

COVID-19 RECOVERY HEALTH ADVISORY NO. 4

APPENDIX 01 PROTECTIVE MEASURES FOR SEAFOOD PROCESSING WORKERS

This Appendix will provide general recommendations for seafood processing workers. Due to the wide variation of conditions between geographic regions, additional guidance may be passed by local governments and regional fisheries associations. This Appendix establishes the minimum standards for protective measures recommended by the State of Alaska. Additional measures may be recommended by the Alaska Division of Public Health (DPH) during outbreak investigations. Employers may choose to enact measures which meet or exceed these standards. Employers that choose not to enforce these standards are making the decision to accept additional risk to their workforce and the surrounding communities.

I. **Applicability.**

- a. This Appendix should be applied to all resident employees and all workers traveling into Alaska to work in a shore-based seafood processing plant or onboard a processor or catcher-processor vessel which averages more than 5,000 pounds of processed product per day.

II. **Definitions.**

- a. **Close Contact** means being within six feet of a known, or suspected, COVID-19 positive case for 15 minutes or more, or having had direct contact with the infectious secretions of a positive COVID-19 case. This determination is irrespective of whether or not either person was wearing a face covering. The 15-minute time period does not have to be continuous, it may be cumulative over a 24-hour period.
- b. **Isolation** is the separation of people infected with the virus (those who are sick with COVID-19 and those with no symptoms) from people who are not infected. It is strongly recommended that anyone with a positive test result (that has not recently recovered from the virus), or who is diagnosed by a medical professional through symptoms, should isolate immediately. Isolation is monitored by medical professionals and is discontinued upon receipt of a clearance letter.
- c. **Quarantine** is the separation of individuals who have potentially been exposed to the virus in order to prevent the possible spread of the virus to others. For the purposes of this advisory, there are two primary types of quarantine, Close Contact Quarantine and Entry Quarantine:
 - i. **Close Contact Quarantine** is a quarantine process where an individual has been exposed to a positive case. Close Contact Quarantine is

monitored by a medical professional or designated representative of the employer to ensure compliance and daily health checks. Section VIII.e provides detailed recommendations for the observation of close contact quarantine.

- ii. **Entry Quarantine** is a sequestering process that occurs when an individual arrives to the State of Alaska.

III. Testing.

- a. **Testing Purposes.** There are four purposes for COVID-19 testing: Diagnostic Testing, Baseline Testing, Entry Testing, and Continuous Screening Testing. Section III provides further guidance on testing.
 - i. **Diagnostic Testing** is intended to identify current infection in individuals and is performed when a person has signs or symptoms consistent with COVID-19. This testing should be conducted as soon as possible once the individual begins showing symptoms. The individual should be kept separate from all others while test results are pending.
 - ii. **Baseline Testing** is intended to identify current infection in individuals and is performed on members of the workforce following a confirmed case in the workplace. Individuals who are not in Close Contact Quarantine do not need to be separated from others while test results are pending.
 - iii. **Entry Testing** is conducted during a worker's entry process or Entry Quarantine to determine if it is safe for the worker to travel and/or enter the designated Entry Quarantine site, or be released from quarantine.
 - iv. **Continuous Screening Testing (CST)** is performed to identify persons who may be contagious so that measures can be taken to prevent further transmission. Screening testing is conducted on a periodic basis for unvaccinated, asymptomatic workers after completion of Entry Quarantine, and without known exposure to a confirmed case.
- b. **Testing methods.**
 - i. A full list of FDA authorized tests is available at: <https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-emergency-use-authorizations-medical-devices/vitro-diagnostics-euas>.
 - ii. **Molecular tests** are presently the most accurate tests for determining whether someone is currently infected with COVID-19. This includes reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) tests and molecular-based rapid testing such as the Abbott ID NOW or Cue.

- iii. **Antigen Tests** are relatively inexpensive and most can be used at the point of care. Most of the currently authorized tests return results in approximately 15 minutes. Antigen tests for SARS-CoV-2 are generally less sensitive than molecular tests. The predictive ability of their results depends on whether or not the individual had a known exposure or is displaying COVID-like symptoms.
 - 1. Antigen testing should not be used for Entry Testing, since there is no known exposure.
 - 2. Antigen testing for SARS CoV-2 can be used for diagnostic testing on symptomatic people if the facility also has resources to confirm negative antigen test results with another molecular-type test (a positive antigen test on a symptomatic person does not need to be confirmed).
 - 3. Antigen tests may be considered for Diagnostic and Baseline testing in outbreak response under the direction of DPH or at sea under direction of a healthcare provider with a repeating interval of at least 24 hours when no access to molecular testing is available.
 - 4. An algorithm for interpreting antigen test results can be found in the State Testing Guidance linked in Section III.c.
- iv. **Antibody tests** look for evidence of past infection and are not useful for determining if the individual is currently infected, infectious, or immune to the virus.
- v. **Home Testing Kits.** Self tests purchased over the counter that do not include a method for verification are not recommended for industry testing. Further guidance can be found at:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/testing/self-testing.html>
- c. Further information on testing can be found in the State Testing Guidance at:
<http://www.dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/SiteAssets/Pages/HumanCoV/AKCOVIDTestingGuidance.pdf>.
- d. **Prior Positives.** Unless required by a medical provider or a state public health official, individuals who have previously tested positive for, or been diagnosed with, COVID-19 and are currently asymptomatic should be exempt from the testing for a period of 90 days beginning from the date of their first positive test, or the onset of their symptoms, whichever is first.
- e. Any company performing COVID testing in the State of Alaska is required by federal and state regulations to submit testing data to the State of Alaska Section of Epidemiology. All required results should be reported daily. Electronic reporting is the most efficient and preferred method, and can be arranged by contacting Megan Tompkins at megan.tompkins@alaska.gov. Further guidance

can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/lab/reporting-lab-data.html>.

- f. Employers should maintain records of all testing for employees while they are under contract to the company. If an employee conducts testing at a testing site that does not report the results to their employer, the employee should retain records of the test.

IV. Vaccination

- a. As recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the state of Alaska, all person who are eligible to be vaccinated should be vaccinated. Upon vaccination the need for father isolation and quarantine when exposed to COVID-19 are severely reduced.
- b. The CDC has provided Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People, available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>, which includes conditions under which a fully vaccinated person may forego Close Contact Quarantine.
- c. The DPH has published clarifying Public Health Recommendations for Asymptomatic Persons, available at: <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/SiteAssets/Pages/HumanCoV/QuarantineGuidanceSeafood.pdf>. These recommendations give employers additional guidance for making the risk decision to allow fully vaccinated persons to forego Quarantine. While these recommendations were written specifically for the Seafood Industry, they can also be used as a guide for other businesses that have workers in congregate living and working conditions, until the CDC can pass industry-specific guidance.

V. Entry Travel.

- a. All workers should be screened for new symptoms prior to commencing travel to Alaska using the procedures in Section VI.
- b. To the greatest extent possible, all travelers should receive a molecular COVID-19 test within 72 hours prior to commencing travel. In accordance with Health Advisory 2, any person positive with SARS-CoV-2 cannot travel to Alaska until they have been released from isolation, or cleared for travel, by a medical provider or public health agency.
- c. All workers and crewmembers in transit on commercial aircraft and in transportation hubs must wear a face covering that meets the requirements of the CDC Masking Order: https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/pdf/Mask-Order-CDC_GMTF_01-29-21-p.pdf. This face covering must be worn while transiting air terminals (to be temporarily removed for security screening, eating, and drinking), and while on the plane. Travelers are recommended to wear the face covering during any follow-on ground transportation until they reach their quarantine facility or destination.

- d. All workers arriving to Alaska by air directly from a foreign airport must also comply with the CDC International Air Travel Testing Order of 12 Jan, 2021, including those arriving on chartered aircraft.
 - i. The CDC entrance testing requirements may be met with an FDA-authorized antigen test.
- e. **Mid-season Transfers and Cross-Decking.** If workers are leaving a facility or vessel that has experienced onsite transmission of SARS-CoV-2 and it has been less than 28 days since the last positive case was released from isolation, pre-departure molecular testing of departing workers should be conducted if they are heading to a different facility or vessel. They should observe Entry Quarantine or Strict Social Distancing guidelines at their new facility until they receive negative test results.

VI. Entry Quarantine.

- a. The best method for mitigating the spread of COVID-19 within a facility is to prevent the introduction of the virus. The primary line of defense is for arriving workers to observe some form of entry control, prior to being allowed to fully interact with the workforce already on site.
- b. The most effective form of entry control is a 14-Day Entry Quarantine. While that period can potentially be reduced using a testing strategy based on the assessed risk level for the traveler and the vaccination status of others in the facility, any reduction in the length of Entry Quarantine carries increased risk. The DPH Health has published clarifying public health recommendations for asymptomatic persons at <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/SiteAssets/Pages/HumanCoV/QuarantineGuidanceSeafood.pdf> in order to give employers additional guidance when making the risk decision to allow fully vaccinated persons to shorten or forego Entry Quarantine.
- c. Seafood processing companies should separate their traveling workers into Movement Cohorts of manageable size depending on their capacity and mode of travel and stagger the arrival dates of Cohorts over time to ensure they do not overwhelm their screening, testing, and Entry Quarantine capacity.
- d. **Recommended Procedures for Entry Quarantine.**
 - i. Workers should be educated by the employer on the requirements for quarantine.
 - ii. Workers should be screened for symptoms prior to entering the quarantine location using the procedures in Section VI.

- iii. All arriving workers should receive a molecular test within 48 hours of arrival at their destination community, preferably prior to entering their quarantine lodging. Depending upon the local availability of testing capacity, workers should also receive a molecular test six days into their quarantine period. Workers should receive a test within 48 hours before being released from quarantine.
- iv. During Entry Quarantine, the preferred method is for workers to observe quarantine in single rooms with food delivered. If single rooms and food delivery are not available, employees should be assigned into small (<10 persons) Quarantine Groups, and all observe quarantine together on the same timeline.
- v. Quarantined workers should not leave their quarantine facility except to receive medical treatment.
- vi. **It is strongly recommended by the State of Alaska that arriving processing workers are not permitted to work during their Entry Quarantine period.** The only exceptions that should be considered to this are for mission-critical specialists such as electricians, heavy equipment operators, or refrigeration mechanics who can maintain strict social distancing while working and continue to quarantine during their non-work times. Workers should not engage in seafood processing during quarantine.
- vii. Quarantined workers should wear a face covering at all times when outside of their assigned sleeping quarters except when eating and performing personal hygiene.
- viii. Quarantine Groups should maintain six-foot social distancing measures from all workers outside of their Quarantine Group.
- ix. Common spaces should be cleaned between use by different Quarantine Groups and before use by workers who have completed Entry Quarantine.
- x. If a new worker joins a Quarantine Group, the clock should restart for the entire Quarantine Group.
- xi. Workers should have temperature checks and symptom screening twice a day. Should fever or symptoms of COVID-19 develop, the individual should be isolated immediately until diagnostic testing can be completed. Should they test positive, all members of the Quarantine Group should begin Close Contact Quarantine.
- xii. The employer should retain records of each worker's completion of Entry Quarantine, including the dates and location of quarantine, the names of

other individuals quarantining at the same location for contact tracing purposes, records of twice daily temperature readings, and daily observations of COVID-19 symptoms as identified by the CDC.

- xiii. Employers are responsible for appropriately isolating any employee with a positive test result, ensuring that the employee has access to necessary healthcare, and will be responsible for arranging transport to a hospital, if needed.
- xiv. Borough, Municipal and/or tribal governments may have enacted local Emergency Ordinances (EOs) which include requirements for entry quarantine. It is incumbent upon seafood processing companies to work with the local govt or EOC in order to coordinate entry control measures for their arriving workers.

VII. Symptom Screening of Personnel.

All workers should be screened individually for symptoms upon arrival to the quarantine facility and/or final destination facility or vessel, using the following procedures or an equivalent medically vetted procedure. Seafood processing companies should arrange for dedicated spaces to conduct private symptom screening in a space that can be disinfected should an arriving worker fail the screening. Answering “yes” to ***any one*** of the following questions should prompt testing. Employers should ensure that questions are presented in a manner and/or language that the employee can understand. Arrival symptom screening should include all of the following:

- a. Verbal Symptom Screening Questions
 - i. Have you experienced any cough, difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, loss of smell or taste, sore throat, unusual fatigue or symptoms of acute respiratory illness in the last 72 hours?
 - ii. Have you experienced a fever (100.4° F [38° C] or greater using an oral thermometer) within the last 72 hours?
 - iii. Have you experienced signs of a fever such as chills, aches and pains, etc., within the last 72 hours?
 - iv. In the past 14 days, have you traveled in an area or country with widespread COVID-19 transmission without practicing social distancing?
 - v. Have you had close contact (within six feet for longer than 15 minutes) within the past 14 days with a lab-confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case patient or had direct contact with infectious secretions of a positive COVID-19 case?
- b. Physical Symptom Screening
 - i. Each worker should demonstrate a measured temperature < 100.4° F [38° C]. (This reference is for oral temperature, a forehead (temporal)

scanner is usually 0.5°F (0.3°C) to 1°F (0.6°C) lower than an oral temperature. An ear (tympanic) temperature is 0.5°F (0.3°C) to 1°F (0.6°C) higher than an oral temperature.)

- ii. Anyone performing a physical screening should wear appropriate PPE. If PPE is not available, the worker may take their own temperature.
- c. Prior to being allowed to enter the facility or vessel, each worker should be free of fever or respiratory symptoms. A possible exception would be if the worker has mild symptoms that are clearly attributable to another source (e.g., allergies or other recurring medical issues).
- d. If a worker fails verbal or physical symptom screening, they should be immediately separated from other individuals and should not be allowed to enter a worksite or board a vessel until appropriate testing, quarantine, and/or isolation is complete in compliance with the employer's CWPP.
- e. Symptomatic individuals who receive negative test results or who are positively diagnosed with another disease which is causing their symptoms will follow the treatment and/or return to work policy of the employer's infectious disease protocol upon the recommendation of the medical professional (on-site, local clinic or telemedicine) making the determination.
- f. If a worker has positive results to a SARS-CoV-2 test or is diagnosed through symptoms to have COVID-19 it is strongly recommended that they be immediately isolated in accordance with Section X.c.

VIII. Workplace Protective Measures

- a. The CDC has published their interim guidance for [Protecting Seafood Processing Workers from COVID-19](#). Seafood processing companies should review the interim guidance on a periodic basis and, to the greatest extent possible, should enact the recommended protective measures that are appropriate and suitable for their processing plant or vessel.
- b. The CDC has published their [Interim Guidance for Ships on Managing Suspected or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19](#) and [Ship Crew Well-Being During COVID-19](#). Seafood processing vessels should review the interim guidance on a periodic basis and, to the greatest extent possible, should enact the recommended protective measures that are appropriate and suitable for their vessel.
- c. **Masks and Cloth Face Coverings in the Workplace.** Masks or cloth face coverings should be worn at all times by unvaccinated workers. Employers should consult the current CDC guidance on masking at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html> when determining when masks can be safely removed.

- i. During processing work, a clear face shield may be worn as PPE in lieu of a cloth face covering, in order to facilitate communication between workers, however masks are preferred.
 - ii. While outdoors or on deck, masks may be temporarily removed as needed to facilitate communication.
 - iii. While operating heavy machinery or shipboard systems, masks may be temporarily removed if wearing a mask will impede the safe operation of the equipment or create unsafe conditions, based on a safety assessment by the work supervisor.
 - iv. The company should supply all needed PPE for their workers and replace it as needed.
- d. **Visitors, Third-Party Auditors, and Inspectors.**
- i. Visitors touring the plant and/or interacting with plant staff present a risk of introducing the virus to a facility or vessel. Nonessential visitors should not be permitted.
 - ii. Essential visitors within the company staff should follow the travel, testing and quarantine guidelines listed in the company's CWPP. Third party auditors should be informed prior to travel of the company's testing and quarantine requirements. Regulatory inspectors may not be barred from the facility for COVID-19-related reasons, but should follow reasonable testing and quarantine requirements established by the company prior to their inspection.
 - iii. Visitors, Third-Party Auditors, and Inspectors to shore-based processing plants should observe proper travel and social distancing guidelines to avoid endangering the facility staff.
 - iv. Boarding parties on vessels should observe proper masking and social distancing guidelines to avoid endangering the vessel crew.
- e. **Daily Pre-Shift Symptom Screening.**
Conducting daily symptom screening of all employees throughout the season helps ensure outbreaks are detected early.
- i. All employees should be screened by a supervisor or designated screener.
 - ii. Screening should be conducted near the start of the employee's work shift, prior to prolonged Close Contact with other workers.

- iv. To the greatest extent possible, all workers should have daily temperature checks using the temperature thresholds in Section VI.b.
 - v. Workers who have a fever or other symptoms of COVID-19 should immediately be separated from the rest of the workforce for testing. A possible exception would be if the worker has mild symptoms that are clearly attributable to another source (e.g., allergies or other recurring medical issues).
 - vi. A daily log of screening for each worker should be maintained and made available to the DPH upon request.
- f. **Continuous Screening Testing (CST).**
Testing unvaccinated, asymptomatic workers in the absence of a confirmed case (outside the arrival period) periodically throughout the season is a useful strategy to detect asymptomatic cases and prevent undetected spread of the virus throughout the facility/vessel.
- i. The CDC has published guidelines for developing a CST program, available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/testing-overview.html>. Companies may elect to test larger sample sizes or at a shorter interval if conditions warrant additional caution.
 - ii. Facilities and vessels should continuously evaluate their Alert Level throughout the season, in collaboration with the local government or Emergency Operations Center, as the Alert Level for the surrounding community may directly impact the Alert Level for the facility. Companies should consider the impact of running an “open” or “closed” campus when developing their CST plan.
 - iii. Vessels without testing capability onboard should plan to have test samples collected for the designated population within 48 hours prior to reaching port (if using self-collection) or collected and shipped during the next port call following the specified testing interval.
 - iv. If using mail-in testing, vessels are encouraged to delay departure from port until they receive negative results back, to minimize the risk of getting underway with an infectious crewmember on board.

IX. Immediate Actions in Response to a Confirmed Case.

- a. Under AS 18.15.375, the DPH is responsible for investigating both single cases and outbreaks of certain infectious diseases, including COVID-19.
 - i. The primary goal of these investigations is to prevent additional cases by: (1) identifying ill or infected persons and their contacts, (2)

describing relevant exposures, and (3) implementing prevention strategies.

- ii. Private Sector businesses have the responsibility to provide a safe working environment for their employees.
- iii. To the greatest extent possible, DPH will allow private sector businesses to coordinate outbreak response efforts within their facilities and workforce. DHSS may use the powers and provisions set out in AS 18.15.355 - 18.15.395 to override risk decisions in situations that pose a threat to public health or when business risk decisions may have an impact on public capabilities or infrastructure.
- iv. Employers are responsible for coordinating and funding actions taken within their facility and workforce in response to a COVID-19 case or outbreak.

b. **Notification.**

Employers should notify the nearest Public Health Nursing Center or the DHSS Section of Epidemiology at 907-269-8000 in the event of a positive clinical diagnosis or positive test result in their workplace outside of Entry Quarantine. A full list of Public Health Nursing Centers is available here:

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Nursing/Pages/locations.aspx>.

- i. Employers may also be required by local ordinances to contact the local or borough government authorities or Emergency Operations Center (EOC).
- ii. The information that should be provided when notifying Public Health of a case includes the name of the case and their date of birth, current address, state or country of permanent residence, telephone number, and the date of test result.
- iii. In accordance with USCG District 17 MSIB Number 01-21, persons on vessels underway who exhibit symptoms consistent with COVID-19 must be reported immediately to the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Captain of the Port (COTP).
- iv. Vessels that departed from a foreign port and are destined for a U.S. port must report to the closest Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Quarantine Station any sick or deceased crew/passengers during 15 days prior to arrival at the U.S. port. Guidance for vessels to report deaths and illnesses to the CDC can be found here:
<https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/cruise/reporting-deaths-illness/guidance-how-report-onboard-death-illness.html>.

- v. Vessels should follow the contact process from the State of Alaska Maritime Communicable Disease Emergency Response Plan.

c. **Immediate Actions.**

The key to containing the spread of the virus throughout a facility or vessel is swift, decisive action once the first positive case is identified.

- i. **Identification of Positive Cases.** Once COVID-positive individuals have been diagnosed based on test results, it is strongly recommended that they be immediately isolated in accordance with Section VIII.d.
- ii. **Consultation with Telemedicine provider, local clinic, SOPHN and SOE.** Upon identifying a positive case in the workplace, an employer should immediately consult medical professionals, to include their on-site medical staff, telemedicine provider and the local clinic. Assistance for contact tracing should be requested from Public Health Nursing. Upon identifying a positive case cluster (three or more positive individuals), the employer should contact the Section of Epidemiology for assistance in outbreak response.
- iii. **Contact Tracing** is normally conducted by trained public health staff members. The intent of contact tracing is to identify and categorize the exposure that other workers may have had to the positive case. If PHNs are not immediately able to respond, the on-site staff may begin contact tracing under the direction of a medical professional.
 - 1. Tier 1 contacts are those that had Close Contact as defined in Section II.a. Tier 1 contacts should observe Close Contact Quarantine in accordance with Section VIII.e, regardless of the results of Baseline Testing.
 - 2. Tier 2 contacts are members of the same shift or movement cohort, that did not have Close Contact with the positive case.
 - 3. Tiers 3 contacts are other workers who shared common spaces or surfaces (such as dining or bathroom facilities) with the confirmed case.
- iv. **Medical Risk Assessment of Workforce.** The employer's medical staff or telemedicine provider should conduct a Medical Risk Assessment, based on the CDC's guidelines for persons who are at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/index.html>. The employer should consider additional protective measures to safeguard this vulnerable population, or removing them from the facility if feasible.

- v. **Baseline Testing Plan.**

Based on the availability of testing resources, the employer should develop a Baseline Testing Plan. Baseline testing on asymptomatic Tier 1 contacts may not be used to shorten Close Contact Quarantine, but is very useful for determining how wide-spread the outbreak may be. Additional Baseline Testing may be prioritized by vulnerability (Medical Risk Assessment), exposure (Contact Tracing Tier) or criticality of the individual to maintain operations. Other considerations, such as housing conditions, may effect the Baseline Testing priorities. Additional considerations for Baseline Testing are available from the CDC at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/worker-safety-support/hd-testing.html>.
- vi. **Continuity of Operations.**

For smaller clusters, or outbreaks isolated to a specific department or work shift, the facility may be able to continue operations. For larger outbreaks, it is strongly recommended that the facility conduct an “operational pause” until contact tracing can be conducted and Baseline Testing started. Tier 2 and Tier 3 workers may continue to work while awaiting Baseline Testing or test results.
- vii. **Cleaning of Facility/Workspaces.**

Prior to re-commencing operations after a positive case is known to be at work in the facility, the workspace should be cleaned and disinfected following the CDC’s guidance available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>. The facility should strongly consider following an enhanced periodic cleaning regimen until the outbreak is resolved.
- viii. **Return to Work Policy.**

The State of Alaska strongly recommends against the use of any test-based return to work policy for any unvaccinated positive cases and Tier 1 Contacts. If the facility has conducted an operational pause, it is recommended to use negative results of two Baseline Tests before returning Tier 2 Contacts or High-Risk individuals to work and the negative results of one Baseline Test before returning Tier 3 Contacts to work.
- d. **Isolation of Positive Individuals.**

It is strongly recommended that anyone who is suspected of having COVID-19, or tests positive for the virus that causes COVID-19 be immediately placed into Isolation.

 - i. Individuals who receive positive test results or who are diagnosed through symptoms with COVID-19 may only be released from Isolation by the DPH or a health official acting in coordination with the DPH.

- ii. Several hotels across the State have established protocols to house isolated and/or quarantined people. If a positive case or Close Contact is going to be moved into a hotel, the hotel staff and local jurisdiction must be notified of the person's status and the person must follow all hotel and local protective measures.
 - iii. The preferred method is for positive patients to Isolate individually, if facilities are not available then positive patients can Isolate in a shared facility with other positive patients.
 - iv. Commuting workers may be permitted to Isolate in their home. If an individual is Isolating at home, all other members in the household should follow Close Contact Quarantine. Their quarantine period should continue for 14 days after the Isolation period of the positive household member ends or as directed by a Public Health Nurse. If a commuting worker lives with other household members who are at an elevated risk for COVID-19 infection, the employer may consider offering temporary lodging as an isolation or quarantine facility.
 - v. Companies may choose one of the CDC-established strategies (test-based, or time/symptom-based) for discontinuing staff from Isolation; selecting a strategy to discontinue Isolation should be made in consultation with Public Health staff and in the context of local circumstances. The time/symptom-based strategy is currently recommended by the Section of Epidemiology for most cases.
 - vi. If previously positive individuals are displaying COVID-like symptoms and evaluation fails to identify a diagnosis other than SARS-CoV-2 infection (e.g., influenza), then the person may warrant evaluation for SARS-CoV-2 reinfection in consultation with an infectious disease or infection control expert. Isolation may be warranted during this evaluation, particularly if symptoms developed after Close Contact with an infected person.
- e. **Close Contact Quarantine.**
Workers who have been identified by public health staff as Close Contacts to a COVID-19 case should remain in monitored quarantine for 14 days.
- i. Workers should be placed into Close Contact Quarantine immediately upon being identified as Close Contacts through contact tracing. Additionally, workers who are clearly Close Contacts (for example: roommates, significant others or family members) should be put into Close Contact Quarantine immediately; coordinating with Public Health should not delay that process. Individuals who have previously tested positive for or been diagnosed with COVID-19 are exempt from

quarantine requirements for a period of 90 days beginning from the date of their first positive test, or the onset of their symptoms, whichever is first. Any symptomatic recent former positive may need retesting and/or quarantine; consult with a medical provider.

- ii. Workers who are identified as Close Contacts but remain asymptomatic that have been fully vaccinated, should follow the DPH's published Public Health Recommendations for Asymptomatic Persons, available here:
<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/SiteAssets/Pages/HumanCoV/QuarantineGuidanceSeafood.pdf>
- iii. While the CDC Guidance for [Implementing Safety Practices for Critical Infrastructure Workers Who May Have Had Exposure to a Person with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19](#) does allow for Critical Infrastructure Workers to continue work during quarantine following specific testing requirements, recent events here in Alaska have shown that the safety measures recommended are not adequate to prevent the spread of the virus in a congregate work setting such as a seafood processing plant. Seafood processing companies should only allow Close Contacts to continue working under Close Contact Quarantine if the worker can maintain strict social distancing, *and* the worker's function is critical to the Minimum Basic Operations of the facility (payroll, safety and sanitation, facility maintenance, etc.). Receiving catch, processing seafood, and delivering product are *not* considered Minimum Basic Operations.
- iv. If workers are going to returning to a congregate working or living situation upon completion of Close Contact Quarantine, employers should not use testing strategies recommended by the CDC to reduce Close Contact Quarantine to less than 14 days. If the workers will be heading immediately home following quarantine without returning to the plant, vessel or bunkhouse, employers may consider the CDC [Options to Reduce Quarantine](#) to 10 or 7 days using PCR testing.
- v. If the facility has enough remaining workers who are not under isolation and/or quarantine to safely continue processing operations, the facility may restart operations once the workspace occupied by the positive case(s) has been completely sanitized.
- vi. Procedures for Close Contact Quarantine.
 1. Close Contact Quarantine should be done in an environment with no opportunity for Social Mixing. If an individual is quarantining at home, all other members in the household who

cannot maintain social distancing should also be following the same Close Contact Quarantine requirements.

2. During Close Contact Quarantine following a confirmed case in the workplace, workers should be quarantined separately in single rooms unless otherwise directed by a Public Health Nurse or other medical professional assigned to handle the case by the State, with food delivered. Persons at higher risk for COVID-19 infection due to underlying medical conditions should be quarantined individually.
3. Commuting workers may be permitted to complete Close Contact Quarantine in their home. If an individual is quarantining at home, all other members in the household should maintain social distancing to the maximum extent possible throughout the quarantine period. If a commuting worker lives with other household members who are at an elevated risk for COVID-19 infection, they should consult with Public Health Nursing for recommended protective measures.
4. Individuals under quarantine should be screened for symptoms and have temperature checks twice a day. Temperature checks may be self-administered. To the greatest extent possible, daily health checks should be completed in a manner/language that the quarantined individual is comfortable with, and they should be given the opportunity to communicate with a medical provider if they wish to.
5. Quarantined workers may not leave their quarantine facility except to receive medical treatment.
6. Should any symptom of COVID-19 develop including a fever, follow the identification protocol in the seafood processing company's Community/Workforce Protective Plan. Seek testing and medical treatment immediately if symptoms are suspected to be caused by COVID-19. Of note: you do not need more than one symptom to be considered at risk of having COVID-19.
7. The employer should retain records of a worker's completion of Close Contact Quarantine, including the dates and location of quarantine, records of twice-daily temperature readings, and daily observations of COVID-19 symptoms as identified by the CDC.

X. Response to Large Outbreaks.

An employer's projected strategies for managing reasonable numbers of positive cases should be detailed in the company's CWPP. If the number of positive cases grows beyond the strategies planned for in the company's CWPP, the employer should work with State and local government officials to conduct contingency planning.

a. Outbreak Contingency Plans.

For large outbreaks, which exceed the normal capacity of the company to manage easily, State and local government authorities may request that the company develop and submit an Outbreak Contingency Plan, detailing in writing how the company will conduct their response.

- i. An Outbreak Contingency Plan is not a standing document, it is only developed once the situation exceeds the company's CWPP, and is customized to manage the unforeseen incident.
- ii. Companies should plan to Isolate and Close Contact Quarantine affected workers on-site, if it is safe to do so, locally within the community, or to move affected workers to a larger community if no safe options are locally available.
- iii. Movement of positive workers or Close Contacts between communities for Isolation and Close Contact Quarantine should require an Outbreak Contingency Plan.
- iv. Elements of an Outbreak Contingency Plan may include:
 1. Movement plans for positive cases and Close Contacts.
 2. Lodging, dining and wrap-around services for Isolated and quarantined workers.
 3. Medical monitoring plans for Isolated workers.
 4. Security considerations at the worksite and lodging site.
 5. Communications plan for relaying information to Isolated/Quarantined workers.
 6. Any agreements with local authorities.
 7. Any contractual agreements with other private sector businesses for monitoring, testing, transport, or security.
 8. Discontinuation and Return to Work Strategies.
 9. Cleaning procedures for the workplace and any vehicles used for transport.

b. Public Messaging.

It is highly recommended that employers work with local government authorities to discuss options for public messaging in the event of a large number of positive cases from a single facility, or cases that may be of concern to the local population.