

HOWARD COUNTY EMPLOYEE COVID-19 TESTING AND RETURNING TO WORK GUIDELINES

I. Definitions:

- a. **Suspected Patient-** A “Suspected Patient” is an employee who exhibits one or more of the following symptoms of COVID-19: (1) Low grade fever of 100.2 F or higher; (2) dry cough and difficulty breathing; (3) chills, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headaches, sore throat, congestion, runny nose, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, loss of taste, or sense of smell; or (4) any other symptom or combination of symptoms listed by the CDC.
- b. **Exposed Employee-** An “Exposed Employee” is someone who has had extended direct contact with a Suspected Patient or Confirmed Patient, which is defined as direct continuous contact at a distance of 6-feet or less for a continuous period of fifteen minutes or more when either individual was not wearing a mask.
- c. **Confirmed Patient-** A “Confirmed Patient” is defined as an employee who has actually received a positive test result for COVID-19.
- d. **Recovered Patient-** a “Recovered Patient” is defined as an employee who is previously tested positive for COVID-19.

II. Testing:

The Employee is responsible for making their own testing arrangements. The employee’s county insurance will pay for COVID-19 testing under the following three circumstances: (1) when an employee is a Suspected Patient; (2) when an employee needs confirmation that he or she is an Exposed Employee; or (3) when an employee needs confirmation that he or she is a Recovered Patient before returning to work. Employees who do not fall within one of these categories still remain at liberty to seek a COVID-19 test on their own pursuant to the terms and conditions of their health insurance coverage, but such testing will be billed to the patient according to the terms of their health insurance coverage.

Employees are encouraged to utilize any available drive-through or walk-up testing centers available in Howard County at the time when they need to be tested. Please contact Sharon Adams in the Howard County Treasures Office for the appropriate paperwork.

III. Workplace Response/Return to Work Guidelines for Suspected Patients, Confirmed Patients, or Exposed Employees:

Any employee who is a Suspected Patient or Confirmed Patient should be sent home immediately. All Suspected Patients should be tested as soon as possible, in accordance with the testing procedures in these Guidelines. Each employee testing positive or with symptoms of COVID-19 are encouraged to contact their primary