

Sabine County COVID 19 Policy
Reinstated 09/13/2021

Sabine County is committed to protecting our employees and customers from exposure to COVID-19. In that regard, Sabine County will follow the procedures below in the event an employee tests positive for COVID-19, or is directly or indirectly exposed to COVID-19.

Employee receives a positive test:

If an employee receives a post test for COVID-19, the following steps will be taken:

1. The employee who tests positive will be required to quarantine, in accordance with the following current CDC guidelines:

Employees who test positive and have symptoms (vaccinated or unvaccinated):

- Employees who test positive for COVID-19 and experience symptoms will be allowed to return to work after (1) 10 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared; (2) at least 24 hours have passed since you last experienced a fever without the use of fever reducing medications, and (3) symptoms are improving.
- Employees will be required to provide a doctor's release or negative test results to return to work.
- Employees who are severely ill with COVID-19 and/or have a severely weakened immune system may be required to stay home from work longer than 10 days. In these circumstances, the department head along with Human Resources will develop a return-to-work plan with the employee.

Employees who test positive but have **no symptoms:**

- Employees who test positive for COVID-19 but have no symptoms, will generally be allowed to return to work after 10 days have passed since the positive test result. Employees will need to have a negative test result or a signed doctor's release.
2. Sabine County will follow proper cleaning according to CDC sanitizing guidelines. If necessary, the affected offices will be closed, for the amount of time needed to be sanitized.

Employee is/was in close contact with a person with COVID-19:

All employees who have been in "close contact" (as defined below) with any individual who tests positive for COVID-19 will be required to quarantine, in accordance with the following updated CDC guidelines:

- Most employees will be required to quarantine for 7 days after being exposed. An employee will be allowed to return to work on day 8 after exposure, as long as the employee test negative for COVID-19. The test must be taken within 24 hours of the day the employee plans to return to work (basically employees will. Employees must present proof of a negative test.
- Employees can test a facility of their choice and the expense of the test will not be covered by Sabine County. If there are any concerns regarding the validity of an employee's test, Sabine County may require an employee to be re-tested at another facility.
- Employees are expected to follow the 7-day quarantine guidelines above. However, if an employee is unable to take a test, the employee will be allowed to return to work after 10 days have passed since the initial exposure, as long as the employee does not develop any symptoms of COVID-19.
- Employees exposed who previously tested positive for COVID-19 (within the past 3 months) and have recovered; and are not experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms will not be required to quarantine, and will be allowed to continue working as usual.
- All "fully vaccinated" employees (as defined below) who have been exposed to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 do not need to quarantine or stay home from work following exposure, as long as the employee is not experiencing COVID-like symptoms. Fully vaccinated people should get tested 3-5 days after exposure and should self-monitor for 14 days after exposure.

Close contact means being within six feet of someone who has COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more; providing care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19; you had direct physical contact with a person with COVID-19 (hugged or kissed them; you shared eating or drinking utensils; and/or they sneezed, coughed, or somehow got respiratory droplets to you.

People are considered "fully vaccinated" once two weeks have passed since the person received the second dose in a two-dose series, or at least two weeks have passed since the person received the single-dose vaccine.

After stopping quarantine, you should watch for symptoms until 14 days after exposure. If you have symptoms immediately self-isolate and contact health care provider.

Employees who have been in the vicinity of someone with COVID-19, but have not been in "close contact" with the person, are considered to be at low-risk of exposure, and will be allowed to continue working but should self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19.

Employee who is a caregiver:

If an employee is caring for someone with COVID-19, the employee must stay home from work while caring for the person, and generally must remain home for 14 days from the date the person he or she is caring for tests positive for COVID-19 (or 14 days from the day the person he or she is caring for starts showing symptoms of COVID-19 if the person does not take a test).

Self-monitoring:

All employees should self-monitor for any signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and immediately report any symptoms to his/her department head. According to the CDC, persons with COVID-19 may experience a wide range of symptoms, including but not limited to fever or chills; cough; shortness of breath or difficult breathing; fatigue; muscle or body aches; headaches; new loss of taste or smell; sore throat; congestion or runny nose; nausea or vomiting; and/or diarrhea. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus.

Compensation:

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act ("FFCRA") granted employees paid sick leave thru December 31, 2020 for certain specific reasons related to COVID-19. They include:

1. An employee who tests positive for COVID-19;
2. Is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and is seeking a medical diagnosis; or
3. Is advised by a healthcare provider to self-quarantine related to COVID-19.

If any of the above occurs a full-time employee will be eligible for up to 10 days discretionary pay. Sabine County will require an employee to provide evidence of test results, a doctor's excuse, or other documentation necessary to substantiate entitlement to discretionary pay.

An employee is also entitled to up to 10 days discretionary pay if the employee must stay home to care for an immediate family member (or other person who regularly resides in the employee's home) because the family or household member has been advised by a healthcare provider to self-quarantine related to COVID-19 and the employee is unable to work from home. Documentation to substantiate the need for such leave may be required.

Discretionary pay is approved by the employee's immediate department head and can only be used for up to 10 days paid. This paid benefit is in place for the period of August 26 thru December 25, 2021. Any unused discretionary paid leave will not carry over into the new year. Timesheets should indicate discretionary pay when used. Temporary and part-time pay will be based on number of hours worked weekly.

Remember to social distance (6 feet from others) at all times when possible; masks help slow the spread of the virus, wash your hands frequently, avoid crowds, and take all other necessary steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.