

# SAN JUAN BASIN public health

## FAQ: Businesses with Potential COVID-19 Exposure

### How will a business be notified if an employee is identified as a COVID-19 case?

San Juan Basin Public Health (SJBPH) is notified by medical providers or the laboratory that conducted the testing when a resident in either Archuleta or La Plata County tests positive for COVID-19. Once a medical care provider notifies the patient of their test result, a SJBPH contact tracer conducts an interview with the patient to identify where they may have contracted the illness and who they may have accidentally exposed.

Cases can be confirmed or probable. Confirmed cases include people who tested positive. Probable cases include those where epidemiological evidence has determined that there is a high likelihood that an individual has COVID-19.

The information collected includes the individual's occupation and where they work. The SJBPH Disease Investigation and Control Division will then contact the business owner or manager if it is believed an exposure has occurred at the individual's workplace.

### What is expected of a business if they have a staff member that tests positive?

SJBPH contact tracers will reach out to the business owner or manager to notify them of the exposure of an employee and answer any questions they may have. Agency staff will then ask for contact information for other staff identified as close contacts during the investigation. If these employees have symptoms, they will be encouraged to get tested and will be put on isolation by SJBPH. If these employees do not have symptoms, they will be encouraged to get tested 7 days after exposure and put on a 14-day quarantine starting the last day they were exposed to the infectious person.

Guidance for cleaning and other disease control measure will be provided specific to the business and operation model. In most situations SJBPH will not disclose the name of people who test positive to anyone, including employers. Employees are encouraged to inform their employer of a COVID-19 diagnosis, but this information should remain confidential. Please do not share this information with other staff.

### What if a family member of an employee tests positive?

If a staff member has close contact with an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19, they will be placed on quarantine for 14 days since the last exposure occurred. COVID-19 testing is recommended 7 days after an exposure to help identify asymptomatic individuals and reduce the spread of illness. When someone is required by SJBPH to quarantine due to an exposure to COVID-19, this is a legal requirement. Legal consequences may result if an individual does not follow quarantine requirements.

An individual cannot test out of quarantine by receiving a negative test result as the 14-day period represents the time frame in which an individual may develop symptoms and infect others.

This may create staffing challenges for the business depending on the size of the business and role of the employee.

## What if a business has a COVID-19 outbreak? What does that mean and how does this effect operations?

A “confirmed” outbreak of COVID-19 is defined as two or more lab confirmed cases of the virus (positive laboratory test) in a workplace/facility or (non-household) group with onset in a 14-day period. Since the incubation period for COVID-19 is 14-days this demonstrates that the cases are epidemiologically linked.

A “suspect” outbreak is defined as two or more probable COVID-19 cases (or one confirmed COVID-19 case and one or more probable COVID-19 cases) in a workplace/facility or (non-household) group with onset in a 14-day period.

If SJBPH identifies an outbreak in a business or facility, SJBPH staff will work to identify potential causes of transition and implement the disease control measures to stop further spread of disease within the business. SJBPH is required to report the outbreak to the Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment (CDPHE). CDPHE will assign the outbreak an identifiable name (may include the business name and/or address) and add it to the publicly posted list of Colorado outbreaks. This information can be found here: <https://covid19.colorado.gov/data/outbreak-data>

An outbreak could affect operations because more of your staff will be out sick or unable to come to work because they are on quarantine after an exposure.

SJPBH will work with the affected business to discuss appropriate communications regarding the outbreak which may include a media release. The releases can be co-branded to demonstrate cooperation and partnership. In its commitment to transparency, SJBPH believes it is important to provide context and reassurance to our community by demonstrating that both the agency and business are taking appropriate steps to control spread of the virus.

## How will an employer know when their staff can come back to work? Should a negative COVID-19 test be required to return to work?

Employees placed on isolation or quarantine by SJBPH may return to work once the following criteria is met:

Staff with symptoms and place on isolation*	Staff without symptoms but have positive COVID-19 test and placed on isolation*	Staff who was exposed to someone with COVID but does not have symptoms and place on quarantine**
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least three days (72 hours) have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications <b>and</b></li> <li>• Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) <b>and</b></li> <li>• At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 days have passed since the test collection date</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14 days after last exposure</li> </ul>

\*A testing strategy may also be used to release a case from isolation. The staff member must have two negative test results 24 hours or more apart to return to work. SJBPH does not recommend this strategy as access to testing may be a barrier and/or it may extend the period of time the individual is on isolation.

\*\* You cannot not test out of quarantine