



**COVID-19 POLICIES**  
**COVID-19 TESTING**  
**MASK POLICY**

**CONTINGENCY and CRISIS CAPACITY STAFFING PLANS**  
**AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

**RETURN-TO-WORK POLICY FOR EMPLOYEES WITH COVID -19 OR  
CLOSE EXPOSURE TO CONFIRMED COVID-19**

**COVID -19 IN THE HOME OF CONSUMERS**

**Change in this update includes elimination of return-to-work temperature reporting after COVID-19 infection or exposure to COVID-19. Employee self-monitoring must continue.**

**(Updates in Red Font)**

While My Home Care, LLC (MHC) will continue to abide by the conventional Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and PA Department of Health (DOH) guidelines to protect employees and consumers from the spread of COVID-19, we may occasionally experience staffing shortages due to staff illness or quarantine recommendations. During such shortages, if there are not enough staff to provide safe consumer care, MHC will implement **contingency capacity strategies** in order to provide coverage for our consumers as best as we can. Contingency capacity strategies will be followed by **crisis capacity strategies** if the contingency staffing is inadequate and we have exhausted all other staffing standards. **DOH guidance is used when implementing contingency and crisis capacity staffing strategies.**

**In all cases however, return-to-work criteria will be evaluated and determined by MHC management on a case-by-case basis.** Utilizing the most conservative criteria, a worker will be permitted to return to work based on his/her specific symptoms, duration of illness, immunocompromise status, health care provider recommendations, condition and permission of the consumer(s) to whom the worker will return, and other relevant factors.

This updated (**03.29.22**) policy sets forth MHC's Contingency and Crisis Capacity Staffing Plan to address staffing shortages. This plan follows CDC and DOH recommended strategies to mitigate staffing shortages in the healthcare industry. Until further notice, MHC is primarily operating under the **contingency staffing plan** as part of MHC's **emergency preparedness**. **However**, as determined by management, should the contingency staffing plan be inadequate to mitigate staff shortages, MHC will implement **crisis staffing plans as needed** until such time that we may revert to contingency or



conventional staffing plans as allowed. Under crisis staffing, return-to-work options will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and will be implemented simultaneously with contingency staffing so that the most conservative return-to-work criteria will be applied as the situation warrants. Quarantined employees with the lowest risk factors will be returned to work first, followed by those with moderate risk factors. Higher risk employees will only be permitted to work when all other options have been exhausted and only when there are safety considerations which prohibit a consumer from being alone for extended periods of time.

Per CDC/DOH Contingency/Crisis staffing guidelines, a symptom-based strategy is preferred over a test-based strategy because a person who was recently positive for COVID-19 may still be shedding the virus up to 3 months following recovery, thus producing a positive test result, but no longer be contagious. As well, testing too early after an exposure to positive COVID-19 may produce a negative COVID-19 result, but the person may actually be infectious. MHC will utilize both strategies in consultation with the employee and MHC management. For employees who are suspected of having COVID-19, but following evaluation another diagnosis is suspected or confirmed, return to work decisions will be based on the employee's other suspected or confirmed diagnoses, **health care provider's note regarding fitness for duty**, as well as the risk factors involved for the consumers.

The CDC and DOH now define vaccination status as "up to date" or "not up to date." Being **up to date** with vaccine doses includes the receipt of a booster once the recommended time frame is reached (i.e., 5 months post-primary series for mRNA vaccine) and additional primary shots for some immunocompromised persons where indicated. MHC and DOH follow the definitions of "up to date" provided by CDC. For example, persons who have completed a primary vaccine series at least 2 weeks prior but are not yet eligible for a booster shot per current CDC recommendations are included in the "up to date" category. In general, testing and work restrictions are also not necessary for asymptomatic employees who have recovered from SARS-CoV-2 infection in the prior 90 days, which permits this category of employees to follow the same criteria as "up to date" employees.

### **COVID-19 TESTING / HOME TESTING**

As of this update, **March 29, 2022**, MHC does not require employees to test for COVID-19. However, should an employee opt to test, MHC will accept a COVID-19 home test result if it is positive. A positive home test will warrant full quarantine periods in most instances and the employee will not have to be tested by a health care provider. Because home test results cannot be validated, a negative home test result will not be accepted unless the employee is needed to return to work under crisis staffing guidelines. In this instance, a negative home test result will be taken under consideration by management before permitting the employee to return to work.

## **MHC MASK POLICY**

Masks continue to be required when social distancing is not possible and when performing certain task. All employees of MHC must continue to wear masks in the homes of their consumers as follows:

- when entering home of consumer;
- when exiting home of consumer;
- during change of shift, especially when being relieved by another worker;
- when assisting with personal care;
- at all times when within 6 feet of consumer, consumer's family members, other MHC employees, or other visitors to the consumer's home;
  - when preparing food;
  - when handling laundry;
- when assisting with medications or medical equipment;
  - when inside a vehicle with consumer;
  - when requested by the consumer on other occasions;
- when at medical appointments or other high-risk outings with consumer, such as grocery shopping.

## **WORK RESTRICTIONS FOR EMPLOYEES WITH COVID-19 OR PRESUMED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19 REGARDLESS OF VACCINATION OR BOOSTER STATUS**

**CONTINGENCY Staffing Policy for All Employees Who are Positive or Presumed Positive for COVID-19, Regardless of Vaccination or Booster Status:**

Employees with COVID-19 infection who are well enough and willing to work may be permitted to return to work as follows:

- Employee is to immediately report COVID-19 status to MHC if positive for COVID-19 or have COVID-19-related symptoms;
- Employees with mild-to-moderate symptoms who are not moderately-to-severely immunocompromised, may return to work after 5 (five) days have passed since symptoms first appeared (day zero) **AND** 24 hours have passed without a fever without the use of fever-reducing medicine **AND** all other symptoms (e.g. cough, shortness of breath) have improved;
- Employees who are asymptomatic throughout their infection, and are not moderately-to-severely immunocompromised, may return to work at least 5 days have passed since the date of their first positive viral test (day zero).
- Employees with severe to critical illness and who are not moderately to severely immunocompromised may return to work at least 10 days and up to 20 days have passed

since symptoms first appeared, and at least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications, and symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved.

- Employees with severe-to-critical symptoms, and who are moderately to severely immunocompromised, may return to work when 20 days have passed since symptoms first appeared AND 24 hours have passed without a fever without the use of fever-reducing medicine **AND** all other symptoms have improved, **AND** we strongly encourage consultation with doctor;
- After returning to work, the employee must wear a face mask (not a cloth face covering) at all times **for a period of 14 days** when with a consumer until all symptoms have resolved **AND** must self monitor and seek re-evaluation if symptoms return. After this period of time, the employee must comply with MHC's policy regarding mask wearing (**see page 3 of this policy - MHC Mask Policy**).
- Upon return to work, a COVID-positive employee must **closely** self-monitor for symptoms for a period of **90 days** from last exposure and report **fever and/or** any new symptoms immediately to MHC Supervisor. If experiencing new COVID-19-related symptoms, employee will be removed from the schedule and requested to consult with his/her physician. Employee may return to work with a work excuse from the physician, or may return after five (5) days have passed since the new symptoms started, as long as the employee is symptom-free for the last 24 hours prior to return to work.

**CRISIS Staffing Policy for All Employees Who are Positive or Presumed Positive for COVID-19, Regardless of Vaccination or Booster Status:**

- Employee is to immediately report the COVID-19 exposure to Supervisor and is not to report to work after learning of the exposure until cleared by Supervisor or HR;
- No work restriction, with prioritization considerations (e.g. asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic; risk levels of employee and consumer are considered; and employee will be restricted from contact with consumers who are moderately to severely immunocompromised);
- Employee is to arrange testing as possible;
- Employee returning to work under the crisis staffing plan must comply with the following conditions:
  - ~Employee must **closely** self-monitor for symptoms for a period of 90-days after last positive test, or first day of symptom start if not tested, and report any new **or worsening** symptoms immediately to MHC office;



~Employee must wear a face mask (not a cloth face covering) **at all times** at work and when entering and exiting the consumer’s home for a period of 14 days after last positive test, or first day of symptom start if not tested, and comply with the standard COVID-19 precautions ordinarily imposed at the time of the worker’s return to work After this period of time, the employee must comply with MHC’s policy regarding mask wearing (see page 3 of this policy - MHC Mask Policy).

~Employee must social distance from the consumer, consumer’s family and other employees as much as possible during the course of the work day;

~Employee is to clean and disinfect common surfaces in the consumer's home periodically throughout the shift **and again at the end of the shift**;

~If employee becomes sick(er) during the work shift -even with mild symptoms - the employee will be sent home after contacting the Supervisor who will ensure a relief worker and/or consumer safety prior to the employee being sent home. The employee is to maintain as much distance as possible and wear a face mask at all times while waiting for authorization to leave. The next worker that goes in to the same consumer will be responsible for cleaning and disinfecting all common surfaces;

~After returning to work, if the employee develops even mild symptoms within the 90-days after last positive test, or first day of symptom start if not tested, employee is to NOT report to work and must notify Supervisor immediately.

*Summary of Strategies for Mitigating Staffing Shortages for Employees with COVID-19 (unchanged since 01.25.22 update)*

<b>Vaccination Status</b>	<b>Conventional</b>	<b>Contingency</b>	<b>Crisis</b>
Up to Date, Unvaccinated, and Not Up to Date	10 days OR 7 days with negative test† , if asymptomatic or mild to moderate illness (with improving symptoms)	5 days with/without negative test, if asymptomatic or mild to moderate illness (with improving symptoms)	No work restrictions, with prioritization considerations (e.g., types of consumers they care for)

†Negative test result from test collected within 48 hours of returning to work. For calculating the day of the test, consider day of symptom onset (or first positive test if asymptomatic) as day 0.

## **WORK RESTRICTIONS FOR ASYMPTOMATIC EMPLOYEES WITH CLOSE EXPOSURES TO COVID-19**

**CONTINGENCY Staffing Policy for Asymptomatic Employees Who Are **Up to Date** or within 90 days of a prior infection Who Have Had Close Exposure\* to a Person with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19, including household exposures:**

- Employee is to immediately report the COVID-19 exposure to Supervisor and is not to report to work after learning of the exposure until cleared by Supervisor or HR;
- No work restrictions will be imposed **as long as employee is up-to-date with COVID-19 vaccinations and proof of up-to-date status** is provided to MHC;
- Household exposure is considered a higher-risk. DOH strongly recommends COVID-19 testing in this situation 24-hours after the first-known exposure, and if negative, test again in 5-to-7 days after the first-known exposure. Although an "up to date" employee may be permitted to work after a household exposure, MHC may consider excluding the employee from work if the person with COVID-19 cannot fully isolate and exposure is ongoing. The employee's exclusion from work may be for an additional 10 days (or 7 days with a negative test on or after day 5) AFTER the person with COVID-19 is released from isolation. Isolation for the infected household member may be as short as 5 days; however, it is possible for persons to still be infectious during days 6-10, thus MHC may consider extending work restriction for an employee with household exposure.
- Up-to-date employee returning to work must comply with the following conditions:
  - ~Employee must **closely self-monitor body temperature and symptoms prior to going to work; and contact Supervisor if fever or symptoms occur**. Weekends, holidays, and after hours the workers should contact the MHC office number and will be transferred to the on-call Supervisor;
  - ~Employee must wear a face mask **at all times** at work and when entering and exiting the consumer's home for a period of 14-days from last exposure and comply with the standard COVID-19 precautions ordinarily imposed at the time of the worker's return to work. After this period of time, the employee must comply with MHC's policy regarding mask wearing (**see page 3 of this policy - MHC Mask Policy**).
  - ~Employee must social distance from the consumer, consumer's family and other employees as much as possible during the course of the work day;
  - ~Employee is to clean and disinfect common surfaces in the consumer's home periodically throughout the shift **and again at the end of the shift**;
  - ~If employee becomes sick during the work shift -even with mild symptoms - the employee will be sent home after contacting the Supervisor who will

ensure a relief worker and/or consumer safety prior to the employee being sent home. The employee is to maintain as much distance as possible and wear a face mask at all times while waiting for authorization to leave. The next worker that goes in to the same consumer will be responsible for cleaning and disinfecting all common surfaces;  
~If the employee develops even mild symptoms within the 14-day period after last exposure, employee is to NOT report to work and must notify Supervisor immediately.

CONTINGENCY Staffing Policy for Asymptomatic Employees Who Are Not Up to Date, Who Have Had Close Exposure\* to a Person with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19:

- Employee is to immediately report the COVID-19 exposure to Supervisor and is not to report to work after learning of the exposure;
- Employee will be removed from schedule for a period of 10-days or 7 days with negative test result after day 5 of exposure; **OR** may return to work after day zero (date of exposure) with negative test on each of days 1, 2, 3, and day 5-7. If employee opts for testing, rather than 10 days off (or 7 days with negative testing), the employee is responsible for setting up and paying for the tests. At this time, home testing is not accepted by MHC for the purpose of returning to work.
- For an employee who shares a household with someone who has COVID-19, the employee's work restriction period starts from the last time they were exposed to the person with COVID-19. If the person with COVID-19 cannot fully isolate and exposure is ongoing, the employee's work restriction will be for an additional 10 days (or 7 days with a negative test) AFTER the person with COVID-19 is released from isolation. Isolation for the infected household member may be as short as 5 days; however, it is possible for persons to still be infectious during days 6-10, thus the work restriction for the employee with household exposure is extended to this length of time.
- Employee returning to work under any option above, must comply with the following conditions:
  - ~Employee must **closely self-monitor body temperature and symptoms prior to going to work; and contact Supervisor if fever or symptoms occur.** Weekends, holidays, and after hours the workers should contact the MHC office number and will be transferred to the on-call Supervisor;
  - ~Employee must wear a face mask **at all times** at work and when entering and exiting the consumer's home for a period of 14-days from last exposure and comply with the standard COVID-19 precautions

ordinarily imposed at the time of the worker's return to work After this period of time, the employee must comply with MHC's policy regarding mask wearing (see page 3 of this policy - MHC Mask Policy).

- ~Employee must social distance from the consumer, consumer's family and other employees as much as possible during the course of the work day;
- ~Employee is to clean and disinfect common surfaces in the consumer's home periodically throughout the shift **and again at the end of the shift**;
- ~If employee becomes sick during the work shift, even with mild symptoms, the employee will be sent home after contacting the Supervisor who will ensure a relief worker and/or consumer safety prior to the employee being sent home. The employee is to maintain as much distance as possible and wear a face mask at all times while waiting for authorization to leave. The next worker that goes in to the same consumer will be responsible for cleaning and disinfecting all common surfaces;
- ~If the employee develops even mild symptoms within the 14-day period after last exposure, employee is to NOT report to work and must notify Supervisor immediately.

CRISIS Staffing Policy for Asymptomatic Employees Who Are Vaccinated, Unvaccinated, within 90 days of a prior infection, or Boosted Who Have Had Close Exposure\* to a Person with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19:

- Employee is to immediately report the COVID-19 exposure to Supervisor and is not to report to work after learning of the exposure until cleared by Supervisor or HR;
- **No work restriction, with prioritization considerations (e.g. asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic; risk levels of employee and consumer are considered; and employee will be restricted from contact with consumers who are moderately to severely immunocompromised);**
- Employee is to arrange testing as possible;
- Employee returning to work under the crisis staffing plan must comply with the following conditions:
  - ~Employee must **closely self-monitor body temperature and symptoms prior to going to work; and contact Supervisor if fever or symptoms occur.** Weekends, holidays, and after hours the workers should contact the MHC office number and will be transferred to the on-call Supervisor;
  - ~Employee must wear a face mask **at all times** at work and when entering and exiting the consumer's home for a period of 14-days from last exposure and comply with the standard COVID-19 precautions



ordinarily imposed at the time of the worker's return to work. After this period of time, the employee must comply with MHC's policy regarding mask wearing (see page 3 of this policy - MHC Mask Policy).

- ~Employee must social distance from the consumer, consumer's family and other employees as much as possible during the course of the work day;
- ~Employee is to clean and disinfect common surfaces in the consumer's home periodically throughout the shift and again at the end of the shift;
- ~If employee becomes sick during the work shift, even with mild symptoms, the employee will be sent home after contacting the Supervisor who will ensure a relief worker and/or consumer safety prior to the employee being sent home. The employee is to maintain as much distance as possible and wear a face mask at all times while waiting for authorization to leave. The next worker that goes in to the same consumer will be responsible for cleaning and disinfecting all common surfaces;
- ~If the employee develops even mild symptoms within the 14-day period after last exposure, employee is to NOT report to work and must notify Supervisor immediately.

*Summary of Strategies for Mitigating Staffing Shortages by Vaccination Status for Asymptomatic HCP with Exposures (from PA Department of Health, 2022 PAHAN - 621 - 1-25, Update: Work Restrictions for Healthcare Personnel with Exposure to COVID-19):*

Vaccination Status	Conventional Strategy	Contingency Strategy	Crisis Strategy
Up to Date or Recent Infection (Within the prior 90 days)	No work restrictions, with negative test on days 1 # and 5-7	No work restrictions	No work restrictions
Unvaccinated or Not Up to Date	10 days OR 7 days with negative test	No work restrictions with negative tests on days 1#, 2, 3, & 5-7 (Employee who does not wish to test this often reverts to Conventional Strategy)	No work restrictions, with prioritization considerations (e.g., types of consumers they care for)

For calculating day of test: consider day of exposure as day 0

## COVID-19 IN THE HOME OF A CONSUMER

When MHC is informed that a consumer or a household member of a consumer has tested positive (or is presumed positive) for COVID-19, Direct Care Workers who are assigned to that consumer will be notified immediately. If the Worker and consumer are in agreement to have the Worker provide care in that home, all infection control guidance must be followed. **Worker is to provide written acknowledgment of the situation and the decision to continue working in the consumer's home.** Additionally:

- Worker must follow all recommended infection prevention and control practices, including wearing well-fitting source control, self-monitor for fever or symptoms consistent with COVID-19, and not report to work when ill or if testing positive for COVID-19;
- Precautions and prevention must be followed for a period of 10 to 20 days depending on the severity of illness and risk factors for the Worker and consumer;
- Worker is to perform routine cleaning and disinfection procedures (e.g., using cleaners approved by the consumer and water to pre-clean surfaces prior to applying a disinfectant to frequently touched surfaces throughout the consumer's home;
- Face shields and/or goggles must be worn in addition to masks and other safety precautions;
- If there is a shortage of Workers, consumer's family members and back-ups may have to assist, and the consumer's Service Coordinator will be notified;
- Workers who are up-to-date and recently recovered from COVID-19 will be prioritized to work with consumers who are positive for COVID-19 or have household members who are positive for COVID-19;
- If a Worker assigned to a consumer who is positive for COVID-19 develops a fever or symptoms consistent with COVID-19, the Worker should immediately self-isolate and contact their supervisor.

### DEFINITIONS:

#### Close Contact -

- You were within 6 feet of someone who has COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more (cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. For example, three individual 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes.)
- You provided care at home to someone who has COVID-19.
- You had direct physical contact with someone who has COVID-19 (hugged or kissed them).
- You shared eating or drinking utensils with someone who has COVID-19
- Someone who has COVID-19 sneezed, coughed, or somehow got respiratory droplets on you.

**Boosted** - Receipt of a booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine at the recommended interval after completion of a primary series of COVID-19 vaccine and at least two weeks have passed since receipt of the booster dose.

**Exposure While at Work** - (for purpose of home care) Higher-risk exposures in the healthcare / home care setting generally involve exposure of Direct Care Worker eyes, nose, or mouth to material potentially containing COVID-19. Other exposures classified as lower-risk, including having body contact with the consumer (e.g., rolling the consumer) without gown or gloves, may impart some risk for transmission, particularly if hand hygiene is not performed and Workers then touch their eyes, nose, or mouth. In general, work restrictions and testing are not required for Workers with a lower-risk exposure, which is defined as any exposure other than a higher-risk exposure where the consumer has (or potentially has) COVID-19 and the Worker was not wearing proper PPE. The specific factors associated with these exposures will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and restriction from work will be applied if the risk for transmission is deemed substantial.

**Household Exposure** - An infectious person living in the home with an employee represents an exposure to that employee. In most cases the shared environment represents a level of risk consistent with higher-risk exposure, and will be evaluated as such on a case-by-case basis.

**Immunocompromised** - Ultimately, the degree of immunocompromise is determined by your healthcare provider. Generally, people are considered to be moderately or severely immunocompromised if they have:

- Been receiving active cancer treatment for tumors or cancers of the blood
- Received an organ transplant and are taking medicine to suppress the immune system
- Received a stem cell transplant within the last 2 years or are taking medicine to suppress the immune system
- Moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency (such as DiGeorge syndrome, Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome)
- Advanced or untreated HIV infection
- Active treatment with high-dose corticosteroids or other drugs that may suppress your immune response.

**Up to date** - up to date with vaccine doses includes the receipt of a booster once the recommended time frame is reached (i.e., 5 months post-primary series for mRNA vaccine) and additional primary shots for some immunocompromised persons where indicated. MHC and the PA Department of Health follow the definitions of "up to date" provided by CDC. For example, persons who have completed a primary vaccine series at least 2 weeks prior but are not yet eligible for a booster shot per current CDC recommendations are included in the "up to date" category.