



ADVISORY ON WORK AND LEAVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR EMPLOYEES WHO TEST POSITIVE FOR COVID-19 BUT ARE MILDLY SYMPTOMATIC OR PHYSICALLY WELL

Issued on 25 September 2021
Updated on 24 February 2022

The MTF announced on 5 January 2022 a revised approach for managing individuals who test positive using the Antigen Rapid Test (ART) but are either mildly symptomatic or physically well. Such individuals are advised to self-isolate and monitor their health. This is a risk-calibrated approach that will allow Singapore to focus the use of primary care and other healthcare resources on COVID-19 patients who are at higher risk of falling severely ill.

2. The tripartite partners are issuing this advisory to provide guidance to employers and employees regarding the work and leave arrangements during the period of self-isolation.

Approach to Self-Isolation

3. Employees who are mildly symptomatic or physically well, but self-test positive are advised to self-isolate at home for 72 hours¹. There is no need for these employees to visit a General Practitioner (GP), polyclinic or Emergency Department in the hospital, or any medical professional for that matter, just to undergo a confirmatory Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test² or to obtain a medical certificate (MC) or recovery memo. Employees who feel unwell may consult a doctor for medical advice if they feel the need to do so.

4. After 72 hours of self-isolation, employees should do a self-ART. If the result is negative, such employees may return to work and resume daily activities. However, if the result is positive, employees should continue to self-isolate and self-test daily until they obtain a negative result or until 12pm on Day 7 if vaccinated or Day 14 if not fully vaccinated, whichever is earlier [Note: Day 1 is the date of the first positive ART test].

Work and Leave Arrangements for Employees Under Self-Isolation

5. Employees should immediately inform their employer when they test positive for COVID-19 and begin their self-isolation at home. **They should not return to the workplace.**

- a. **Employees who are physically well should be allowed to work from home if they are able to do so. If working from home is not possible, employers should treat the period of absence as paid sick leave (either paid outpatient sick leave or paid hospitalisation leave) without requiring a MC.**
- b. For employees who are unwell due to the infection, whether issued with a medical certificate or not, employers should similarly treat the period of absence as paid sick leave.

¹ Refer to [MOH's website](#) for more details.

² Individuals in the groups listed in the Annex should visit a doctor even if they are feeling well.

There is no need for employers to ask for a recovery memo from employees before allowing them to return to the workplace – employers should recognise a negative self-administered ART result as proof of recovery. Employees should also not be asked to take no-pay leave for the period of self-isolation.

6. Employees, who are household members or close workplace contacts of:
 - a. COVID-19-positive individuals of para 5a, are advised to minimise contact with the affected individual, monitor their health and obtain a negative self-administered ART result daily for the next 5 days before leaving home³ (e.g. for work) on that day. Those who test ART-positive should follow the protocol in paras 3 to 5.
 - b. COVID-19-positive individuals of para 5b whose ART was conducted by a medical professional or at a Combined Test Centre or Quick Test Centre, will be issued a Health Risk Notice (HRN) and they should follow MOH’s protocol⁴. Similarly, they are allowed to leave home and return to work, as long as their self-administered ART result is negative.

For further queries, please contact:

Ministry of Manpower

[Online Enquiry](#)

www.mom.gov.sg

Ministry of Health

[Online Enquiry](#)

www.moh.gov.sg

National Trades Union Congress

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Singapore National Employers Federation

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³ Refer to [MOH’s website](#) for more details and prevailing requirements.

⁴ Refer to [MOH’s website](#) on prevailing HRN protocol.

Employees who should visit a doctor if they self-test positive but are mildly symptomatic or physically well

- Employees aged 70 and above (unvaccinated) or aged 80 and above (vaccinated)
- Employees who are/have
 - immunocompromised
 - pregnant;
 - on dialysis;
 - diagnosed with HIV or AIDS;
 - had organ transplant surgery;
 - been diagnosed with cancer before;
 - any disease or taking medications that weaken the immune system;
 - any disease affecting their heart, lungs, kidneys, liver or brain that required hospital admission in the last 6 months.