

January 3rd, 2022

VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Protocol – Field

Operational Guidelines for transition back to normal operations from the Department’s COVID-19 Response 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. **Close contact:** Suspected exposure through close contact per VDH guidance to [someone with COVID-19](#) outside of the workplace. Close contact as defined:

1. You were within 6 feet of someone who has COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more
2. You provided care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19
3. You had direct physical contact with a person with COVID-19 (hugged or kissed them).
4. You shared eating or drinking utensils with a person with COVID-19
5. A person with COVID-19 sneezed, coughed, or somehow got respiratory droplets on you.

Section 1 – Staff

i. Mask Requirement

Field offices are required to follow the mask requirements pursuant to the directions below:

1. Pursuant to Act 1, An Act Relating to Temporary Municipal Rules in Response to COVID-19 (Special Session 2021), all staff must be in compliance with local municipal mask mandates while on duty.
2. Effective December 1, 2021, and until further notice, visitors to state facilities, which include the public, customers, contractors, and others who have business with the State, are required to wear masks while indoors in areas where they are unable to socially distance.
3. District offices shall require Department staff to wear an N-95 or KN-95 mask, which will be provided by the Department, while inside a facility or any instance where a Department staff member is interacting with an individual in the care, custody, or supervision of the Department of Corrections.
4. Although masking is not required at most state worksites for employees who have attested to being fully vaccinated, masks are recommended indoors when other people are present, regardless of vaccination status.

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 \(vermont.gov\)](#)

iii. Staff Close Contact

2. Staff who are fully vaccinated with no symptoms will not be excluded from work.
3. Staff who have been fully vaccinated and are exhibiting symptoms consistent with COVID WILL BE excluded from work and required to test as soon as possible.
4. Staff who are fully vaccinated and continue to exhibit symptoms following a negative COVID test should follow up with their medical provider to receive return to work guidance.
5. If it is determined that a work-related exposure has occurred, the involved staff are to be prepared to speak with a contract tracer and provide their vaccine status and a copy of their vaccination card if requested.
6. Staff who are attested, will be excluded from work pending review by RRT.
7. Staff who are unattested and determined to be a close contact and are asymptomatic can return to work after a PCR test which has been taken on day 7 following the contact and negative results received.

iv. COVID-19 Antigen Testing- Staff

1. Each field site shall dedicate specific DM or CPS to secure the antigen test kits in their offices with access limited to those dedicated staff.
2. Antigen tests are available to any DOC or contract staff working out of a field site at the approval of the CPS or DM who become symptomatic when reporting to the work or who report symptoms while at work.
3. DMs or CPS may approve use of an antigen test outside the above parameters but only for symptomatic staff.

4. Staff will conduct the test in an isolated area avoiding close contact with others.
(Preferably in their vehicle)
 - <https://youtu.be/baQQfoX-JXo>
 - [OTC COVID Test Instructions](#)
5. Staff will show the results to the DM or CPS.
6. Staff will complete the [VDH Report form](#) and return to the DM or CPS.
7. The DM or CPS will immediately then forward the VDH form to the COVID team alias. AHS.DOCCOVIDResponseTeam@vermont.gov.
8. If staff receive a positive result from an at home antigen 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 \(alchemer.com\)](#)
9. Staff who are symptomatic, but test negative on Antigen, are still excluded from work until cleared by a medical provider or receives a negative PCR test which follows the return-to-work protocols outlined below
10. The above process follows VDH guidance. [COVID-19 Testing Decision Guide \(healthvermont.gov\)](#)

v. Staff Diagnosed with COVID-19

1. Staff who have confirmed COVID-19 should refer to Section 4 for specific return to work criteria.
2. They should contact their medical provider and may not return to work while symptomatic.
3. Each district manager will ensure information is tracked regarding any employee that is sick or in-home quarantine.

Section 2 – Transports

1. Any offender being transported by field staff must wear a mask.
2. Staff conducting transports will wear masks.

Section 3 - Field Contact Tracing

1. Each field office will have a designated “contact tracer” who has completed the online training listed below:

https://www.coursera.org/learn/covid-19-contact-tracing?utm_medium=coursera&utm_source=promo

| Site | Point of Contact | Phone number |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| Barre Probation and Parole | Mike Merchant | (802) 793-4274 |
| Bennington Probation and Parole | Ellen Palmer | (802) 760-7869 |
| Brattleboro Probation and Parole | Christina Granger | (802) 579-6451 |
| Burlington Probation and Parole | Alan Monnier | (802) 863-7542 |
| Hartford Probation and Parole | Matt Holden | (802) 296-5513 |
| Morrisville Probation and Parole | Mike Merchant | (802) 793-4274 |
| Newport Probation and Parole | Jason Webster | (802) 334-3312 |
| Rutland Probation and Parole | Nick Daigle | (802) 779-4239 |
| St. Albans Probation and Parole | Lisa Wilson | (802) 524-7966 |
| St. Johnsbury Probation and Parole | Maxwell Maloney | (860) 681-9435 |
| Springfield Probation and Parole | Lisa Brooks (backup)Leona Watts | (802)-738-2985 (cell) (802) 802-885-2985- home (802) 885-8994 |

2. Any COVID-19 related questions regarding close contact should be directed to the field office contact tracer.
3. When a positive C19 case is identified in a field office, the identifier is to send an email immediately to the COVID response team (CRT) at AHS.DOCCOVIDResponseTeam@vermont.gov.
4. CRT will then review and determine if contract tracing will be done.

Section 4 - 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 for Healthcare Providers which is supported by the Vermont Department of Health.

These recommendations are in accordance with the CDC Return to Work Guideline updates as of 6-2-2021.

[Return-to-Work Criteria for Healthcare Workers | CDC](#)

Symptomatic Staff:

- At least 10 days have passed *since symptoms first appeared* **and**
- At least 24 hours have passed *since last fever* without the use of **fever-reducing medications** **and**
- Symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved

Staff who were asymptomatic throughout their infection:

At least 10 days have passed since the date of their first positive viral diagnostic test.

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 test may return to work

Attachment 1 – Field Close Contact Tracing Questionnaire

Name _____

Date _____

The CDC defines **close contact** as anyone who was **within 6 feet** of an infected person **for 15 minutes or more.**

1. Using the standard above, at any point were you in close contact with _____? Y/N
If yes-
When?
How long?
What was the proximity (distance between) to _____?
Were you wearing a mask? What type?
Was _____ wearing a mask? What type?
2. Did you remove your mask at any point in the vicinity of _____?
For how long?
What was the distance between you and _____?
3. Do you have any symptoms? Fever or chills, Cough, Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, Fatigue, Muscle or body aches, Headache, New loss of taste or smell, Sore throat, Congestion or runny nose, Nausea or vomiting, Diarrhea.
4. When did the symptoms start?
5. Have you had any close contact with any DOC staff at or outside of work/office in the two days prior to symptoms starting? If Asymptomatic- have you had any close contact with DOC staff since exposure?
Please advise if masks were worn and what type.
6. Have you had any close contact with offenders in the two days prior to symptoms starting?
If Asymptomatic- have you had any close contact with offenders since exposure?
Please advise if masks were worn and what type.

7. Any recent contact with a confirmed COVID positive person?

When?

What was the distance between you and them?

What was the duration of the contact?

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