

RHODE ISLAND
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
COVID-19: Staff Exposure and Isolation Protocols
Last Updated: 1/24/2023

Please be advised that the information contained in this document changes rapidly. As a result, this document is updated often; therefore, staff should ensure no changes have been made since last referencing or printing it. Also, please keep in mind that RIDOC determines exposure, isolation and testing decisions based on RIDOH and CDC guidelines and recommendations; **however**, RIDOC is unique as it is not only a correctional facility but is also considered a congregate living setting. It has a varied nature of work that employees conduct on a daily basis, thus there are multiple factors that contribute to this decision making. RIDOC routinely consults with the RIDOH to determine the best course of action based upon these factors and the individual circumstances surrounding an exposure. Situations and circumstances are not always the same; therefore, many decisions are made on a case-by-case basis.

Staff are reminded that they should not come to work if they are not feeling well.

DEFINITION UPDATE

The CDC and RIDOH have adjusted the terms used for vaccination status. Please review carefully so you know which category you fall under.

Fully Vaccinated – individuals who have received both doses of either Moderna or Pfizer, or one dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine but have **not** received a booster

Up-to-Date on Vaccinations - individuals who have received all recommended boosters (individuals are considered “up-to-date on vaccinations” the day they receive the booster)

Unvaccinated – individuals who have not received any COVID-19 vaccinations

TESTING REQUIREMENTS

Regular surveillance testing may occur at specific intervals as determined by the Medical Program Director.

- ❖ Those who test positive for COVID-19 should not undergo asymptomatic PCR testing until 90 days after their isolation period has ended. If they are exposed to a positive case or become symptomatic, they should only test with a rapid antigen test.
 - ❖ All symptomatic individuals should stay home and test. If they test positive, they should follow the isolation guidelines below.
 - ❖ Testing requirements may change depending on the number of positives in the community or within a facility.
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POST EXPOSURE PROTOCOL

Staff who are exposed should test at least 5 days after exposure (or sooner if they develop symptoms). Staff should not use a PCR test if they were previously positive in the last 90 days.

Staff must continue to follow DOC-specific Isolation Protocols as outlined below. *Changes to these protocols may be made in response to increased case numbers or crisis staffing or supply/lab issues.*

DOC ISOLATION PROTOCOLS

No one shall enter any RIDOC facility who is COVID-19 positive or has COVID-19 like symptoms.

Isolation protocols do not change based on vaccination status; however, isolation may be prolonged if symptoms persist or if the individual is immunocompromised.

- Staff who have COVID-19 symptoms should test in the community (<https://portal.ri.gov/>). **An at-home rapid test is not acceptable as proof of a COVID-19 test.**
- Staff must notify their supervisor upon receipt of a positive COVID-19 test.
 - Staff must send a copy of their positive COVID-19 test results to their supervisor and to doc.covidquestions@doc.ri.gov, for secure storage.
 - Supervisors shall track staff isolation information.
- Staff must isolate, **using their own sick time**, for at least 7 days from the start of symptoms or from the date they initially tested positive.
- Starting on day 5 from the start of symptoms or the initial positive test, staff may take a PCR test or two rapid tests (**cannot be an at-home rapid test**) 48 hours apart and if negative, symptoms are improving, they are fever free for 24 hours off fever reducing medications like aspirin, acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil), they weren't hospitalized, and don't have a weakened immune system, they can return to work.
 - Testing must be done in the community (<https://portal.ri.gov/>) and a copy of the negative test result must be sent to their supervisor and to doc.covidquestions@doc.ri.gov, **prior to returning to work**, for secure storage.
- If testing is positive or the above conditions are not met, staff should isolate for 10 days.
 - Individuals with underlying health conditions, or those that are immunocompromised, should discuss return to work with their PCP to ensure they are no longer contagious or at risk for serious health complications related to the COVID-19 virus. If someone is unsure if this category applies to them, they should contact their PCP.

These recommendations are consistent with the CDC Guidance in Correctional Facilities, which is different than the CDC Guidance for the General Community.

All staff will have access to adequate PPE.