

Frequently Asked Questions

Changes to the Attending Work Directive

March 2024

The following information is meant to address questions you may have about Alberta Health Services (AHS) [Attending Work with COVID-19 Symptoms or a Positive COVID-19 Test](#). This directive was revised on March 31, 2023.

General

1. Why has this directive been revised?

- This change reflects Alberta's transition to an endemic approach to managing COVID-19 and is the next step toward aligning public health recommendations across all acute respiratory viral illnesses.

2. Who does this apply to?

- This directive applies to all Alberta Health Services employees, members of the medical and midwifery staffs, students, volunteers, and other persons acting on behalf of Alberta Health Services (including contracted service providers).

3. When do I need to test for COVID-19?

- When a worker has COVID-19 symptoms, rapid antigen testing is recommended
- Testing for COVID-19 is not routinely recommended for workers who do not have COVID-19 symptoms.
- While our teams have been eligible to book molecular COVID-19 tests throughout the pandemic, self-referral will no longer be available after March 31. Anyone experiencing symptoms of respiratory illness is encouraged to conduct a rapid antigen test (RAT).

4. When am I considered positive for COVID-19?

- You are considered confirmed for COVID-19 if:
 - You have COVID-19 symptoms and a positive rapid antigen test.
 - You do not have COVID-19 symptoms but have 2 positive rapid antigen tests completed at least 24 hours apart of each other.
 - You have tested positive using a molecular test.

5. I have tested positive for COVID-19. What do I do?

- While Alberta's isolation recommendations to the public have been eased, the majority of individuals seeking care at AHS sites are more vulnerable to severe outcomes from COVID-19.
- Ensuring you are not at work and providing care while at highest risk for transmitting the virus will help protect someone at high risk of becoming severely ill if they were to develop COVID-19.

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- We continue to require all AHS employees, members of the medical and midwifery staffs, students, volunteers, and other persons acting on behalf of AHS (including contracted service providers) to be restricted from work for a minimum of five (5) days from the onset of their COVID-19 symptoms, or until their symptoms have improved and they are fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medications), whichever period is longer. Your symptom onset date is considered day 0. For example, if you develop symptoms on Nov. 1, the earliest day to return to work is Nov. 7 if the above conditions are met.
- If you are returning to work after having COVID-19 symptoms and/or a positive test, you must continuously mask and perform thorough hand hygiene for 10 days following the onset of your COVID-19 symptoms, or for 10 days following the date of your first positive test if you remain asymptomatic, when working in any AHS setting where you are going to be in contact with other people (e.g., other workers, patients, visitors, members of the public). Using the example above, if you were returning to work on Nov. 7, you would need to continuously mask and perform thorough hand hygiene until Nov. 12.

6. If I have COVID-19 symptoms or have tested positive for COVID-19, do I need to contact Workplace Health and Safety (WHS)?

- Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) is now managing healthcare worker COVID-19 cases to align with our guidance for other respiratory viruses including influenza.
- There is no longer a requirement for workers who have symptoms of COVID-19 or other respiratory symptoms to contact WHS.
- Contact WHS if you have tested positive for COVID-19 **and**
 - Recently worked on an outbreak unit or had a confirmed exposure to a COVID positive case while at work; **or**
 - Worked on an outbreak unit when you may have been communicable (from 48 hours prior to your symptoms starting through to when you were symptomatic) **OR**
 - Had a confirmed exposure to a COVID positive case while at work.
- If you have questions about whether you are fit to return to work, refer to the [Attending Work with COVID-19 Symptoms or a Positive COVID-19 Test Directive](#) and this FAQ.

7. Did our Rapid Antigen Test kits expire?

- Alberta Health has worked with the federal government to secure additional COVID-19 rapid antigen test (RAT) kits with longer expiry dates, ranging from September to December 2024. The first shipment of kits has now arrived.
- RAT kits will be available across all zones and sites. Kits will continue to be available on clinical supply carts.
- Areas that do not have clinical supply carts will have access to the kits through local servicing inventories.

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- If the RAT kits on your units are expired, please contact your [CPSM site service supervisor](#).
- 8. Do I still need to complete Fit for Work Screening?**
- No, the Fit for Work Screening Protocol has been rescinded and the Online Daily Fit for Work Screening Tool was decommissioned on March 31, 2023.
 - Please see the [Fit for Work page](#) for updates.
- 9. Why can't I find the Return to Work Decision Chart and Return to Work Guidance on Insite?**
- The Return to Work Decision Chart and Return to Work Guide have been rescinded.
- 10. I have more questions. Who do I contact?**
- Email [Workplace Health and Safety](#).