

Good morning,

We are 6 months into our living with the Pandemic and from all we have heard most offices are returning to some semblance of normal. There are still many challenges one of which is how to deal with positive testing and people including children of staff members in school who may have symptoms. You should have these addressed in your office protocol binder so everyone knows what to do if these situations occur. I have read through the directives from the PEI government on their web site that you can all access but to save you some work I have included some here and their application to us.

COVID-19 Positive Cases in the Dental Office

With any increase in COVID-19 cases, some dental offices could learn they may have seen patients who tested COVID-19 positive subsequent to their appointment, or similarly may have staff who test positive.

THE DAPEI WOULD advise that dental offices do not need to shut down if they have a patient or staff member who tests positive for COVID-19, although the infected individual would need to self-isolate for 14 days. This advice is given on the assumption that the dental office is following all recommended COVID-19 protocols. Should we get further updates or clarification, we will provide this information as soon as it becomes available. This is based on guidelines from the BCDA and Worksafe BC.

FAQ's From the PEI Government Covid Website:

What does it mean to self-isolate?

Self-isolation means limiting contact with others. This means all situations where you may come in contact with others, such as social gatherings, work, school, child care, athletic events, university, faith-based gatherings, healthcare facilities, grocery stores, restaurants, shopping malls, and all public gatherings. **YOU ARE REMINDED THAT ANYONE WHO IS SELF ISOLATING CAN NOT ATTEND A DENTAL APPOINTMENT NOR SHOULD THEY BE SEEN IN YOUR OFFICE.**

This following point applies to staff members and/or their children once they begin school again :

Developed symptoms of COVID-19 and am being tested. How does this impact the members of my household? I have not had recent travel or contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 on PEI.

When any member of a household develops symptoms consistent with COVID-19, all members of the household must begin self-isolation and monitor for symptoms until the test results return. [See the list of COVID-19 symptoms.](#)

What happens if someone shows symptoms of COVID-19 at school?

If a student or staff member shows [COVID-19 symptoms](#) at school, the guidelines are as follows:

1. They must get picked-up or leave school immediately;
2. They will be asked to wear a non-medical mask and self-isolate in a separate room;
3. They must [call 811 to arrange testing](#); and
4. All areas used by the individual will be cleaned immediately

Will there be a screening process?

Parents, students and staff will be asked to screen for any symptoms every morning. All staff, students and visitors will be asked to stay home if they are feeling unwell.

I have tested positive for COVID-19, when can I return to work?

Any health care worker who has been identified to self-isolate and receives a positive test result for COVID-19 is required to have two (2) negative tests results in a 24 hour period before they can be cleared to return to work. Health care workers should continue to follow any isolation advice provided by Public Health and keep their managers and/or supervisors updated as to their status.

I am symptomatic (cough, chills, etc...), do I have to self-isolate? Do I have to use sick, paid leave or unpaid leave?

If an employee is symptomatic with symptoms consistent with COVID 19 and the employee is advised to self-isolate, the employee is required to self-isolate until tested. During this time, the employee will be on sick leave until such time as test results are confirmed.

- If you are symptomatic with exposure criteria (history of travel or close contact) you will self-isolate for 14 days from the date of the test, regardless of whether a negative test result is received in that period.
- If the test results are negative for COVID-19 without exposure criteria and the employee is no longer symptomatic, the employee returns to work.
- If the test results are positive for COVID-19, the employee follows the direction of Public Health.

I am a health care worker and am asymptomatic but someone I live with is being tested. Am I required to self-isolate?

If the person being tested is symptomatic, the health care worker would be required to self-isolate until the test result is returned. If the person the health care worker lives with has a negative test result, the health care worker can return to work. If the test result is positive, the health care worker must continue to self-isolate and monitor for symptoms.

If the person being tested is asymptomatic the health care worker can work unless testing is being conducted due to exposure and/or contact tracing as identified by the Chief Public Health Office. Guidance will be provided by the Chief Public Health Office.

If the health care worker becomes symptomatic they are to contact **1-855-354-4358** for screening and instruction.

If an employee has to quarantine for 14 days, is the employer responsible to pay for that time?

Under the *Employment Standards Act*, the employer would **not be required** to pay the employee.

If the workplace is covered by a collective agreement, employers may consult with their collective agreement and discuss the matter with the union if there is some question on the interpretation of any of the leave and pay provisions.

What are the ramifications if an employer does not pay staff during this time?

From the employer's perspective, under the *Employment Standards Act* there would be no ramifications, unless they are laying staff off or terminating staff.

Does the 14 day quarantine count as sick leave?

Yes, under Government of Canada employment insurance rules.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS FEEL FREE TO CONTACT THE OFFICE

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