



Quarantine B in Health and Welfare Services

- Employees in the field of welfare or health care are generally not exempt from quarantine requirements for travel or in connection to an infection case where protective equipment was not used during interaction with the case.
- If there is a risk that the safety of patients in the hospital or service recipients of special measures provided by the welfare services is threatened due to a lack of trained staff, and the trained staff are without symptoms in quarantine, an exemption can be applied for to implement quarantine B (see below).

Quarantine B

In special circumstances, where other means are not possible, trained employees who are quarantined may be allowed to return to work if certain conditions are met. This quarantine is called quarantine B to distinguish it from the general quarantine. It is a special circumstance, in light of a very demanding environment in unprecedented circumstances. Outside of work areas, [all general rules on quarantine apply](#), despite the fact that an exemption has been granted for going for work.

Conditions for Quarantine B:

1. Other solutions, e.g. staffing with the transfer of employees between institutions or the use of on-call back-up teams, have been thoroughly examined and are not sufficient.
2. In the opinion of the supervisors, the work contribution of the employee in question is necessary to ensure the safety of the patients. The employee should be registered as in quarantine even if an exemption is granted. Registration in quarantine and the labelling of special quarantine areas in the workplace / quarantine B are done by the Chief Epidemiologist when applying for quarantine B if the reason for quarantine is a trip from abroad and if quarantine B is requested before traveling to Iceland. If a connection to an infection case has led to the registration on behalf of the Civil Protection tracking team, the Chief Epidemiologist will arrange for registration in quarantine B when the application has been approved.
3. The employee is **without symptoms**.

Employees need to monitor symptoms daily according to the following:

- Measure your temperature in the evening and morning – if above 37.8°C, it should be measured again after 30 min. If it is above 38°C, do not go to work and inform your supervisor and the healthcare centre of any symptoms.
- Even if your temperature is normal, other symptoms need to be monitored:
 - Fatigue, muscle or bone pain, headache
 - Cold or sore throat, sudden change in sense of smell or taste
 - Cough or shortness of breath

If any of these symptoms occur, the supervisor should be notified of the symptoms and a healthcare centre contacted to request a medical evaluation regarding COVID-19 if this is not possible at the institution where the person works.

- If symptoms occur while the person is at work, he or she must contact their supervisor, remove themselves as much as possible and have as little contact as possible with colleagues and patients.
- If communication is unavoidable for patient safety, a symptomatic employee should wear a virus-proof face mask without a valve, as well as a protective coat and gloves.
- If patient safety is not threatened by it, the sick employee shall go home as soon as possible.

4. An employee in quarantine shall try, to the best of their ability, to stay 2 metres away from colleagues unless they are wearing protective equipment. An employee shall, as a minimum, use protective equipment in **all dealings** with patients, according to the following guidelines; however, an institution may set stricter requirements on using protective equipment at work.

- Use a surgical mask if asymptomatic and within 2 metres of the patient – replace if contaminated/wet.
 - Use a virus-proof face mask if an employee falls ill on duty.
- Use gloves if inside the patient room and need to be in contact with a surface – change after each interaction.
- Use a long-sleeved protective coat when examining patients. Change it if there is reason to avoid contact infection from the patient. If an infection agent spreads to the coat, remove at the end of the patient visit (e.g. after the ward rounds).
- Standard hand cleaner/scrub and protective equipment are used in the operating room.

5. An employee performs hand cleaning according to basic asepsis before and after use of protective equipment.

6. An employee in quarantine B does **not visit the employee common areas**, but there should be available facilities where he/she is alone during the quarantine. An employee in quarantine B must have access to **separate toilet** facilities for the entire shift, and if others need to use it on the next shift, the common surfaces of the toilet facilities must be cleaned with soapy water and/or wiped with disinfectant according to the instructions from the disinfectant manufacturer.

7. An employee in quarantine mainly cares for patients who are **also in quarantine or in isolation**.

- If the patient is in **quarantine**, special care must be taken with hygiene and all employees shall wear protective equipment **if** there is a risk of contact with body fluids.
- If the patient is in isolation, all workers should wear long-sleeved protective gowns, gloves and a virus-proof mask for all patient care.

- If a patient is [at risk for serious illness due to COVID-19](#), it should be checked whether it is possible to remove the patient from the ward where there are employees or other patients in quarantine, whether that person is quarantined or not.
- If the patient is not in quarantine themselves, it should be checked whether it is possible to move them from the ward where the employee is in quarantine whilst quarantine B is in effect.

8. There is no requirement for viral testing by the Chief Epidemiologist for the application of this resource, as protective equipment shall be used to prevent transmission to others if the employee should get sick while in quarantine B. An institution may require a virus test even if the employee is asymptomatic in order to further reduce the risk of transmission to others, for all employees in quarantine B or at certain work premises.

Chief Epidemiologist