



FMCS

FEDERAL MEDIATION &  
CONCILIATION SERVICE

# **COVID-19 Workplace Safety Framework**

*As of: October 17, 2022*

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## Purpose

**The health and safety of the FMCS workforce and the public we service is the agency's paramount priority.** The Federal Government and the FMCS are committed to addressing essential work requirements consistent with best public health practices.

As set forth in the January 20, 2021, Executive Order 13991 “Protecting the Federal Workforce and Requiring Mask-Wearing,” the policy of the Administration is “to halt the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) by relying on the best available data and science-based public health measures”. This Framework has been developed in accordance with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) memorandum M-21-15, COVID-19 Safe Federal Workplace: Agency Model Safety Principles, issued January 24, 2021; M-21-25, Integrating Planning for a Safe Increased Return of Federal Employees and Contractors to Physical Workplaces with Post-Reentry Personnel Policies and Work Environment, issued June 10, 2021; Safer Federal Workforce Task Force COVID-19 Workplace Safety: Agency Model Safety Principles, issued July 29, 2021; updated U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance; Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines; and Federal guidance.

This Framework outlines the requirements to protect the health and safety of the FMCS workforce from COVID-19, which ensures the effective accomplishment of the FMCS mission. The Framework is a living document that will be updated as needed to account for changing COVID-19 conditions and CDC guidelines. New and updated information in this safety plan is identified by bold “**NEW** or **UPDATED**” at the beginning of the section.

## Scope and Applicability

This Framework replaces the FMCS COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan, revised in September 2021, and provides overall FMCS requirements and guidance. The safety principles in this Framework document apply to Federal employees, contractors, and any others entering or working at FMCS leased facilities. The principles presented here establish a minimum level for workplace safety and are aligned to current CDC guidance and established public health best practices. Based on evolving research and understanding of COVID-19, the principles and guidance in this reentry plan may be reassessed and changed if necessary to ensure the agency is continuing to place the health and safety of the workforce as the top priority.

## COVID-19 Coordination Team- Updated

In October 2022, the Acting Director of FMCS updated the FMCS COVID-19 Coordination Team which was previously established in December of 2020:

Mr. Gregory Goldstein, Acting Director, Chief Operating Officer, [ggoldstein@fmcs.gov](mailto:ggoldstein@fmcs.gov)

Mr. Javier Ramirez, Deputy Director Field Operations, [jramirez@fmcs.gov](mailto:jramirez@fmcs.gov)

Mr. Josh Flax, Deputy Director, Policy and Strategy, [jflax@fmcs.gov](mailto:jflax@fmcs.gov)

Ms. Angie Titcombe, Human Resources Director, [atitcombe@fmcs.gov](mailto:atitcombe@fmcs.gov)

Ms. Alisa Zimmerman, Acting General Counsel, [azimmerman@fmcs.gov](mailto:azimmerman@fmcs.gov)

Ms. Cynthia Washington, Procurement and Operations Director, [cwashington@fmcs.gov](mailto:cwashington@fmcs.gov)

Ms. Natalie Samuels, Benefits Officer, [nsmauels@fmcs.gov](mailto:nsmauels@fmcs.gov)

Ms. Beth Schindler, Associate Deputy Director, Regional, [bschindler@fmcs.gov](mailto:bschindler@fmcs.gov)

Ms. Sarah Cudahy, Associate Deputy Director, National, [scudahy@fmcs.gov](mailto:scudahy@fmcs.gov)

FMCS's COVID-19 Coordination Team is responsible for establishing, implementing, and monitoring compliance with the health and safety requirements specified in this Framework. The team meets regularly to review this Framework and to consider potential revisions and updates based on emerging guidance and any other operational needs.

## Principles

- **The health and safety of FMCS Federal and contractor employees are of paramount importance and guide all actions for employees at FMCS facilities.**
- The Framework aligns with OMB's and the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force's model safety principles and will be revised as necessary to account for any superseding or additional guidance.
- CDC-recommended and optional practices, including enhanced entrance screening, social distancing, and workplace protocols will be used, as practical and appropriate, to lower risk.
- Where a locality has imposed additional pandemic-related requirements more stringent than those set forth in this framework, FMCS employees will adhere to not only these internal standards, but any other additional standards in place at FMCS leased facilities.
- Plans and protocols will consider contingencies to prepare for potential new developments.
- The Agency will use CDC guidelines to reassess and inform decisions as conditions warrant.

## Operating Status Utilizing CDC Local Conditions- Updated

FMCS utilizes the CDC COVID-19 Community Levels which measure the impact of COVID-19 illness on health and healthcare systems and inform the appropriate prevention to utilize at a given time. FMCS will utilize the CDC Local Conditions to assess risk and mandate safety protocols based on the level of the local community. All employees will weekly receive an updated report for all FMCS physical locations. If FMCS employees are providing in-person services they are required to review the CDC Local Conditions found here: [COVID-19 by County | CDC](#) to determine if additional COVID-19 safety protocols are needed. At no time shall a supervisor approve any activities which are in violation of the requirements set forth by the Safer Federal Workforce ([Safer Federal Workforce](#)) and internal procedures.

The CDC classifies COVID-19 local conditions into 3 categories, Low, Medium, and High.

New Cases (per 100k population in the last 7 Days)	Indicators	Low	Medium	High
<b>Fewer than 200</b>	New COVID-19 admissions per 100,000 population (7-day total)	<10.0	10.0-19.9	>20.0
	Percent of staffed inpatient beds occupied by COVID-19 patients (7-day average)	<10.0%	10.0-14.9%	>15.0%
<b>200 or more</b>	New COVID-19 admissions per 100,000 population (7-day total)	NA	<10.0	>10.0
	Percent of staffed inpatient beds occupied by COVID-19 patients (7-day average)	NA	<10%	>10%

The COVID-19 community level is determined by the higher of the inpatient beds and new admissions indicators, based on the current level of new cases per 100,000 population in the past 7 days.

Overview of Federal Facility COVID-19 Safety Protocols by COVID-19 Community Level:

Federal Facility COVID-19 Safety Protocols	When COVID-19 Community Level is LOW	When COVID-19 Community Level is MEDIUM	When COVID-19 Community Level is HIGH
Federal employee vaccination requirement pursuant to E.O. 14043	No implementation or enforcement given a nationwide injunction <sup>3</sup>	No implementation or enforcement given a nationwide injunction <sup>3</sup>	No implementation or enforcement given a nationwide injunction <sup>3</sup>
To be consistent with Task Force guidance, agencies would need to <b>require documentation of vaccination status</b> from employees, and <b>ask about the vaccination status of onsite contractor employees and visitors.</b>	Pause, given that COVID-19 safety protocols do not vary by vaccination status at this time <sup>4</sup>	Pause, given that COVID-19 safety protocols do not vary by vaccination status at this time <sup>4</sup>	Pause, given that COVID-19 safety protocols do not vary by vaccination status at this time <sup>4</sup>
Agencies must <b>require all individuals to wear a high-quality mask or respirator (such as an N95)</b> regardless of vaccination status.	NO <sup>5</sup> (mask-wearing optional)	NO <sup>5</sup> (mask-wearing optional)	YES
Where agencies have established <b>serial screening testing programs and/or point-in-time screening testing requirements for certain agency-identified high-risk settings</b> , <sup>6</sup> screening testing must be implemented for individuals enrolled in the program or subject to the requirement, regardless of vaccination status.	NO	YES	YES
To be consistent with Task Force guidance, agencies would need to require <b>symptom screening</b> self-checks for all individuals prior to entry to Federal facilities.	YES	YES	YES

Travel- Updated

There are no travel restrictions for FMCS employees. FMCS will adhere to CDC guidance concerning official [domestic](#) and [international](#) travel before, during, and after travel.

When approving travel supervisors will:

- Inform those employees that CDC recommends that individuals make sure they are up to date with COVID-19 vaccines before travel;
- Recommend that those employees consider being tested for current infection with a viral test as close to the time of departure as possible (no more than 3 days) before travel;
- Instruct those employees to check their destination COVID-19 Community Level before traveling and to wear a high-quality mask or respirator (such as a N-95) while on-duty and around others indoors at their destination, if the COVID-19 Community Level in the county where their destination is located is HIGH;
- Instruct those employees to make sure they understand and follow all travel restrictions put in place by State, Tribal, local, and territorial governments; and
- Advise those employees to prepare to be flexible during their travel, as restrictions and policies may change during their travel.

Supervisors may approval official travel for individuals without COVID-19 symptoms even if the individuals have had a known close contact with someone with COVID-19. If the individual remains without COVID-19 [symptoms](#) before traveling, the supervisor will instruct the individual to, in addition to other CDC travel requirements:

- Wear a high-quality mask or respirator (such as an N95) the entire time they are on-duty and around others indoors for the full duration of their travel that falls within the 10 full days after their last known exposure;
- Not travel on public transportation such as airplanes, buses, and trains if they will not be able to wear a high-quality mask or respirator (such as an N95) when around others indoors for the full duration of their travel within the 10 full days after their last known exposure; and
- Follow other aspects of post-exposure protocols, including the requirement for individuals with a known exposure to be tested for COVID-19 after 5 full days following their last known exposure (ideally, on or after day 6)—note that this testing may need to occur while the individual is traveling, and that agencies do not need to require that employees wait for the results of this post-exposure diagnostic test to undertake official travel, including return travel.

The agency will not approve official travel if the individual develops COVID-19 symptoms, and must instruct the individual to follow FMCS [isolation](#) requirements.

Pursuant to Executive Order 13991 and consistent with CDC guidance, FMCS will not approve official travel (i.e., travel conducted under an official travel authorization) for individuals who have COVID-19 symptoms and are waiting for an initial diagnostic test result. FMCS also will not approve official travel for at least five full days after the first day of symptoms for individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19, or five full days after the date of a positive viral test for asymptomatic individuals.

If an individual who tested positive for COVID-19 has returned to working onsite at an agency workplace or interacting with members of the public as part of their official responsibilities, once they are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and their other symptoms are improving, then the agency may approve official travel for the individual.

The agency must instruct the individual to, in addition to other standard pre-travel instructions related to COVID-19:

- Wear a high-quality [mask or respirator](#) (such as an N95) the entire time they are on-duty and around others indoors for the full duration of their travel that falls within the period they are otherwise required to wear a high-quality mask or respirator after ending [isolation](#), consistent with Safer Federal Workforce Task Force guidance;
- Not travel on public transportation such as airplanes, buses, and trains if they will not be able to wear a high-quality mask or respirator (such as an N95) when around others indoors for the full duration of their travel that falls within the period they are otherwise required to wear a high-quality mask or respirator after ending [isolation](#), consistent with Safer Federal Workforce Task Force guidance; and
- Follow other aspects of [post-isolation protocols](#).

If at any point prior to travel their COVID-19 symptoms recur or worsen, agencies must not approve the official travel, and must instruct the individual to again not enter a Federal facility or interact with members of the public as part of their official responsibilities, restarting at day 0 of [isolation](#) protocols, consistent with Executive Order 13991 and CDC recommendations on [isolation](#) and the protocols set forth by their agency.

If an employee has probable or confirmed COVID-19 while on official travel (i.e., travel conducted under an official travel authorization), then pursuant to Executive Order 13991 and consistent with CDC guidance, FMCS will instruct the individual to follow agency [isolation](#) protocols and not undertake further travel, including return travel, for at least 5 full days after their first day of symptoms, or after the date of a positive viral test for asymptomatic individuals. FMCS will cover all costs associated with travel and lodging expenses, as well as the cost of any diagnostic testing, in these circumstances, to the extent permitted by the Federal Travel Regulation. After that point, once the individual is fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and their other symptoms are improving, then the supervisor may approve further travel, including return travel. The supervisor will then instruct the individual to, in addition to other standard pre-travel instructions related to COVID-19:

- Wear a high-quality [mask or respirator](#) (such as an N95) the entire time they are on-duty and around others indoors for the full duration of their travel that falls within the period they are otherwise required to wear a high-quality mask or respirator after ending [isolation](#), consistent with Safer Federal Workforce Task Force guidance;
- Not travel on public transportation such as airplanes, buses, and trains if they will not be able to wear a high-quality mask or respirator (such as an N95) when around others indoors for the full duration of their travel that falls within the period they are otherwise required to wear a high-quality mask or respirator after ending [isolation](#), consistent with Safer Federal Workforce Task Force guidance; and
- Follow other aspects of [post-isolation protocols](#).

If at any point prior to their return travel their COVID-19 symptoms recur or worsen, supervisors will not approve the return travel, and must instruct the individual to again not enter a Federal facility or interact with members of the public as part of their official responsibilities, restarting at day 0 of [isolation](#) protocols. To be consistent with Safer Federal Workforce Task Force guidance, FMCS will cover all costs associated with travel and lodging expenses, as well as the cost of any diagnostic testing, in these circumstances, to the extent permitted by the Federal Travel Regulation.

## Vaccinations- Updated

**FMCS is holding enforcement of the vaccine mandate in abeyance pursuant to the nation-wide injunction.**

Vaccines are now widely accessible throughout the United States. All FMCS Federal employees were mandated to be fully vaccinated by November 22, 2021, other than in limited circumstances where the law requires an exemption. FMCS employees who are not fully vaccinated must comply with all required OMB and agency requirements, including but not limited to masking, physical distancing, and travel, unless not required due to a legal exemption.

Employees who are eligible for a COVID-19 booster shot are authorized up to 4 hours of administrative leave time to receive a COVID-19 vaccine booster shot. The administrative leave will cover the time it takes to travel to the vaccination site, receive the vaccination dose, and return to work. Because there is currently no requirement for Federal employees to receive a vaccine booster shot or additional dose, granting duty time is not allowable in these instances. If an employee needs to spend less time getting the vaccine booster shot or additional dose, only the needed amount of administrative leave should be granted. Employees should obtain advance approval from their supervisor before using administrative leave for purposes of obtaining a COVID-19 vaccine booster shot or additional dose. Employees may not be credited with administrative leave or overtime work for time spent getting a booster vaccine shot or additional dose outside their tour of duty.

In the case of booster shots, this policy may be applied retroactively to the time when authorized booster shots became available (no earlier than September 22, 2021, when the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) amended the emergency use authorization for the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine to allow for the use of a single booster dose). In the case of additional doses, this policy may be applied retroactively to the time when authorized additional doses became available (i.e., no earlier than August 12, 2021, when the FDA amended the emergency use authorization for the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines to allow for the use of an additional dose in certain immunocompromised individuals).

In general, people are considered fully vaccinated:

- 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or
- 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine

FMCS employees who do not meet these requirements are NOT fully vaccinated. Employees are recommended to continue taking all [precautions](#) until fully vaccinated.

If an employee has a condition or are taking medications that weaken their immune system, they may not be fully protected even if they are fully vaccinated and have received an additional dose. These employees should continue to take all precautions recommended for unvaccinated people until advised otherwise by their healthcare provider. Additional information concerning vaccine requirements are found at FMCS Directive 1106 at: [DIRECTIVE 1106 COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAM](#).

## Post-Exposure Precautions and Isolation- Updated



FMCS employees who have a known exposure to someone with COVID-19 and are asymptomatic (symptomless) are not required to quarantine at home and can continue their duties without restrictions. Supervisors will instruct individuals who are known to have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, regardless of their vaccination status, to:

- Wear a high-quality mask or respirator (such as an N95) while working indoors at a FMCS physical location or interacting indoors with members of the public in person as part of their official responsibilities as soon as possible after notification of exposure and continue to do so for 10 full days from the date they were last known to have been exposed;
- Take extra precautions, such as avoiding crowding and physically distancing from others, when they know they are around people who are more likely to get very sick from COVID-19 while working onsite at a FMCS physical location or interacting with members of the public in person as part of their official responsibilities, for 10 full days from the date they were last known to have been exposed; and
- Watch for COVID-19 symptoms for 10 full days from the date they were last known to have been exposed.

For purposes of calculating the 10 full days, day 0 is the day of their last known exposure to someone with COVID-19, and day 1 is the first full day after their last known exposure.

As part of FMCS testing protocols, and pursuant to Executive Order 13991 and consistent with CDC guidance, requires that such employees and contractor employees who are known to have been exposed to COVID-19 and are working onsite at a FMCS location or interacting with members of the public in person as part of their official responsibilities be tested with a viral test authorized by the FDA to detect current infection at least 5 full days after their last known exposure (ideally, on or after day 6). The test can be both self-administered and self-read by the employee if the employee certifies as to when they took the test and that they received a negative result. FMCS will reimburse employees for required tests.

If the individual tests negative, they must continue to follow the above precautions for 10 full days from the date they were last known to have been exposed. If they test positive, or if they at any time develop COVID-19 symptoms, they must follow agency protocols on isolation.

If the individual that has been known to be exposed to COVID-19 is not working onsite at a FMCS location or interacting with members of the public in person as part of their official responsibilities within 10 days of the known exposure, FMCS does not require employees to be tested.

If the individual that has been known to be exposed to COVID-19 had tested positive for COVID-19 with a viral test within the previous 30 days and subsequently recovered and remains without COVID-19 symptoms, then they do not need to get tested after a known exposure. If the individual that had been known to be exposed to COVID-19 had tested positive for COVID-19 with a viral test within the previous 31-90 days and subsequently recovered and remains without COVID-19 symptoms, then they should be tested using a viral antigen test. (See also: CDC guidance on specific testing recommendations for those that have had COVID-19 within the past 90 days.)

#### **Isolation and Other Safety Protocols for Those with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19-NEW**

Any individual with probable or confirmed COVID-19, regardless of their vaccination status, must not enter a FMCS physical location, a Federal facility, or interact with members of the public in person as part of their official responsibilities, consistent with CDC guidance on [isolation](#) and the workplace safety protocols, and monitor their symptoms. This includes people who have a [positive viral test](#) for COVID-19, regardless of whether or not they have symptoms, and people with symptoms of COVID-19, including people who are awaiting test results or have not been tested. Employees working onsite at a FMCS location or interacting with members of the public in person as part of their official responsibilities who develop COVID-19 [symptoms](#) must isolate even if they do not know if they have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19.

Employees who tested positive for COVID-19 and never developed symptoms are authorized to return to working onsite at a FMCS location or interacting with members of the public as part of their official responsibilities after 5 full days following their positive COVID-19 test (day 0 being the day the individual was tested).

FMCS will allow individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 and had symptoms to return to working onsite at a FMCS location or interacting with members of the public as part of their official responsibilities after 5 full days from the onset of symptoms (day 0 being the day of symptom onset, regardless of when the individual was tested), once they are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and their other symptoms are improving. Note that loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation. If at any point an employees' COVID-19 symptoms recur or worsen, individuals will not enter a FMCS location, Federal facility, or interact with members of the public as part of their official responsibilities, restarting at day 0, consistent with Executive Order 13991 and CDC recommendations on [isolation](#).

If an individual had moderate illness (if they experienced shortness of breath or had difficulty breathing) or severe illness (they were hospitalized) due to COVID-19, or they have a weakened immune system, then to be consistent with Safer Federal Workforce Task Force guidance, FMCS advises the individual to delay returning to working at an FMCS location or interacting with members of the public as part of their official responsibilities for a full 10 days. If an individual had severe illness or has a weakened immune system, they should consult their doctor before ending isolation. If an individual is unsure if their symptoms are moderate or severe or if they have a weakened immune system, FMCS advises the individual to talk to a healthcare provider for further guidance.

Once an individual has returned to working onsite at a FMCS location or interacting with members of the public as part of their official responsibilities after having tested positive for COVID-19 and isolated consistent with [CDC guidance on isolation](#), then pursuant to Executive Order 13991 and consistent with CDC guidance, the individual will continue to take precautions consistent with CDC guidance for at least 10 full days after their first day of symptoms, or after the date of a positive viral test for asymptomatic individuals, including wearing a high-quality [mask or respirator](#) (such as an N95) when around others, avoiding eating and drinking around others, avoiding environments such as dining facilities, gyms, or other places where they may need to be unmasked around others, and avoiding being around people who they know are at [high risk for severe disease from COVID-19](#).

FMCS encourages individuals that they can opt to take two viral antigen tests authorized by the FDA to detect current COVID-19 infection, starting on day 6. With two sequential negative tests 48 hours apart, the individual may remove their mask sooner than day 10. If either of their antigen test results are positive, the individual should continue taking antigen tests at least 48 hours apart until they have two

sequential negative results. This may mean that the individual would continue wearing a high-quality mask and testing beyond day 10.

If at any point their COVID-19 symptoms recur or worsen, employees will again not enter a FMCS location, a Federal facility, or interact with members of the public as part of their official responsibilities, restarting at day 0, consistent with Executive Order 13991 and CDC recommendations on [isolation](#).

## Mask-Wearing- Updated

Individuals can and are encouraged to wear a mask if they choose in FMCS facilities regardless of COVID-19 Community Level.

FMCS employees must wear a “high-quality” [mask or respirator](#) when COVID-19 Community Levels are HIGH, and when employees are undergoing post-exposure and post-isolation precautions, to be consistent with Safer Federal Workforce Task Force guidance. FMCS will provide high-quality masks which meet U.S. or international standards (e.g., N-95, KN95, KF94), masks that meet a standard (e.g., ASTM), or “procedure” or “surgical”-style masks. Masks not meeting these standards are not authorized at FMCS locations and while performing official duties when required. FMCS will post signs at entry locations to our facilities when requiring individuals to wear a high-quality mask. Individuals are required to wear high quality masks in Government operated vehicles when there are multiple occupants.

FMCS masking protocols based on COVID-19 Community Levels	
When COVID-19 Community Level is <b>LOW</b> in the county where a Federal facility is located	Individuals are not required to wear masks in an FMCS facility, regardless of vaccination status.
When COVID-19 Community Level is <b>Medium</b> in the county where a Federal facility is located	Individuals are not required to wear masks in an FMCS facility, regardless of vaccination status.
When COVID-19 Community Level is <b>HIGH</b> in the county where a Federal facility is located	Individuals are required to wear masks in an FMCS facility, regardless of vaccination status and consistent with CDC and Task Force guidance on mask-wearing.

Generally, FMCS employees in travel status must abide by the protocols above based on the county in which they are traveling. However, FMCS employees must abide by any stricter protocols of the county in which they are traveling if not in a federal facility. Additionally, the protocols are subject to CDC guidelines on travel. See Travel section above (e.g., masks must still be worn on airplanes).

## Visitors- Updated

To be consistent with Safer Federal Workforce Task Force guidance, FMCS will pause asking visitors to provide information about their COVID-19 vaccination status, where COVID-19 safety protocols do not vary based on vaccination status. This is true regardless of COVID-19 Community Levels. FMCS will not ask individuals about if they have screened for COVID-19 and will not have to provide a negative COVID-19 test for entry into FMCS locations or to receive services.

## Meetings, Events, and Conferences- Updated

FMCS does not have any additional COVID-19 restrictions concerning meetings, events, and conferences unless listed in this document or other updated guidance.

## Symptom Screening- New

Individuals are not required to provide individual symptom screening to enter a FMCS location or provide services. However, if an employee, contractor employee, or visitor has fever or chills, or if they have other new or unexplained symptoms consistent with COVID-19 such as new or unexplained onset of cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing, new or unexplained loss of taste or smell, or new or unexplained muscle aches, they should not enter a FMCS location, Federal workplace or interact with the public. If an individual suspects that they have COVID-19, such as because they have new or unexplained COVID-19 symptoms, but they do not yet have test results, they should not enter a FMCS location or interacting with members of the public as part of their official responsibilities and should get tested if they have not already done so.

To be consistent with Safer Federal Workforce Task Force guidance, FMCS employees and on-site contractors, and all visitors are required complete symptom screening before entering a Federal facility. FMCS requires that all employee's complete symptom screening prior to interacting with members of the public in person as part of their official responsibilities. Symptom screening can be self-conducted and does not need to be verified by FMCS personnel. In developing these tools, FMCS will utilize the screening tool developed by [CDC](#).

To be consistent with Safer Federal Workforce Task Force guidance, FMCS will allow individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 and had symptoms to return to working onsite at a FMCS location or interacting with members of the public as part of their official responsibilities after 5 full days from the onset of symptoms (day 0 being the day of symptom onset, regardless of when the individual tested positive), once they are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and their other symptoms are improving. Note that loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation. If at any point their COVID-19 symptoms recur or worsen, FMCS employees are instructed to again not enter a FMCS location, Federal facilities, or interact with members of the public as part of their official responsibilities, restarting at day 0, consistent with Executive Order 13991 and CDC recommendations on [isolation](#) and the protocols.

FMCS supervisors should contact the Human Resources Office for questions on reporting who must stay out or leave the workplace during the workplace during the workday due to COVID-19 symptoms.

## Testing- New

FMCS will reimburse employees who are exposed to COVID-19, including, asymptomatic employees at least 5 full days after they last had a known exposure to someone with COVID-19 when such employees are working onsite at an agency workplace or interacting with members of the public in person as part of their official responsibilities (unless the employee tested positive for COVID-19 with a [viral test](#) within the previous 30 days and subsequently recovered and remains without COVID-19 symptoms, in which case they do not need to get tested after exposure). FMCS will not require screening testing either point in time, or serial screening.

Under certain conditions FMCS is required to report to OSHA if an employee tests positive for SARS-Cov-2 (COVID-19) infection. The agency must record on the OSHA Illness and Injury Log if the employees who have a positive COVID-19 test, utilizing an approved FDA methodology adhere to all confidentiality and privacy requirements. The point of contact is Mr. Greg Goldstein.

## Confidentiality and Privacy

FMCS will adhere to all confidentiality and privacy requirements. The point of contact is Mr. Greg Goldstein for all questions relating to FMCS treatment of personal medical information in the context of COVID-19 safety protocols.

## Building Operations- New

All FMCS locations does not have a FMCS occupancy limits solely for the purpose of facilitating physical distancing as a COVID-19 prevention action. Physical distancing is no longer required, however when COVID-19 Community Levels are Medium and High FMCS encourages individuals to consider physical distancing for themselves in common areas and meeting rooms.

## Leave- Updated

If a FMCS employee is isolating because they have COVID-19 symptoms and are waiting for a test result, or because they have probable or confirmed COVID-19 and is unable to or does not feel well enough to telework, then the employee may request sick leave, use accrued annual leave or other forms of earned paid time off (e.g., compensatory time off or credit hours), access a voluntary leave bank, or use unpaid leave in this situation, as appropriate. FMCS supervisors can authorize 1 day of administrative leave to employees who have COVID-19 symptoms and are isolating while actively seeking to be tested.

If an employee who is recommended to isolate because they have COVID-19 symptoms and are waiting for a test result or to be tested, or because they have probable or confirmed COVID-19, attempts to report to the workplace, FMCS will direct the employee to return home and telework. If the employee is unable to telework (because, for example, they are sick, ineligible to telework, do not have an applicable telework agreement, or are otherwise not able to telework based on their job duties), and the employee does not request to use sick leave, annual leave, or other forms of paid time off (e.g., compensatory time off or credit hours), FMCS may bar the employee from the workplace for the safety of others. Any decision to bar the employee should be made in consultation with the FMCS Human Resources office, Office of General Counsel, and the Chief Operating Officer. If FMCS bars the employee from the workplace, the employee will be placed on administrative leave until the FMCS determines what status the employee should be placed in while isolating (e.g., enforced leave). If FMCS elects to place the employee on enforced leave while isolating, the agency will follow appropriate processes for placing an employee on enforced leave (e.g., adverse action process). FMCS will only utilize this option as a last resort when evaluating the protection of co-workers.

If a FMCS employee, while on official travel (i.e., travel conducted under an official travel authorization), an employee has probable or confirmed COVID-19, then the employee should follow agency [isolation](#) protocols and delay their return travel (see [Travel FAQs](#)). The employee may request sick leave, use accrued annual leave or other forms of earned paid time off (e.g., compensatory time off or credit hours), access a voluntary leave bank, or use unpaid leave in this situation, as appropriate.

Previously, when employees were subject to quarantine based on a close-contact exposure to COVID-19, Safer Federal Workforce Task Force, and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) guidance advised agencies to grant weather and safety leave during the quarantine period for employees who were unable to telework. Current CDC guidance no longer recommends quarantine based on COVID-19 exposure or following travel, so weather and safety leave will not be granted for purposes of quarantine.