

Respiratory Virus, Cold, Contagious Illness

General Exposure and Return to Work Protocol

Updated October 21, 2024

This new guidance brings a unified approach to addressing risks from a range of common respiratory viral illnesses, such as COVID-19, flu, the common cold, and RSV. This guidance is also helpful for an array of other potentially contagious illnesses that volunteers, staff, and participants may encounter.

Precautionary Measures

As of April 5, 2024, Senior Services returned to its pre-pandemic protocol for limiting the spread of virus within our agency. Volunteers are asked to continue to self-monitor for symptoms and report sickness before coming to volunteer. Masks, sanitizer, and distancing remain helpful in preventing illness. Masks are optional for all volunteers, staff and participants.

Exposures

If notified of exposure to a potentially contagious illness or virus (such as the flu, COVID, RSV, common cold, etc.) volunteers should take appropriate precautionary measures to protect others from any risk of spread. Volunteers with a known exposure should monitor themselves for symptoms and observe mask wearing for 3 days following their exposure.

If exposed to a virus such as COVID for which at-home tests may be available, volunteers are encouraged to test on day 3 following their exposure. Remember, Senior Services often has a small supply of COVID-19 tests in the Shorefair office. If you think you may have been exposed to COVID-19 contact your volunteer liaison to inquire about receiving a no-cost personal test kit (while supplies last),

Please note: strict mask wearing means masks should be worn at all times, while indoors and around other people and should fit securely over nose and mouth.

For Volunteers

If exposed and volunteers begin to experience symptoms, they should notify their staff liaison immediately. They will be advised to stay home until they meet the “return to service” guidelines in this document.

Return to Service to Protocol

In accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDCs) respiratory virus guidance staff, volunteers, or participants who are not feeling well or who test positive for a virus such as COVID, the flu, RSV, a cold, etc. should stay home and away from others until both of the following two conditions are met for 24 hours:

- Your symptoms are getting better
- You are fever free without the aid of medication

Following a respiratory virus, cold, or contagious illness volunteers are asked to continue to maintain distance and mask around others for an additional three days following their return to volunteer.

Respiratory Virus Guidance Snapshot

Core prevention strategies

 Immunizations 	Hygiene 	Steps for Cleaner Air 	Treatment 	Stay Home and Prevent Spread* 
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Additional prevention strategies

Masks 	Distancing 	Tests 
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Layering prevention strategies can be especially helpful when:

- ✓ Respiratory viruses are causing a lot of illness in your community
- ✓ You or those around you have risk factors for severe illness
- ✓ You or those around you were recently exposed, are sick, or are recovering

***Stay home and away from others until, for 24 hours BOTH:**



Your symptoms are getting better

You are fever-free (without meds)



Then take added precaution for the next 5 days