

Virginia ABC Develops Response to Potential COVID-19 Exposures Using Guidance from Health Officials

RICHMOND – The Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority (ABC) implemented a protocol for facility closures due to COVID-19, based on guidance from the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). ABC facilities include stores, regional Bureau of Law Enforcement offices, the warehouse and central office.

If an employee notifies their supervisor that they tested positive for COVID-19, ABC will take the following steps:

- Determine the sick employee's last date of contact with the ABC facility and any employees.
- All employees who had direct contact with the sick employee will remain in quarantine up to 14 days from the last shift worked with the sick employee. Those employees will be eligible for Public Health Emergency Leave (PHEL).
- If the sick person has not been in the ABC facility for at least seven days, that location will not close. Frequently touched surfaces will be deep cleaned.
- If the employee has been in the ABC facility within seven days prior to their positive test result, the location will be closed, professionally deep cleaned and sanitized, and reopened when ABC has determined the risk of community spread has been mitigated. In the case of a large facility, such as the warehouse or central office, only that portion of the location where the employee's work takes place would be closed or otherwise have access limited.

If an employee is symptomatic and/or awaiting test results, the employee will be asked to self-quarantine for 14 days. The employee will be eligible for PHEL. Any employees in contact with that person will be asked to monitor their symptoms as well. The location, or the impacted work area of the location, will be closed, professionally deep cleaned and sanitized, and reopened when ABC has determined the risk of community spread has been mitigated. If the employee later receives a positive test result, ABC will follow the procedure above.

If an employee resides with someone who tests positive for COVID-19, the employee will be asked to self-quarantine for 14 days and will qualify for PHEL. Other employees at that location will be notified of potential exposure and asked to monitor symptoms, but the location will not close. The facility will continue to receive regular cleaning, focusing attention on the most frequented areas and high-touch surfaces such as door handles and knobs.

Decisions to close an ABC facility for situations outside of those listed above will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Additionally, ABC supports its employees' decisions to self-quarantine when necessary, which is impacting staffing levels statewide. As a result, ABC has temporarily closed select stores to alleviate staffing issues and allow time to train additional newly hired personnel.

"As information about the coronavirus and recommendations for retailers continue to change, we will make modifications to our operations to ensure employee and customer safety," said ABC Chief Executive Officer Travis Hill. "We now have more definitive guidance from health officials as to when facility closures and employee quarantines are necessary, and will follow this guidance going forward."

Any extended ABC facility closures related to the coronavirus pandemic will be listed on Virginia ABC's website at <https://www.abc.virginia.gov/covid-19/store-closures>. For more information about Virginia ABC's response to COVID-19, visit <https://www.abc.virginia.gov/covid-19>.

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