Mecklenburg County Public Health
Returning to Work after a Positive COVID-19 Test

Mecklenburg County Public Health currently does NOT recommend a negative test prior to returning to work for individuals who have been diagnosed with COVID-19.

Most employees can stop home isolation and return to work once they have met the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) symptoms-based criteria or time-based criteria to be removed from home isolation and are feeling well enough to return.

CDC Criteria for Stopping Home Isolation	
If the employee had symptoms:	**If the employee had NO symptoms:**
• At least 10 days since symptoms first appeared AND • Symptoms have improved AND • 24 hours with no fever	• At least 10 days since date of test AND • No symptoms develop

Employees with a weakened immune system, who have had severe or critical illness, and/or who work in specific high-risk occupations (e.g. healthcare workers, first responders, long-term care facilities, congregate settings) may need to meet additional criteria prior to returning to work.

Should an employer require a negative COVID-19 test by a returning employee?

Employers should NOT require a negative COVID-19 test for return to work. Viral tests can sometimes remain positive after a person has recovered from COVID-19 and does not necessarily mean that the person is still contagious.

We continue to have limited testing capacity in the county and need to use tests in a way that maximizes our ability to identify new infections and prevent further spread.

Should an employer require documentation prior to returning to work?

In general, Public Health discourages most businesses and employers from requiring a note to return to work. If employees meet the criteria described above, they do not need any verification before returning to work.

All employees should continue to "Remember Your Ws."

After returning to work, it is important that all employees continue to take precautions to protect themselves and others including:

- Wear a face covering (unless unable to do so).
- Practice social distancing.
- Perform hand hygiene frequently.
- Disinfect high-touch surfaces frequently.
- Stay home and isolate from others if COVID-19 symptoms develop again.

WEAR a cloth face covering.

WAIT 6 feet apart. Avoid close contact.

WASH your hands often or use hand sanitizer.

@NCDHHS   #StayStrongNC

Questions? Contact Mecklenburg County Public Health at **980-314-9400.**