COVID-19 at work

When a worker contracts COVID-19 as a direct result of their employment, they are entitled to compensation if the following conditions are met:

- The nature of employment involves sufficient exposure to the source of infection,
- and -
- The nature of employment is shown to be the source of the condition,
- or -
- The nature of employment creates a greater risk of exposure for the worker.

Reference: Policy 03-01: Part II - Occupational Disease

How is workers’ compensation coverage determined?

Specially trained adjudicators will obtain and review the specifics of the employment activities and environment and assess whether employment placed the worker at a greater risk of exposure.

Compensable examples

An acute care hospital worker treating patients who have been diagnosed with COVID-19.

A worker staying at employer-provided accommodations that are shared with other workers who have been diagnosed with COVID-19.

A care aide in a long-term care facility treating residents who have been diagnosed with COVID-19.

Workplace outbreaks

When multiple employees in the workplace fall ill, other workers at that site may have a greater risk of contracting the infectious disease than the general public during the period of the outbreak. This is due to the increased exposure to the virus during a normal workday.

If the outbreak is first reported to be community-based, do I still need to report?

Yes. A facility outbreak may occur in tandem with a community outbreak. If there are multiple positive cases in the workplace, claims should be submitted for adjudication to determine whether the circumstances in the workplace put workers at a greater risk of contracting the disease. We will adjudicate every individual claim to determine eligibility for coverage.

If I send a worker home to prevent them from getting sick, do I need to report it to WCB?

No. If there is no illness, there is no claim. There’s no need to report this to WCB.

What happens when I submit a COVID-19 claim?

Like any other workplace illness or injury claim, we must determine whether your worker’s exposure to the disease arose out of the course of employment and was caused by an employment hazard (in this case, greater risk of workplace exposure to the virus).

For more information about WCB coverage for infectious diseases, See the EFS_Infectious_diseases.pdf (wcb.ab.ca).