



HQ Return to Work Guidelines Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

Revised 4 Aug 2020 (*changes in red are updated guidance*)

To help prevent the spread of 2019 Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) the Department of Defense (DoD), in coordination with medical experts, have instituted four transmission-based precautions:

- 1.) Stay-home-from-work policy
- 2.) Restriction of movement
- 3.) Quarantine
- 4.) Isolation

Personnel who have COVID-19 symptoms should notify their supervisor and stop going to work immediately. Those who have traveled to high-risk locations as defined by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) should be placed under restriction of movement per DOD and SOUTHCOM policy. Personnel who are found to be infected with COVID-19 should be placed under isolation at a healthcare facility, home, or another designated isolation facility. Per CDC guidance, close contacts of a COVID-19 infectious person should be tested whether the close contacts have symptoms or not.

Quarantine / Restriction of Movement

- After **travel to a high-risk location** or **close contact¹ with COVID-19** positive case (or suspected case when operationally feasible), individuals will be placed on quarantine/restriction of movement for **14 days**.
- Personnel may return to work if no symptoms develop after **14 days** since the date of departure from a high-risk location or the last date of contact with the individual with COVID-19, if they remain free of symptoms. One **cannot test-out** of restriction of movement and you must complete the full 14-day period.
- An individual who is in **close contact with a patient under investigation for COVID-19** does not automatically require 14-day restriction of movement unless the lab test result is confirmed to be positive. Individuals should not return to work until discussing with their supervisor. While awaiting results, commanders may temporarily restrict close contact of patients under investigation. Commanders should consult with medical staff and balance the likelihood of a patient under investigation becoming a positive case versus the close contact's impact on mission requirements when making their decision. If isolated, these individuals should not return to work until instructed by their command.

¹ Close contact is defined as a) being within 6 feet of a COVID-19 case for a prolonged period (>15 minutes) during his/her potentially infectious period, defined as from 48 hours prior to symptom onset (or positive test if asymptomatic) to the time he/she is released by medical authorities from isolation; or, b) having direct contact with infectious secretions (e.g., being coughed on).

Patient Under Investigation (PUI)

A PUI is defined as an individual with signs and symptoms of COVID-19 who either has a test pending or would have been tested had a test been available. Personnel identified as a PUI are undergoing a medical evaluation and may not RTW until cleared by their medical provider. The medical provider will make a determination whether the PUI is: a COVID-19 case or considered to have another acute respiratory illness. Asymptomatic individuals quarantined due to their status as a close contact with a COVID-19 positive person are not classified as a PUI. Asymptomatic individuals being tested for COVID-19, including sentinel surveillance testing, are not considered PUIs while awaiting test results.

COVID-19 Case (Confirmed or Probable COVID-19 Case)

After being diagnosed as having COVID-19 (confirmed or probable) by a medical provider, personnel **who were directed to care for themselves at home** may discontinue isolation and return to work based upon the following clearance criteria:

- At least **24 hours** since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
- Improvement of symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath, etc.); **and**
- At least **10 days** have passed since symptoms first appeared

For persons who never develop symptoms, isolation and other precautions can be discontinued 10 days after the date of their first positive PCR or antigen test.

A test-based strategy is NO longer recommended to determine when to discontinue home isolation, except in certain circumstances. These special circumstances include the following: medical providers may consider testing if isolation precautions need to be discontinued earlier than 10 days or for severely immunocompromised persons.

Retesting is not recommended within the first 3 months after diagnosis, unless new symptoms develop without alternative etiologies identified.

Other Acute Respiratory Illness (i.e. flu and flu-like illnesses)

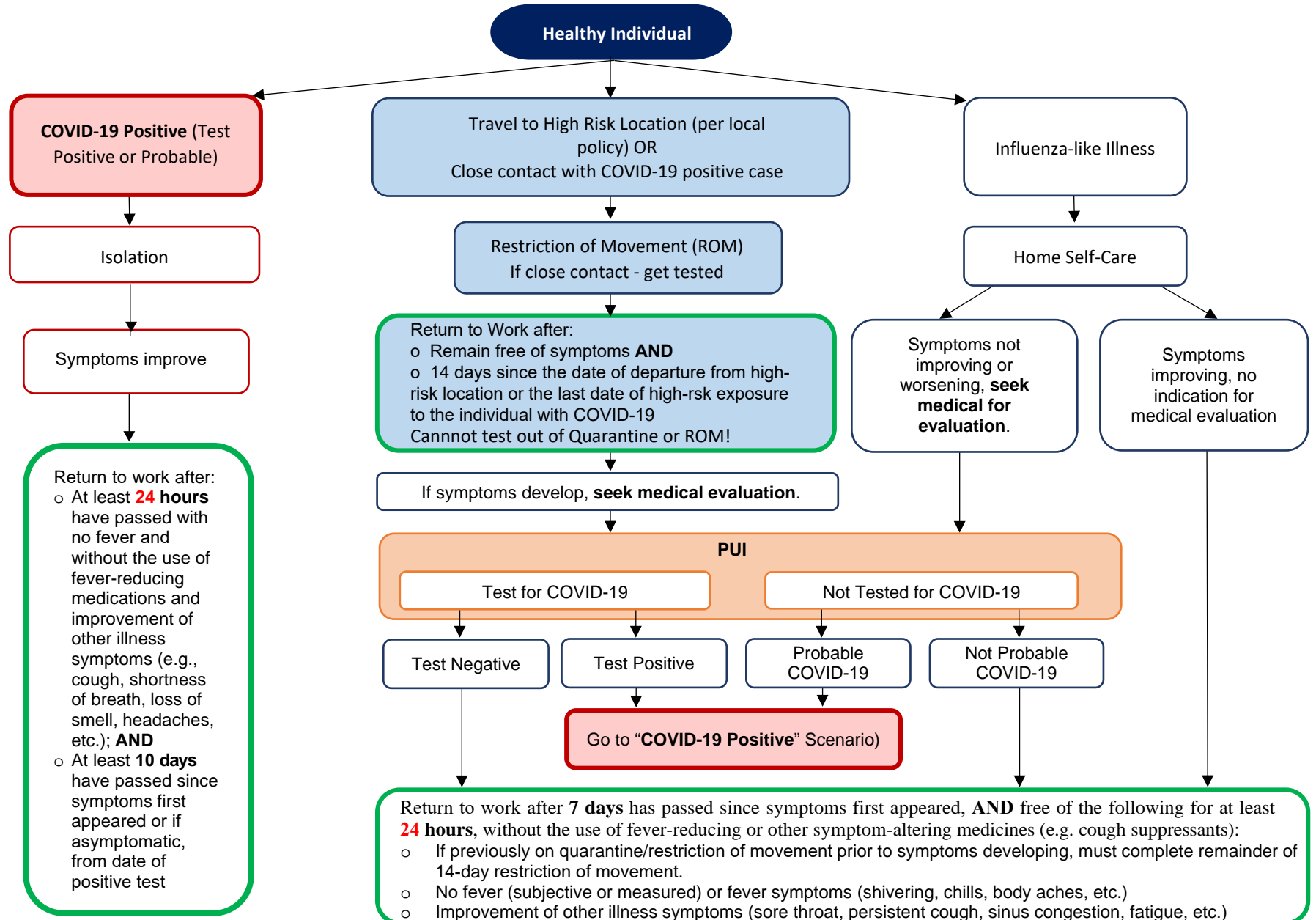
Personnel who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness are recommended to stay home and not report to work until **7 days** has passed since symptoms first appeared, **and 24 hours** has passed since the following are met, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines:

- No fever (subjective or measured) or fever symptoms (shivering, chills, body aches, etc.)
- Improvement of other illness symptoms (sore throat, persistent cough, sinus congestion, fatigue, etc.)



HQ Return to Work (RTW) Flowchart Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

Revised 4 Aug 2020 (changes in red are new updates)



Asymptomatic Individuals who Test Positive: if no symptoms develop, may return to work 10 days after positive test.