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PHASE-Industries COVID-19 Plan Summary

Revised 09-14-2022 Version 15.0

Hello PHASE-Industries Team Members and Stakeholders,

CDC has recently streamlined its COVID-19 guidance to help people better understand their risk, how to protect themselves and others, what actions to take if exposed to COVID-19, and what actions to take if they are sick or test positive for the virus. COVID-19 continues to circulate globally, however, with so many tools available to us for reducing COVID-19 severity, there is significantly less risk of severe illness, hospitalization and death compared to earlier in the pandemic. This letter outlines the updated PHASE-Industries COVID-19 Plan, and is informed by CDC guidance.

“We’re in a stronger place today as a nation, with more tools—like vaccination, boosters, and treatments—to protect ourselves, and our communities, from severe illness from COVID-19,” said CDC’s, Greta Massetti, PhD, MPH, MMWR author. “We also have a better understanding of how to protect people from being exposed to the virus, like wearing high-quality masks, testing, and improved ventilation. This guidance acknowledges that the pandemic is not over, but also helps us move to a point where COVID-19 no longer severely disrupts our daily lives.” - [CDC streamlines COVID-19 guidance to help the public better protect themselves and understand their risk | CDC Online Newsroom | CDC](#)

The new CDC guidance says that someone exposed to an individual with COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status, no longer needs to quarantine at home, away from others. They can go to work, attend school and be in other settings around people as long as they wear a well-fitted, high-quality mask and are not experiencing any symptoms.¹

During PHASE-Industries services, persons must mask for 10 days following their exposure (Program Participants have the option to follow quarantine guidelines in place of masking). They should also test at least five days after the exposure.

- If it's **negative**, continue masking for the 10-day duration and follow the [What to Do if You Were Exposed to COVID-19 guidance](#) - [CLICK HERE](#)
- If it's **positive**, you have COVID-19, and need to go into isolation **immediately**.

Isolation: Regardless of vaccination status, **you should isolate from others when you have COVID-19. You should also isolate if you are sick and suspect you have COVID-19 but do not yet have test results.**

- **If you test positive or are showing symptoms of COVID-19, isolate immediately and follow CDC’s up-to-date full isolation recommendations [CLICK HERE](#)**

1- PHASE-Industries will determine exposure risk level on a case-by-case basis. PHASE-Industries may require a quarantine period for those with “Sustained High Risk Exposure” (e.g., on-going close contact/proximity to someone infected with COVID-19, caring for someone with COVID-19, etc.).

Summary of CDC Isolation Guidance as of 09-15-2022	
If you test positive for COVID-19 and have:	Isolation Period & Ending Isolation:
No Symptoms:	Isolate for five days.
Symptoms and they are improving:	Isolate for five days AND fever-free for at least 24-hours without fever-reducing medication.
Symptoms not improving:	Isolate at least five days AND continue to isolate until symptoms start improving AND fever-free for at least 24-hours without fever-reducing medication.
Symptoms plus moderate illness (i.e., difficulty breathing or shortness of breath):	Isolate at least through day 10 AND symptoms improving AND fever-free without fever-reducing medication.
Severe illness (i.e., hospitalization) or weakened immune system:	Isolate at least 10 days and consult a healthcare professional prior to ending isolation.
<p><i>Note: If you develop symptoms within 10 days of when you were tested, the clock restarts at day 0 on the day of symptom onset</i></p>	

PHASE-Industries continues to review the [CDC COVID-19 Community Levels Data Tracker](#) and local outbreak data to monitor COVID levels across our service area. PHASE-Industries may, at its discretion, reimplement a mask mandate for programs in areas where the infection levels present unmanageable risk.

PHASE-Industries may also mandate masks at a specific location, or in working with an individual with complex medical needs, if the program is experiencing an unmanageable increase in positive cases or risks.

We continue to encourage team members and program participants to wear a mask based on personal preference, informed by personal level of risk.

There continue to be exceptions to the masking rules that apply to both program participants and team members:

- When supporting people in independent employment you should follow the rules of the business or community setting.
- On community outings, continue to follow the rules of the setting and local municipality and wear masks (or not) accordingly.

Alternatives to masks such as clear face shields may be considered for those with health conditions or situations where wearing a mask is problematic. PHASE-Industries will continue to accommodate individuals who are exempt from wearing a mask. Please inform your Designated Coordinator/Manager (for program participants), or our HR Director (for employees) if you need to request an exemption.

Contact Tracing

PHASE-Industries will continue to track confirmed and suspected cases. Employees and program participants are required to report “close contact”, suspected and/or confirmed cases of COVID-19 immediately to their Designated Coordinator/Manager (program participants), or the Human Resources Director (employees). Any employee or program

participant who has been in “close contact” with another individual who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 will be notified of their potential exposure. PHASE-Industries will follow the CDC and MDH guidelines specific to the situation and program capabilities.

Mitigation Strategies/Protective Actions

Community Levels – PHASE-Industries will continue to regularly review and evaluate data regarding COVID-19. [COVID-19 Community Levels | CDC](#)

High Risk Conditions – PHASE-Industries will work with each program participant and their support to team to assess and create individual plans to best support their health and safety. [Underlying Medical Conditions Associated with Higher Risk for Severe COVID-19: Information for Healthcare Professionals | CDC](#)

Vaccinations – PHASE-Industries encourages all community members to review the most recent and factual information on COVID-19 vaccinations and determine if vaccination is appropriate for you. [COVID-19 vaccinations](#) are highly effective at preventing severe illness, hospitalizations, and death. CDC recommends that everyone who is eligible stay up to date on their COVID vaccines.

- [Frequently Asked Questions about COVID-19 Vaccination | CDC](#)

Universal Precautions

Handwashing - Handwashing is the single most important procedure for preventing the spread of common infections. Thus, proper handwashing will be expected as part of the regular routine, even in the absence of recognized disease.

Cleaning and Disinfecting - Regular housekeeping practices will continue to be implemented in our buildings which includes routine cleaning and disinfecting of work surfaces, equipment, tools and machinery, and areas in the work environment, including restrooms, break rooms, lunchrooms, and meeting rooms.

Social Distancing - We continue to ask you to practice social distancing when and where it is appropriate, as well as avoid touching your face, cover your cough and sneezes, wash your hands frequently, stay **home and [get tested](#) when you are ill.**

We appreciate all of you for going above and beyond to support and keep everyone safe. PHASE-Industries remains committed to maximizing in-person services, meeting the individual support needs of our team members and the people that we provide services to and providing a safe environment for all.

Thank you again for helping us keep our community safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Tim Schmutzer
CEO | PHASE-Industries