

May 16th, 2022

VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

COVID-19 Endemic Protocol – Field

Operational Guidelines for transition through the endemic from the Department’s COVID-19 Response Team will be updated frequently to incorporate the latest scientific, medical, and governmental recommendations. Please ensure you are using the most current document.

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Definitions

- a. **Fully Vaccinated:** 2 weeks have passed since the second dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine series OR 2 weeks have passed since a single dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine.
- b. **Immunocompromised:** Having an impaired immune system as diagnosed by a medical provider.
- c. **Lamp test:** LAMP is similar to the PCR lab tests, also known as Lucira. It test amplifies the SARS-CoV-2 virus's genetic material while the test is running. Lucira's accuracy is comparable to one of the highest sensitivity lab PCR tests.

Section 1 – Staff

i. Mask Requirement

Effective March 14, 2022, facial coverings will no longer be required for employees, contractors, and visitors to State offices and buildings regardless of vaccination status unless required by local municipal mask mandates while on duty.

Individuals who wish to wear a mask may continue to do so.

ii. Immunocompromised Staff

1. If any staff feel they are immunocompromised, it is their responsibility to pursue accommodations through human resources.

2. If you believe you are disabled in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and can still perform the essential functions of your position, with or without a reasonable accommodation, you may request an accommodation in accordance with State of Vermont Policy 3.2 – Reasonable Accommodation: [Number 3.2 REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION.pdf](#) (vermont.gov)

iv. COVID-19 Antigen and LAMP Testing-Staff

1. Each field site shall dedicate specific DM or CPS to secure the antigen and LAMP test kits in their offices with access limited to those dedicated staff.
2. Antigen and/or LAMP are available to any DOC or contract staff working out of a field site at the approval of the CPS or DM.
3. Staff will conduct the test in an isolated area avoiding close contact with others. (Preferably in their vehicle)
4. For any initial positive COVID 19 result after using a **DOC provided test ONSITE**, staff will complete the [VDH Report form](#) and return to the DM or CPS and follow process listed in # 6 below.
5. For any initial positive COVID 19 results taken **OFFSITE**, staff do NOT need to submit the VDH form. They do however need to follow the process listed in #6 below.
6. When a positive staff is identified, the district manager or designee must notify the COVID response alias AHS.DOCCOVIDResponseTeam@vermont.gov. and include the following information:
 - i. Name
 - ii. DOB
 - iii. Date of Testing
 - iv. Location
 - v. Work site (Staff)
 - vi. Last day worked (staff)
7. No PCR test is required if an initial antigen or LAMP shows a positive result.
8. Any negative antigen result does not require a VDH Report Form and is NOT required to be sent to the COVID team alias.

9. If staff receive a positive result from an at **home antigen or LAMP** test the results must be reported to their DM or CPS and reported on the VDH web site. [Vermont COVID-19 Self-Test Result Reporting Form \(alchemer.com\)](https://www.alchemer.com)
10. Staff who are symptomatic, but test negative on Antigen, are still excluded from work until cleared by a medical provider or receives a **negative LAMP or PCR** test which follows the return-to-work protocols outlined below.

Section 2 – Transports

1. Any offender being transported by field staff must wear a surgical mask.
2. Staff conducting transports will wear masks.
3. When transporting a COVID-19 or suspected infected offender will follow the transport process outlined in the facility protocol.

Section 3 - Return to Work Following a COVID-19 Positive

In order to be cleared to return to work, staff will need to follow the criteria below:
The Vermont Department of Corrections is following the guidelines issued by the CDC which is supported by the Vermont Department of Health.

These recommendations are in accordance with the CDC Return to Work Guideline updates as of 1/9/2022

COVID Positive Staff ([Vermont's Guidance: What to do if you test positive](#))

- Positive staff can return to work after day 5 if:
 - i. The person has two negative antigen tests performed at least 24 hours apart beginning no earlier than day 4
 - ii. If still antigen positive on day 9, STOP testing and use prior return to work protocols
 1. Return on day 11 if symptoms improved and no fever for 24 hours
 - iii. AND The person never had symptoms or symptoms have improved and they feel better

- iv. AND they have had no fever for at least 24 hours without the use of medicine that reduces fevers
 - v. AND they can wear a mask around others through day 10.
 - vi. Subsequent positive antigen testing do not need to be submitted to the alias.
 - vii. Negative antigen test results DO NOT need to be submitted to the alias,
- **Unattested staff who are within their 90 day of a positive collection and meet the close contact criteria do not need to be excluded from work so long as they are asymptomatic.**

Staff who are immunocompromised or have symptoms that persist for longer than 10 days should seek the advice of a health care provider prior to returning to work.

Staff experiencing symptoms but not confirmed COVID 19 positive

Symptomatic Staff may return to work if they fall under either of the 2 categories listed below:

- Staff who are cleared by a medical provider may return to work as directed
- Staff who have received a negative COVID 19 PCR or LAMP test may return to work