

# Guidelines for Illness Exclusion and Return to Work Documentation for COVID-19: Adult and Pediatric

Title: Guidelines for Illness and Return to Work  
Work Force Member Roles Impacted: All Work Force Members  
Sponsoring Department: Occupational Health

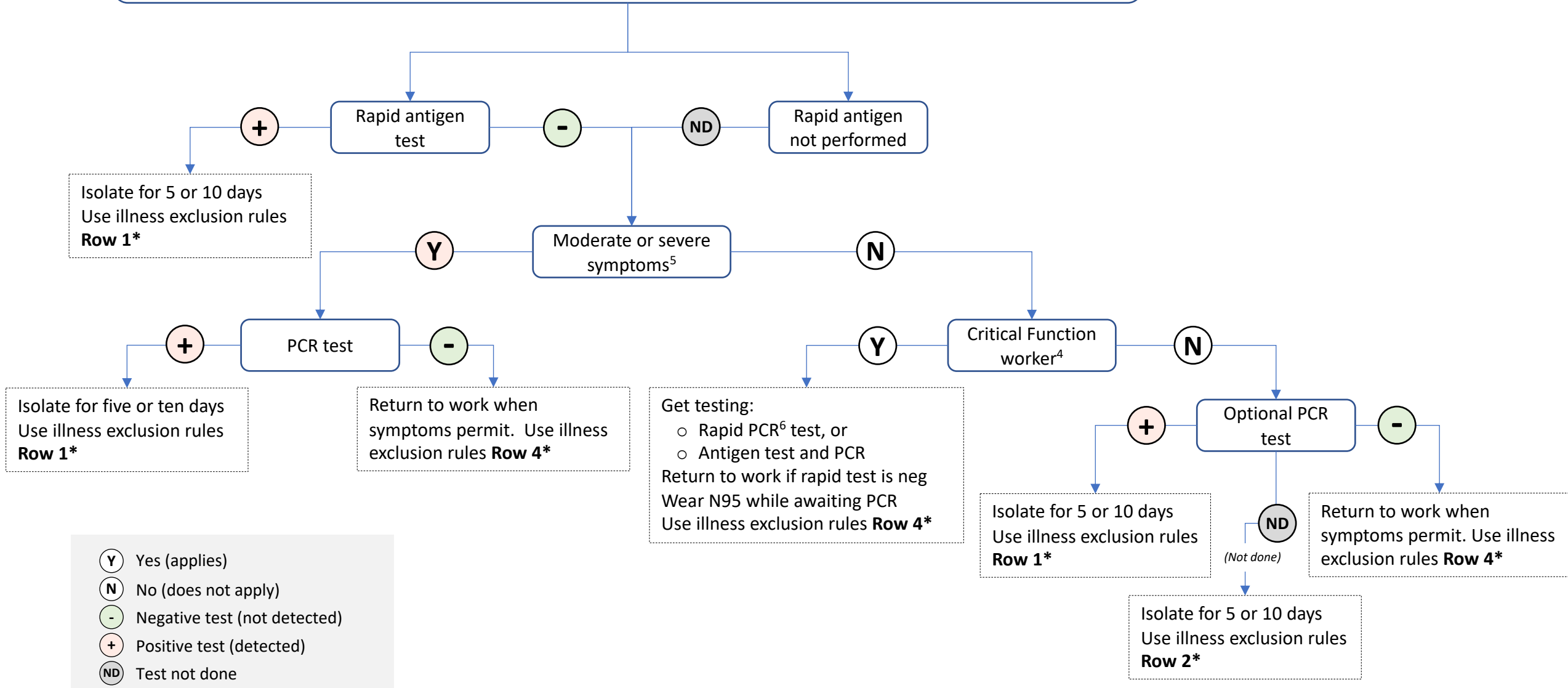
CreationDateandTime: 04/13/2021  
ModifiedDate: 2/10/2022  
ReviewbyDate: 2/10/2023



1	Positive test	<p>If you have a positive COVID-19 test AND are <u>not</u> immunocompromised<sup>1</sup>, you may return to in-person work if:</p>	<p>It has been 5 days from your positive test date or symptom onset<sup>2</sup> <b>whichever is later</b> (return to work on day 6) <b>and</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have been fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications (if applicable) <b>and</b></li> <li>Your symptoms have significantly improved<sup>3</sup> (if applicable) <b>and</b></li> <li>You have a negative antigen test result taken on day 5</li> </ul> <p>If your antigen test is positive on day 5 or you do not retest, isolate through day 10 (return on day 11). No repeat antigen test required</p>
2	No initial testing	<p>If you have symptoms of a viral illness but were unable to obtain testing at onset AND are <u>not</u> immunocompromised<sup>1</sup>, you may return to in-person work if:</p>	<p>It has been 5 days from symptom onset<sup>2</sup> (return to work on day 6) <b>and</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have been fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications (if applicable) <b>and</b></li> <li>Your symptoms have significantly improved<sup>3</sup> (if applicable) <b>and</b></li> <li>You have a negative antigen test result taken on day 5</li> </ul> <p>If your antigen test is positive on day 5 or you do not retest, isolate through day 10 (return on day 11). No repeat antigen test required</p>
3	Immuno-compromised	<p>If you have a positive COVID-19 test AND are immunocompromised<sup>1</sup>, you may return to in-person work if:</p>	<p>It has been 10 days from your positive test or symptom onset<sup>2</sup> <b>whichever is later</b> (return to work on day 11) <b>and</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have been fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications (if applicable) <b>and</b></li> <li>Your symptoms have significantly improved<sup>3</sup> (if applicable) <b>and</b></li> <li>You have a negative antigen test result taken on day 10</li> </ul> <p>If your antigen test is positive on day 10 or you do not retest, isolate through day 20 (return on day 21). No repeat antigen test required</p>
4	Negative test	<p>If you have a viral illness (mild or severe symptoms) and a negative test, you may return to in-person work now if:</p>	<p>You are an critical function worker<sup>4</sup> <b>and</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have only mild symptoms<sup>5</sup> <b>and</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have a negative PCR test <b>or</b></li> <li>You have a negative antigen test while PCR is pending. Wear an N95 while awaiting your PCR test</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>You are not a critical function worker<sup>4</sup> or if you are a critical function worker<sup>4</sup> with moderate / severe symptoms<sup>5</sup> <b>and</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It has been at least 48 hours since symptom onset <b>and</b></li> <li>You have been fever free for at least 24 hours without using fever-reducing medications <b>and</b></li> <li>Your symptoms have significantly improved</li> </ul> <p><i>If you have ongoing or new/worsening symptoms after a negative test, please get retested after two days</i></p>

# Covid-19 Testing Algorithm

**Possible COVID-19 symptoms**  
**Mild symptoms:** new onset of fatigue, body aches, muscle pain, sore throat, nasal congestion, headache  
**Moderate or severe symptoms:** Fever, new shortness of breath, new diarrhea or vomiting, new loss of taste or smell



- (Y) Yes (applies)
- (N) No (does not apply)
- (-) Negative test (not detected)
- (+) Positive test (detected)
- (ND) Test not done

## Definitions and information

1. **Immunocompromised** – Having a medical condition or taking a medication that can substantially weaken the immune system. This includes but not limited to:
    - a) Diagnosed with HIV with a CD4 count of  $\leq 200$
    - b) Individuals who have had a bone marrow transplant within the last 6 months.
    - c) Currently taking  $> 60$  mg of prednisone per day or equivalent medication.
    - d) Actively undergoing potent immunosuppressive therapy including but not limited to rituximab or other monoclonal antibody therapy that is designed to target B cells and/or antibody production.
  2. **Date of test/symptoms onset** (whichever is later) is counted as **Day 0**.
  3. **Symptoms significantly improved** – Able to perform work duties without excessive fatigue, discomfort, or cough. Please reach out to Occupational Health or Student Health if you have ongoing symptoms and are not sure if you meet return to work criteria.
  4. **Critical Function Workers** - Any OHSU Member whose attendance at an OHSU work site is required in order for a Critical Function to remain operational, regardless of the existence of an emergency condition. More information can be found [here](#).
  5. **Mild symptoms:** new onset of fatigue, body aches, muscle pain, sore throat, nasal congestion, headache  
**Moderate or severe symptoms:** Fever, new shortness of breath, new diarrhea or vomiting, new loss of taste or smell
  6. **Rapid PCR test** – This is a PCR test done on a platform with rapid turn-around, usually resulting in approximately 4 hours. Due to supply limitations, rapid PCR tests should be done for critical function workers with mild symptoms who have an upcoming shift within 24 hours, when supplies are available.
  7. **What is the difference between PCR and antigen tests?** PCR tests are completed in the laboratory and usually take at least 24 hours to result. PCR tests are the most sensitive tests available and may remain positive long after a person is no longer infectious. Antigen tests detect virus production and usually results in 15 minutes. Antigen tests may miss some early infections but correlate better with infectivity during the first 10 days. A positive antigen test after day 10 does not prove infectivity.
- \* The rows refer to the numbered rows on page one.

Please visit the [COVID FAQ page](#) for answers to more frequently asked questions.

If you have any additional questions in regard to your return to work eligibility please reach out to Occupational Health by email [occhealth@ohsu.edu](mailto:occhealth@ohsu.edu) for assistance. Students please contact Student Health and Wellness via [SHWcompliance@ohsu.edu](mailto:SHWcompliance@ohsu.edu) with questions about return to in-person activities. These Guidelines are based on following [new guidance from the Centers for Disease Control](#), dated 12 23 2021.