Guidance for Employers

Santa Cruz County does not provide individualized clearance letters for returning to work following COVID-19 isolation or quarantine. Employees should instead follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC’s) criteria for returning to work using a symptoms-based strategy.

- **For individuals who test positive for COVID-19 and/or have symptoms, isolation may end after 10 days.** Research shows that people who test positive and experience mild to moderate symptoms are no longer infectious 10 days after symptoms begin.

- **For individuals exposed to COVID-19 who do not have symptoms, quarantine may end after 14 days from last day of exposure.** Symptoms can appear within 14 days after exposure. Recommendations for when to end quarantine are different from isolation to take into account the time it takes for symptoms to develop, if infected. For additional information on when to start and end quarantine visit [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html)

Re-testing individuals for COVID-19 is not recommended for determining when an employee can return to work. Recovered individuals can continue to test positive for up to three months after initial infection, even though they are no longer infectious.

*Refer to chart for detailed guidance

Sources: