



## Joint Guidance for the Florida Fire Service Guidance for Return to Work procedures for Fire Service Employees

- This guidance should be used when making decisions about returning to work for Florida Fire Service employees **with confirmed COVID-19, or who have suspected COVID-19** (e.g., developed symptoms of a respiratory infection [e.g., cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, fever] but did not get tested for COVID-19).
- Options include a test-based strategy or a non-test-based strategy (i.e., time-since-illness-onset and time-since-recovery strategy).

### THE FLORIDA FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION AND THE FLORIDA PROFESSIONAL FIREFIGHTERS RECOMMEND THE TEST-BASED STRATEGY FOR DETERMINING WHEN AN EMPLOYEE CAN RETURN TO WORK AT FIRE/EMS STATIONS.

#### 1. **FFCA/FPF RECOMMENDED** Test-based strategy.

Exclude from work until:

- Resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications  
**AND,**
- Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath)  
**AND,**
- Negative results of an FDA Emergency Use Authorized molecular assay for COVID-19 from at least two consecutive nasopharyngeal swab specimens collected  $\geq 24$  hours apart (total of two negative specimens)<sup>[1]</sup>. See [Interim Guidelines for Collecting, Handling, and Testing Clinical Specimens for 2019 Novel Coronavirus \(2019-nCoV\)](#).

#### 2. **Non-test-based strategy.**

Exclude from work until:

- At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed ***since recovery***; defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and** improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath)  
**AND,**
- At least 7 days have passed ***since symptoms first appeared***

#### **Footnote:**

All test results should be final before isolation is ended. Testing guidance is based upon limited information and is subject to change as more information becomes available. In persons with a persistent productive cough, SARS-CoV-2-RNA might be detected for longer periods in sputum specimens than in upper respiratory tract (nasopharyngeal swab) specimens.