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NEW MEXICO HEALTH ALERT NETWORK (HAN) ALERT

Updated Guidance on Managing Healthcare Personnel with SARS-CoV-2 Infection or Exposure to SARS-CoV-2

DATE

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Background: The NMDOH is issuing updated guidance for healthcare facilities to prepare for a potential surge in COVID-19 cases driven by the Omicron variant. This new guidance from the CDC was developed for managing healthcare personnel (HCP) with SARS-CoV-2 infection or exposure to SARS-CoV-2. Maintaining appropriate staffing in healthcare facilities is essential for a safe work environment for HCP and for safe patient care. This guidance is meant to be considered and implemented sequentially and appropriate implementation should be determined by local conditions impacting the healthcare facility/system.

The SARS-CoV-2 variant of concern, Omicron, was first detected in the state on December 12, 2021. Evidence suggests Omicron will rapidly increase in frequency and may potentially cause an additional surge of COVID-19 hospitalizations, further straining the state's healthcare systems.

Key Points for Managing Healthcare Personnel with SARS-CoV-2 Infection or Exposure to SARS-CoV-2

- In general, asymptomatic HCP who have had a higher-risk exposure do not require work restrictions if they have received all COVID-19 vaccine doses, including booster dose, as recommended by [CDC](#) and do not develop symptoms or test positive for SARS-CoV-2.
- The duration of protection offered by booster doses of vaccine and their effect on emerging variants are not clear; additional updates will be provided as more information becomes available.
- Maximizing interventions to protect HCP, patients, and visitors are critical at all times, including when considering strategies to address staffing shortages.

This interim guidance is intended to assist with:

1. Determining the duration of restriction from the workplace for HCP with SARS-CoV-2 infection.
2. Assessment of risk and application of workplace restrictions for asymptomatic HCP with exposure to SARS-CoV-2.

These mitigation strategies offer a continuum of options for addressing staffing shortages. Contingency, followed by crisis capacity, strategies augment conventional strategies and are meant to be considered and implemented sequentially (i.e., implementing contingency strategies before crisis strategies).

Employers and employee should make decisions based on the context of their setting with the strategies considered guidance and not mandates.

Below is a table outlining **Work Restrictions for HCP with SARS-CoV-2 Infection and Asymptomatic HCP with Exposures**:

HCP are considered “boosted” if they have received all COVID-19 vaccine doses, including a booster dose, as recommended by CDC. For more details, including recommendations for HCP who are immunocompromised, please refer to [Interim Guidance for Managing Healthcare Personnel with SARS-CoV-2 Infection or Exposure to SARS-CoV-2 | CDC](#) and [Strategies to Mitigate Healthcare Personnel Staffing Shortages | CDC](#)

Work Restrictions for HCP with SARS-CoV-2 Infection

Vaccination Status	Conventional	Contingency	Crisis
Boosted, vaccinated, or Unvaccinated	10 days or 7 days with a negative test, if asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic (with improving symptoms)	5 days with/without negative test, if asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic (with improving symptoms)	May remove all work restrictions, with prioritization considerations (e.g. asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic)

Work Restrictions for Asymptomatic HCP with Exposures

Vaccination Status	Conventional	Contingency	Crisis
Boosted	May remove all work restrictions, with negative test on days 2 and 5-7	May remove all work restrictions	May remove all work restrictions
Vaccinated or Unvaccinated, even if within 90 days of prior infection	10 days OR 7 days with negative test	May remove all work restrictions with negative test on days 1,2,3, 5-7	May remove all work restrictions (test if possible)

New Mexico Health Alert Network: To register for the New Mexico Health Alert Network, click the following link to go directly to the HAN registration page <https://nm.readyop.com/fs/4cjz/10b2> Please provide all information requested to begin receiving important health alerts and advisories.

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