***CDC Contact Tracing: 6-15-48***

**You will need infected employees to identify others who worked within 6 feet of them, for 15 minutes or more, within the 48 hours prior to the sick individual showing symptoms, or later.**

As described below, remembering these three numbers will offer you an easy way to navigate the CDC’s often complex and confusing guidance.

**Determine Who Worked Within 6 Feet Of The Infected Employee**

The first step requires you to inquire with the infected employee about those who worked within close proximity of them. The CDC generally defines a [direct exposure](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/public-health-recommendations.html) to COVID-19 as an individual who is a household member with an infected person, intimate partner with an infected person, or an individual who has had close contact (< 6 feet) for a prolonged period of time with an infected individual.

**For Those Who Worked Within 6 Feet, Was It For 15 Minutes Or More?**

Another challenge for employers during this pandemic has been the constantly changing guidance from government agencies on how to address various workplace topics. The CDC’s definition of “prolonged period of time” is no exception. The current CDC [guidance](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/public-health-recommendations.html) on this issue states that “recommendations vary on the length of time of exposure, but 15 minutes of close exposure can be used as an operational definition.” Thus, after identifying the employees who worked within six feet of the individual worker, you should determine if any remained within that proximity of the sick employee for 15 minutes or more.

**Was The Direct Exposure For A Prolonged Period Of Time During The 48 Hours Before The Infected Employee Exhibit Symptoms Or Later?**

The CDC defines the key period of time for determining if an employee was exposed to an infected worker as the “period from [48 hours](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/public-health-recommendations.html) before symptoms onset until” the infected employee is cleared to [discontinue self-isolation](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html). For purposes of contact tracing, the key here is to look at the 48 hours before the sick employee had symptoms and was still working in the workplace. If a sick employee worked on Monday and Tuesday, started showing symptoms at 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday, and immediately left the workplace, you should look for employees working near them starting at 8:00 a.m. on Monday.

**Ask The 6-15-48 Employees To Remain Home For At Least 14 Days**

After following the above three steps, you have identified the *6-15-48* employees. Although asking the sick employee to identify these workers is likely the best contact tracing tool, you may want to check video surveillance to confirm the accuracy of the *6-15-48* employees the sick worker identifies.

Once identified, the CDC guidance for non-critical businesses provides that the *6-15-48* employees should take the following steps:

* Stay home until 14 days after last exposure and maintain social distance (at least six feet) from others at all times
* Self-monitor for symptoms
  + Check temperature twice a day
  + Watch for fever, cough, or shortness of breath
* Avoid contact with [people at higher risk for severe illness](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/high-risk-complications.html)(unless they live in the same home and had same exposure)
* Follow [CDC guidance](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html) if symptoms develop