering in-person services. Once you are aware that you have tested positive, please also complete the COVID Notification survey link to inform Human Resources (HR). This will also cue HR to provide an employee who tests positive with 5 additional paid sick days. Employees do not need to use their existing sick time prior to accessing these 5 additional sick days.**

In order to mitigate spread, exposed employees and clients should immediately be notified that they have or may have come into contact with someone with COVID-19 (without naming the person). Out of an abundance of caution, we would need to pause in-person services with exposed clients, and instruct exposed employees to quarantine per one of the quarantine options described in question #2.

The Clinical Manager will mitigate communications with clients, while Human Resources will notify other exposed employees to advise of the need to pause services and/or quarantine for the specified days.

Employee Fitness for Service Attestation:

https://starofca.formstack.com/forms/covid19_fitness_f_or_service_attestation_employee

COVID Notification Link for STAR of CA & NEABA:

https://starofca.formstack.com/forms/covid19_notification



Only if the infected employee gives consent (via the COVID Notification link) to disclose their COVID-19 positive status can that information be directly shared with fellow employees and clients who are being made aware of this change in fitness for service. Otherwise, this information should be kept confidential by not naming the individual and can only be shared by those who need to know in order to perform their work-related duties (e.g., Human Resources).

We recognize that other employees or clients may deduce an employee’s COVID-19 status by contact history or case assignment, however, this approach allows for mitigation of spread while attempting to protect employee health information where possible.

10. WHEN CAN I BE AROUND OTHERS AFTER I HAD OR LIKELY HAD COVID-19?

See related CDC link for the latest information:

You are not considered fit for service again until the following criteria have met:

- 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared **and**
- You are fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
- Other COVID-19 symptoms have improved (for example, cough, shortness of breath)

*Employees who are experiencing COVID-19 related symptoms may voluntarily seek COVID-19 testing. If testing comes back negative and the employee’s symptoms have improved, then the employee is eligible to return to work and this

CDC Guidance:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html>



<p>situation would be treated similar to a common cold/flu.</p>	
<p>11. I TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19 BUT HAD NO SYMPTOMS, NOW WHAT DO I DO?</p> <p>If you continue to have no symptoms, you can be with others after 10 days have passed since the date your test was taken.</p> <p>You would need to update your fitness for service attestation and complete the COVID Notification link to alert HR. This will also cue HR to provide an employee who tests positive with 5 additional paid sick days. Employees do not need to use their existing sick time prior to accessing these 5 additional sick days.</p> <p>The same follow up procedures for risk mitigation would need to be followed to alert other exposed clients or employees (see question #9)</p>	<p>CDC Guidance: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html</p> <p>Employee Fitness for Service Attestation: https://starofca.formstack.com/forms/covid19_fitness_f_or_service_attestation_employee</p> <p>COVID-19 Notification Link: https://starofca.formstack.com/forms/covid19_notification</p>
<p>12. WHAT STEPS DO I NEED TO TAKE IN ORDER TO RETURN TO WORK AFTER A QUARANTINE?</p> <p>Once your designated quarantine is complete and you are fit for service again, please re-complete the (1) fitness for service attestation, and complete the (2) return to work attestation prior to delivering in-person services.</p>	<p>Employee Fitness for Service Attestation: https://starofca.formstack.com/forms/covid19_fitness_f_or_service_attestation_employee</p> <p>Employee Return to Work Attestation: https://starofca.formstack.com/forms/return_to_work_fitness_attestation_employee</p> <p>CDC Guidance: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html</p>
<p>13. IF I HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO SOMEONE WITH COVID-19 AND THEN GOT TESTED, CAN I RETURN TO WORK IF MY TEST RESULTS ARE NEGATIVE?</p>	<p>CDC Guidance: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/testing-overview.html</p>



<p>Per the CDC, after being exposed to someone with COVID-19, a reduced quarantine period option includes testing negative in order to stop quarantining after Day 7. This requires that the test be taken on Day 5 or later from the date of exposure and that the employee remains symptom-free (see question #2 or CDC guidance for details).</p> <p>If the individual is fully vaccinated, then testing is recommended 3-5 days after a known direct exposure. A negative test result would clear the employee to return to in-person service delivery.</p>	<p>https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/testing.html</p> <p>CDC Guidance: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html</p>
<p>14. WHAT IF I AM CONTACTED BY PUBLIC HEALTH FOR CONTACT TRACING? UNDER HIPAA, IS IT OK TO DISCLOSE CLIENT NAMES AND CONTACT INFORMATION?</p> <p>Employees should notify public health that they work in a HIPAA-regulated environment. Public health should provide the employee options at that point.</p>	
<p>15. WHAT IF I HAVE ALREADY TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19 WITHIN THE PAST 3 MONTHS, HAVE RECOVERED, AND GET EXPOSED TO SOMEONE WITH COVID-19 AGAIN? DO I NEED TO QUARANTINE AGAIN?</p> <p>Per the CDC if you have recovered from COVID-19 within the past 3 months and then get exposed again, you do not need to quarantine or get tested again for up to 3 months as long as you do not develop symptoms again. If you develop symptoms again within 3 months of your first bout of COVID-19, you may need to be tested again if there is no other cause identified for your symptoms.</p>	



<p>Consultation with your healthcare provider would be recommended.</p>	
<p>16. WHAT IF I AM FULLY VACCINATED OR HAD COVID ALREADY? DO I STILL NEED TO QUARANTINE AFTER A CONFIRMED EXPOSURE?</p> <p>People who have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 are not required to quarantine if they have been fully vaccinated and show no symptoms.</p> <p>Per the CDC effective July 27, 2021, it is recommended that vaccinated individuals get tested 3-5 days after a known direct exposure.</p> <p>People are considered fully vaccinated for COVID-19, defined as ≥ 2 weeks after they have received the second dose in a 2-dose series (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna); or ≥ 2 weeks after they have received a single-dose vaccine (Johnson and Johnson/Janssen).</p> <p>Communication with all parties involved in service delivery regarding an individual’s exposure and vaccination status, along with expressed comfort in proceeding with in-person services is required.</p>	<p>CDC Guidance: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html</p> <p>https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html</p>

CLIENT-RELATED QUESTIONS:	Linked Resources:
<p>17. DOES MY CLIENT OR MEMBERS OF THEIR HOUSEHOLD HAVE TO WEAR A FACE MASK?</p> <p>For in-home or office-based services, we highly recommend your client wear a mask whenever possible, yet recognize that there may be clinical or</p>	<p>CDC Guidance: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html</p>



developmental reasons why your client may not consistently be able to do so.

All adults and other children (age 2 and over) in the client household are **required** to wear face masks when distancing 6 feet is not possible.

If your client has questions or concerns with this requirement, please notify your Clinical Manager.

18. IF I WAS JUST INFORMED THAT SOMEONE IN MY CLIENT'S HOUSEHOLD HAS COVID-19, WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Your client is not considered fit for service if anyone in the client's household has COVID-19. They cannot receive in-person services for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms or date of COVID testing (if asymptomatic).

*In this scenario, a positive case of COVID-19 and exposure to someone with COVID-19 occurs because it includes both an infected individual and those in the household who have been exposed to the infected individual.

We can consider offering telehealth services as an alternative whenever feasible. Your Clinical Manager will be responsible for notifying your client of this to plan accordingly.

If your client or members of their household have been infected with COVID-19, we should always seek client consent to share their COVID-19 positive status with others before disclosing such information. This consent can be given by the client via an email to a team member or consent to release information form.

As part of the Clinical Manager's communication with the client, they will ask your client to update their fitness for service attestation (linked to the right).

Client Fitness for Service Attestation:
https://starofca.formstack.com/forms/covid19_fitness_for_service_attestation_client



If you came into close contact with someone in a client’s household who has COVID-19, you will need to quarantine for the required period from the date of exposure and are not eligible to deliver in-person services to any clients until the quarantine period is complete and fitness for service criteria is met. Please follow procedures to update your fitness for service attestation.

Employee Fitness for Service Attestation:
https://starofca.formstack.com/forms/covid19_fitness_for_service_attestation_employee

19. WHEN IS MY CLIENT FIT TO RETURN TO IN PERSON SERVICES AFTER SOMEONE IN THEIR HOME HAS CONTRACTED COVID-19?

Your client is not considered fit for service until the following criteria have been met by all family members in their household. See related link for latest information.

- *10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared (or if asymptomatic, since positive test result)
- The infected individual is fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
- Other COVID-19 symptoms have improved (for example, cough, shortness of breath)
- And no other family members have active symptoms

CDC Guidance:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html>

20. WHAT IF SOMEONE IN MY CLIENT’S HOUSEHOLD PRESENTS WITH SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19, BUT A POSITIVE TEST HAS NOT CONFIRMED IF IT’S COVID-19?

If someone in your client’s household is symptomatic, your client is not considered fit for service and would need to meet



the following criteria before being eligible for in-person services again:

- 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared **and**
- fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
- Symptoms have improved (for example, cough, shortness of breath)

Your client or members of their household may opt to seek testing to determine if their symptoms are indeed due to COVID-19. If a negative test is obtained, then your client would be fit for service again once symptoms are improved; and this situation would be treated similar to a common cold/flu.

21. WHAT SHOULD I TELL MY CLIENT IF I AM NOT FIT SERVICE BECAUSE I AM SYMPTOMATIC, HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO SOMEONE WITH COVID-19, OR HAVE COVID-19?

If you are ill with symptoms consistent with COVID-19, then you are not considered fit for service and should call out sick per typical notification procedures and you should update your fitness for service attestation.

If an employee tests positive for COVID-19 and has been in close contact with clients in the past 2 weeks, your Clinical Manager will notify your clients that they have or may have come into contact with someone with COVID-19 (without naming you), and advise of the need to pause services.

The employee can consent to share their COVID-positive health status via the **COVID Notification Link** (to the right here) which gets directed to HR.

If you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, notify your Clinical Manager. Your Clinical Manager will notify your clients about the need to pause services.

Employee Fitness for Service Attestation:

https://starofca.formstack.com/forms/covid19_fitness_for_service_attestation_employee

COVID-19 Notification Link:

https://starofca.formstack.com/forms/covid19_notification



<p>22. WHAT ABOUT MY CLIENT(S) OR OTHER STAFF THAT I CAME INTO CLOSE CONTACT WITH SINCE TESTING POSITIVE? WHO WILL NOTIFY THEM?</p> <p>The Clinical Manager will mitigate communications with clients, while Human Resources will notify other exposed employees to advise of the need to pause services and/or quarantine for the specified days.</p> <p>While pending employee consent or if the employee who tested positive does not give consent to share their positive COVID-19 status, the Clinical Manager will proceed with informing the client(s) that they have or may have come into contact with someone with COVID-19, <i>without naming the individual</i>. And HR will inform other employees who were exposed that they have or may have come into contact with someone with COVID-19, <i>without naming the individual</i>.</p> <p>Only if the employee grants consent via the COVID Notification Link to HR, can an employee’s positive COVID-19 health status be shared with clients or other employees <i>while naming the individual</i>.</p> <p>When appropriate, clients may be offered telehealth services or substitute staff if the client is still considered fit for in-person services.</p>	
<p>23. IF I AM UNABLE TO DELIVER IN-PERSON SERVICES BECAUSE I AM NOT FIT FOR SERVICES, CAN I STILL DELIVER TELEHEALTH SERVICES?</p> <p>If an employee must quarantine due to not being fit for services, but feels well enough to deliver telehealth services, that employee may work delivering telehealth in lieu of using sick time hours if they choose.</p>	



THE STEPPING STONES GROUP

Transforming Lives Together



24. WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE QUESTIONS THAT ARE NOT ANSWERED BY THIS FAQ?

All employees are encouraged to respond to common COVID-19-related situations using this FAQ as their guide and consulting their Clinical Manager first.

If your questions were not answered from this FAQ and you are seeking additional guidance, consultation with Risk Management (riskmanagement@starofca.com) is available.