Guidelines When can an Employee Return to Work

This is a little complicated. Here's the easy part - a person diagnosed with COVID-19 or a person with symptoms of COVID-19 is contagious 48 hours before they develop symptoms. Here's the hard part – to determine how long a person will continue to be contagious depends on whether or not they can be tested for the coronavirus.

If laboratory testing is available (not everyone is able to get a test) there are three requirements they must meet before they can leave isolation and come back to work:

1. They no longer have a fever without the use of medicine that reduces the fever;

2. Other symptoms such as a cough or shortness of breath have improved; and

3. They have two negative tests given 24 hours apart.

If they are not able to get laboratory testing, there are two requirements they must meet before they can leave isolation and come back to work:

1. At least 72 hours have passed since they have recovered from COVID-19 (i.e. they no longer have a fever without the use of medicine that reduces the fever and other symptoms such as a cough or shortness of breath has improved) AND

2. It has been at least 7 days since the symptoms first appeared.

People who have had NO symptoms but tested positive for COVID-19 must be isolated just as those who have been diagnosed with COVID-19.

1. They may return to work when at least 7 days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test and have had no subsequent illness provided they remain asymptomatic.

2. Once they return to work they must maintain distancing (stay 6 feet away from others) and wear a facemask or cloth covering over their nose and mouth whenever they are in settings where other persons are present for 3 days.