# UPDATED Appendix 4: Quick guide on working arrangements

## COVID-19 work arrangements – Quick Guide for Public Service Employers

Please note the scenarios are based on current public health advice available on 15 September 2021, and have been produced as a guide only. Employers should ensure that they base decisions on current public health advice. In relation to Home Working and Return to the Work premises, different advice may apply in the health sector. Please see hse.ie for further advice.

| **#** | **Scenario** | **Employee** | **Special leave with pay** | **Sick leave** | **Home working / remain available for working at home**[[1]](#footnote-2) | **Return to work premises**[[2]](#footnote-3) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | **COVID-19 symptoms** – employee is awaiting medical assessment to determine if test is required | Self-isolate until outcome known | Yes - until outcome known, then assess and follow subsequent advice (see below scenarios) | No | No | Cannot be determined until outcome known (see other scenarios) |
| 2 | **COVID-19 symptoms** – employee is advised to self-isolate and go for a test | Self-isolate, attend for test, wait for results | Yes - until test results known then follow subsequent advice (see below scenarios) | No - may apply after negative test result | No | Cannot be determined until outcome known (see other scenarios) |
| 3a | **COVID-19 symptoms** – employee received positive test result and is unwell. **Employee was not in the work premises** in the 14 calendar days prior to onset of symptoms | Self-isolate until 10 days from onset of symptoms and last 5 days fever free | Yes - until 10 days from onset of symptoms and last 5 days fever free | Yes – after day 28. This takes effect for any new or open cases on 1 January 2021 | No | After 10 days from onset of symptoms and 5 days fever free, which may run concurrently. |
| 3b | **COVID-19 symptoms** – employee received positive test result and is unwell. **Employee was confirmed by their manager to be in the work premises** in any of the 14 calendar days prior to onset of symptoms[[3]](#footnote-4) | Self-isolate until 10 days from onset of symptoms and last 5 days fever free | Yes - until 10 days from onset of symptoms and last 5 days fever free | No | No | After 10 days from onset of symptoms and 5 days fever free (which may run concurrently) |
| 4 | **COVID-19 symptoms** – employee received negative test result, but has been advised to attend for a second test | Continue to self-isolate until 2nd test results known | Yes - review after 2nd test results known | No – review after 2nd test result known | No | Cannot be determined until outcome known (see other scenarios) |
| 5 | **COVID-19 symptoms** – employee advised to self-isolate and subsequent negative test result | Continue to self-isolate until 48 hours after symptoms have resolved | Yes - up until date of negative test | Yes - after date of negative test if employee continues to be unwell | Where the employee is well, symptoms have resolved and awaiting the end of the 48-hour period - they can work from home/remain available for work for that period. | 48 hours after symptom free |
| 6 | **Employee is concerned** they have COVID-19 symptoms and they are **not well enough to work,** but GP advises that they **do not meet the criteria for COVID testing** | GP may advise to restrict movements until 48 hours after symptoms have resolved. | No | Yes - where the person has been advised that they do not meet the criteria for testing for COVID. | No | On advice of GP |
| 7 | **Close contact** –  Employee has **been vaccinated or had COVID-19** and has no symptoms | No restriction of movement required, **providing they meet the criteria set out on the HSE website**  Different arrangements apply for individuals who have not been fully vaccinated. Refer to HSE website for full details. | No | No | No | Can attend if criteria met. Refer to HSE website for full details. |
| 8 | Employee has expressed **concern** to their employer that they **may be** a close or casual contact[[4]](#footnote-5) | The employee does not need to restrict their movements unless they are advised by contact tracers that they are a close contact of a confirmed case. In instances where they are a casual contact they should continue as normal and be aware of COVID-19 symptoms. | No | No | No | N/A – can attend. If subsequently advised they are close contact of a confirmed case then follow scenario 7. |
| 9 | **Member of employee’s household has COVID-19 symptoms** and is sent for a COVID test - **the employee feels well** | Employees who are fully vaccinated and have no symptoms do not need to restrict their movements.  Different arrangements apply for individuals who have not been fully vaccinated. Refer to HSE website for full details. | No | No | Not required if fully vaccinated and no symptoms. | If vaccinated and no symptoms - employee can attend. |
| 10 | **Member of employee’s household has respiratory symptoms** but the GP advises they are not sent for a test – **the employee feels well** | If household member is not being tested then the employee should continue their activities as normal | No | No | No | N/A – can attend |
| 11 | **Member of employee’s household** is a close contact of a confirmed case and the **close contact feels well** | If the household member feels well, then other members of the household do not need to restrict their movements. | No | No | No | N/A – can attend |
| 12 | Employee is in **very high risk** (extremely vulnerable)[[5]](#footnote-6) category | Please refer to FAQ 2.2[[6]](#footnote-7) | No | No | Where advised by occupational health | See FAQ 2.2 for further details. |
| 13 | Employee is in **high risk** [[7]](#footnote-8) category | Employee can attend workplace. | No | No | No | N/A – can attend |
| 14 | Advised to self-isolate **pre-surgery.** | Restrict movements | No | Yes – during/following surgery | Yes for self-isolation period pre-surgery. Person needs to be available for work (see [FAQ 3.2 in the Guidance](https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/0cfe6-update-24th-august-2020-to-guidance-on-working-arrangements-during-covid-19-for-the-civil-and-public-service/)) for period pre-surgery. | When sick leave finishes post-surgery. |
| 15a | **Overseas travel where a quarantine period is required** | Restrict movements (quarantine) for 14 days[[8]](#footnote-9) - the employee must take annual/other leave for the restricted movement period | No | No | No - Annual/other unpaid leave must be taken for restricted movement period. See [FAQ 4.4 in the Guidance](https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/0cfe6-update-24th-august-2020-to-guidance-on-working-arrangements-during-covid-19-for-the-civil-and-public-service/) | After 14 days (or earlier if negative test result – see FAQ 4.4 and gov.ie for details) |
| 15b | **Overseas travel where no quarantine is required** | Can return to work | No | No | Not required | Yes |
| 16 | Possible reaction to **COVID-19 vaccination** | If an employee is unfit for work, then usual sick leave rules apply | No | Yes | N/A | As per provisions of sick leave, if required |

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1. See FAQ 3.2 in the Guidance document on [gov.ie at this link](https://www.gov.ie/en/news/092fff-update-on-working-arrangements-and-leave-associated-with-covid-19-fo/) for further details on “remain available for work”. Note that at any stage if an employee states that they feel well enough to work, but have tested positive for COVID-19 or are self-isolating because they were symptomatic, the employer may facilitate working from home instead of special leave with pay, if this is feasible and agreeable to both parties. They must not attend the work premises and must also follow Medical and HSE advice as it relates to self-isolation. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Refers to any work location outside the home [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Special leave with pay may be extended beyond 28 days for certified COVID-19 related illness in circumstances where a manager determines that all 4 criteria below are met:

   An employee had been in the work premises (any work premises outside the home) at any time during the 14 calendar days prior to commencing the self-isolation period of a positive case of COVID-19. The attendance must have been known to and/or approved by the manager in advance.

   The employee provides their employer with medical evidence of a positive COVID-19 testincluding the date of this test.

   In accordance with the standard management referral process, the Occupational Health Physician (OHP) confirms that they are medically unfit to resume work.

   The OHP confirms that their absence relates primarily to ongoing COVID-19 illness, and that they are accessing appropriate medical care [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/close-contact-and-casual-contact.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/people-at-higher-risk.html#very-high-risk> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Some conditions that previously placed employees in the very high risk category now place them in the high risk category or in some instance in the normal risk category. In addition an employee’s risk categorisation may now have changed due to vaccination and / or history of recent confirmed COVID infection. Consult Occupational Health. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/people-at-higher-risk.html#high-risk> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. On arrival from certain countries, if a further test is taken at day 5 and the employee receives a negative test result they can stop restricting their movements. This does not apply to arrivals from Category 2 Countries and Territories. See <https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/75d92-covid-19-travel-advice/> for further details. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)