

**TO: All Santa Cruz City Employees**  
**SUBJECT: COVID-19 Post Exposure and Sick Leave Recommendations**  
**DATE: 18 March 2020**

As you know, the COVID-19 outbreak situation is rapidly evolving, and many of you have reached out with a number of questions about potential exposures, illness, and return to work. This is to summarize the most recent guidance from our office.

COVID-19 symptoms include fever (temp of 100.4 or greater) or cough or sore throat or body aches/fatigue.

**Exposures:**

- Contact with a patient who may be COVID-19 positive wearing appropriate PPE does not constitute an exposure.
- Exposure to a possible COVID-19 patient means standing within 6 feet of a suspected or confirmed patient without appropriate PPE for more than 3-5 minutes, or coming in physical contact with the patient or his/her droplets.
- After an exposure, follow your department's guidelines for decontamination and reporting.
- No self-isolation is required.
- You may continue to work as normal without any special precautions.
- We recommend that you monitor yourself for fever (temp of 100.4 or greater) and respiratory illness symptoms (cough, sore throat, shortness of breath) for 14 days after exposure using guidelines established by your employer.
- While there is some viral shedding that can occur prior to developing symptoms, the risk of transmitting COVID-19 to your family and co-workers is very low prior to developing symptoms.

**Illness:**

- If you become ill with symptoms such as fever, sore throat, cough or shortness of breath, you are contagious and should immediately leave the workplace, or refrain from coming to work. Please contact your supervisor immediately.
- Self-isolate and avoid close contact with others. Avoid seeking medical care if you have mild or improving illness. Most cases of COVID-19 require only supportive care including rest, hydration, and fever/body ache control.

- Testing with mild disease is in general not indicated as it plays no role in treatment and recovery. Because COVID-19 is now well established in our community, you are assumed to be infected with this virus if you develop symptoms.
- Testing may be ordered in conjunction and at the discretion of Public Health officials.
- You may also elect to see your personal health care provider to be evaluated for possible testing through public health or a private lab. At this time testing is extremely limited, and is best saved for those patients who are at high risk for serious complications from this disease or those requiring hospitalization.
- In general, testing is indicated if you have any shortness of breath or underlying medical conditions that put you more at risk for complications from this viral illness.
- Seek medical attention immediately if you develop shortness of breath or have worsening symptoms.
- For more information on what to do if you are sick, please review the attached document or visit the Centers for Disease and Control and Prevention's website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>

**Recovery:**

- You may resume normal activity and return to work when you are completely symptom free for a period of 72 hours. This includes resolution of fever, cough, sore throat, body aches.
- At this time there is no recommendation to test individuals who have recovered completely from their illness.

This is a dynamic situation and we will continue to respond appropriately as needed. These guidelines are subject to change given new information from local, state, and national public health experts, and we will keep your departments apprised as this occurs.