Contact Tracing in the Workplace

Contact tracing is a public health tool that is used to help stop the spread of certain communicable diseases. It involves identifying others that may have had recent close contact with a person confirmed to have the virus and giving those close contacts guidance on how to stay safe and healthy. This includes close contacts self-quarantining to prevent further spread of the virus. Quarantine is important with COVID-19 as a person can spread the virus before they know they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms. This information must be reported to the Kent County Health Department, call 616-326-0606.

Symptomatic Case
Employee tests positive after having symptoms.
Symptoms include:
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Fever (Temp > 38°C / 100.4°F)
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

Date symptoms started: ___ / ___ / ______
2 days prior to this: ___ / ___ / ______

Dates Employee worked on or after the above calculated date:

*If the employee did not work during/after the 2-day window, the need to contact trace is up to employer discretion.

Close contacts on those dates:
People in the workplace who are close contacts are those who were in proximity to the infected person for >15 minutes and within 6 ft with or without a mask.

Asymptomatic Case
Employee tests positive and has NOT had symptoms.

Test Date: ___ / ___ / ______
2 days prior to test date: ___ / ___ / ______

Dates Employee worked on or after the above calculated date:

*If the employee did not work during/after the 2-day window, the need to contact trace is up to employer discretion.

Close contacts on those dates:
People in the workplace who are close contacts are those who were in proximity to the infected person for >15 minutes and within 6 ft with or without a mask.

Those who are identified as close contacts should be under self-quarantine (not leave the house unless necessary) for 14 days from last time of known exposure.

Helpful questions to consider when identifying close contacts in the workplace:
- Who does employee work near? (less than 6 ft)
- Who does employee spend time with during breaks? (Has there been adequate physical distancing in breakrooms & lunchrooms?)
- Are there any others at the business that live with the employee, or carpool to work with?

Other considerations for employers when there is more than one positive case identified (to look for patterns/areas of concern):
- Did employer already know employee had been identified as a close/household contact of someone who was positive for COVID-19?
- Is there one shift or location in the facility that seems to be more affected?
- Is there something else in common with positive cases?
- Mask adherence in the workplace? (not just while working, but during breaks and prior to shift?)

*Please note: Cloth masks help slow the spread of the virus. Masks may keep a person from unknowingly spreading the virus to others, but it is not known how well they protect a person from contracting the virus. Guidance from public health officials in regard to the use of masks should be followed.