



# National Postal Mail Handlers Union

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March 30, 2020

To: Local Presidents  
Regional Directors/Representatives  
National Executive Board

Fr: Charles R. Manago  
Contract Administration Representative

Re: **Postal Service Updates Criteria for Return to Work for Employees with Confirmed Case of COVID-19, Supervisors and Management Guidance**

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

Please find enclosed a copy of the above-reference documents, recently updated, from the Postal Service regarding:

- Criteria for Return to Work (RTW) for Employees with Confirmed Case of COVID-19, as of March 30, 2020.
- Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Supervisor and Management Guidance, as of March 30, 2020.
- Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Initial Decision Tree.

Please disseminate this information as you deem appropriate. Should you have any question or concerns do not hesitate to contact the Contract Administration Department.

Cc: Paul V. Hogrogian, National President  
Michael J. Hora, National Secretary-Treasurer  
Teresa L. Harmon, Manager Contract Administration

# Criteria for Return to Work for Employees with Confirmed Case of COVID-19

Updated Guidance as of 03/30/2020

The following information is provided to assist you as managers and supervisors when an employee has indicated their intent to return to work following a confirmed case of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

## General Guidelines:

If an employee notifies you of their intent to return to work following a laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 result, do not request documentation for the employee to return to work. Per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), healthcare provider offices and medical facilities may be extremely busy and unable to provide such documentation in a timely manner due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Rather, you must follow the process outlined below **prior** to allowing an employee to return to work.

Immediately upon employee notification of intent to return to work, the responsible supervisor or manager must:

1. Inform the employee they may not return to work until they have been cleared by a Postal Service physician or nurse;
2. Ask the employee for a phone number at which they can be reached;
3. Inform the employee they will be contacted by a Postal Service physician or nurse for a telephonic interview; **and** then
4. Immediately notify the District Occupational Health Nurse Administrator (OHNA) that you have an employee who has requested to return to work, and provide the OHNA with the employee's contact information (if your District OHNA is not available, please contact your District HR Manager for guidance).

The **Postal Service physician or nurse** will review the information and make a final determination on the return-to-work request. Employees are not permitted to return to work without written clearance from a Postal Service physician or nurse if they have received a laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 result.

For your information, per the CDC, options for decisions about return-to-work for individuals with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 include a test-based strategy or a non-test-based strategy. Employees **with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 who have stayed home** can stop home isolation and return to work following an interview with a Postal Service physician or nurse to confirm:

- **If employee will be tested** to determine if they are still contagious, they can return to work after these three things have happened:
  - Employee no longer has a fever (without the use of any fever-reducing medication); **AND**
  - Other symptoms have improved (for example, when cough or shortness of breath has improved); **AND**
  - *Employee receives one negative test result (test result should be final before isolation is ended).*
- **If employee will not have a test** to determine if they are still contagious, they can return to work after these three things have happened:
  - Employee has had no fever for at least 72 hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use of any fever-reducing medication); **AND**
  - Other symptoms have improved (for example, when cough or shortness of breath has improved); **AND**
  - At least 7 days have passed since COVID-19 symptoms first appeared.
- **If employee has not had symptoms despite laboratory-confirmed COVID-19**, they can discontinue home isolation and return to work when at least 7 days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test, **provided** they have had no subsequent illness or symptoms. Source: [CDC Guidance Discontinuation of Home Isolation](#)

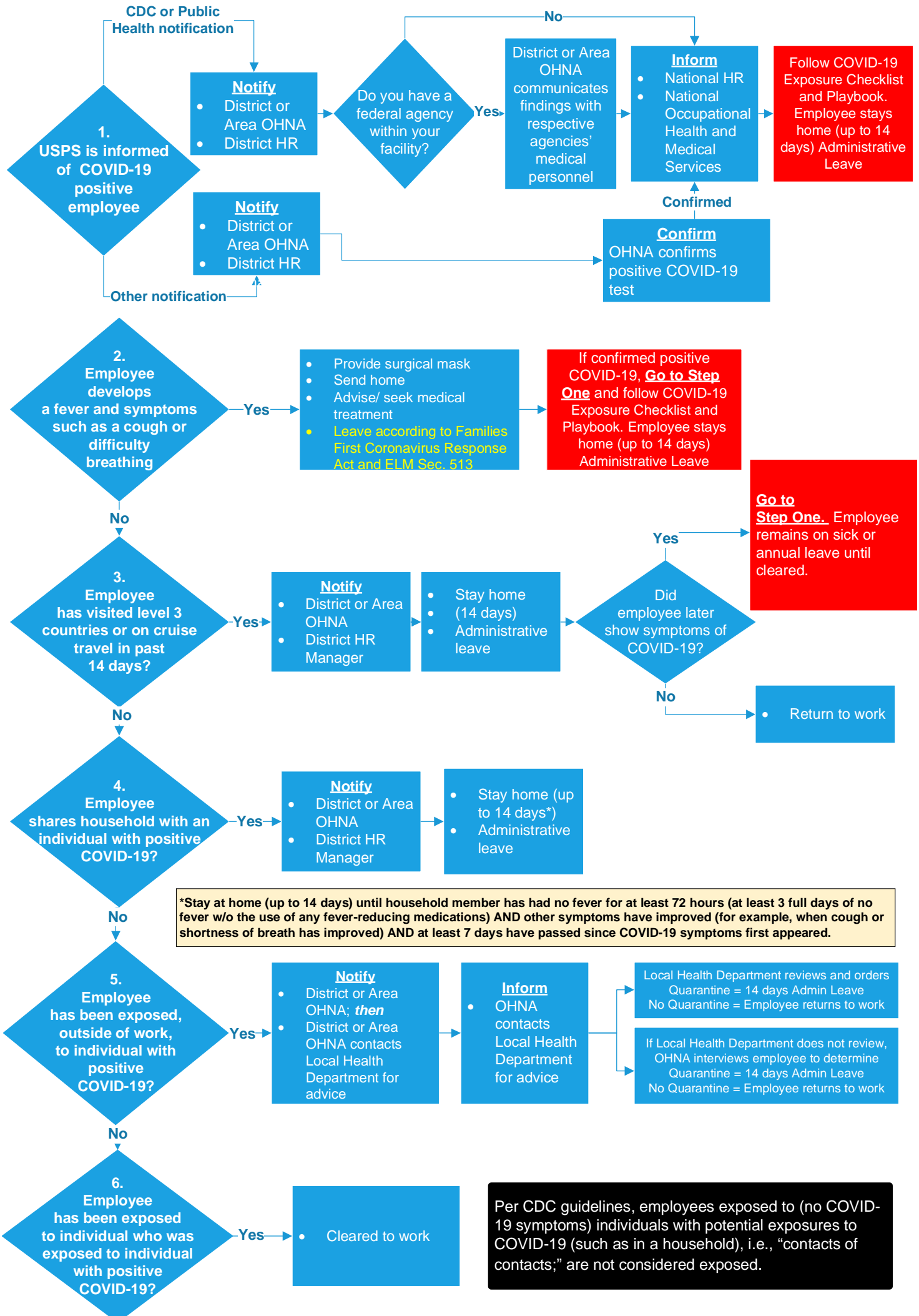
**Contact your District HR Manager or District OHNA if you have any questions.**

# COVID-19 – Initial Decision Tree

March 30, 2020

Employee information is protected by the Privacy and Rehabilitation Act and as such must be restricted to only those identified in this document.

For more information please contact Loretta Chamberlain at (202)748-2394 or call your Area OHNA and Area Human Resources Manager.



## CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19) SUPERVISOR AND MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE

UPDATED: March 30, 2020

The Postal Service continues to monitor the spread of COVID-19 across the United States. The following information is provided to assist you as managers and supervisors to communicate with your employees.

### Key Facts to Emphasize:

- 1) While there is still much to learn about the unfolding situation involving the spread of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), the immediate health risk from COVID-19 is considered low for the general American public.
- 2) If you have employees exhibiting these symptoms: fever, cough, **and** shortness of breath, provide them with a surgical mask and require them to go home and seek medical attention. Then, inform the District Occupational Health Nurse Administrator (OHNA) immediately ([OHNA Contact Information](#)).
- 3) The best preventive strategies against COVID-19 to communicate to your staff are:
  - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
  - Avoid being exposed through close contact (i.e., within six feet) with other people to the extent feasible.
  - Stay home when you are sick.

### General Guidelines:

- Immediately report any communication you receive from the Public Health Office or Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) concerning an employee's health to your District Human Resources (HR) Manager and District OHNA. Your District HR Manager and District OHNA will provide you with instructions for future action.
- If an employee in your facility has contracted COVID-19 or has been directly exposed to someone with COVID-19, contact your District HR Manager or District OHNA for instructions.
- An FMLA packet should be generated for any employee who uses leave in conjunction with COVID-19.
- Allow liberal sick leave usage for employees who are sick.
- Ensure approved hand sanitizer (containing at least 60% alcohol) is available at work.
- Ensure CDC posters concerning COVID-19 are posted in appropriate locations.
- Deliver stand-up talks regarding COVID-19 in a timely manner.
- 4) Provide the contact information of your District OHNA ([OHNA Contact Information](#)) and District HR Manager to all employees under your supervision.
- Provide surgical masks to any employee who requests one, which can be ordered through eBuy Plus.
- Ensure Postal facility is cleaned daily as per the MMO-031-20, *Influenza and Coronavirus Cleaning Contingency*.
- Only advise other employees, if asked, that an employee has been "cleared" to return to work.
- Contact your District OHNA if an employee who tested positive is ready to return to work.
- Upon return from a confirmed COVID-19 related absence, any documentation the employee provides must be given to the OHNA.

### DO NOT:

- Require medical documentation for employees to return to work from a confirmed COVID-19 related absence.
- Request fitness-for-duty evaluations for employees to return to work.
- Share specific health information about any employee, including an employee who is suspected or who has been confirmed to have COVID-19.
- Make "medical decisions."

**Contact your District HR Manager or District OHNA if you have any questions.**