

October 19, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

The Tennessee Department of Health does not recommend a negative COVID-19 test in order to return to work or regular activities.

When an individual has a positive laboratory result indicating current infection with COVID-19, TDH requires them to isolate at home for a minimum of 10 days (and they must be afebrile and well for at least 24 hours).

There is no requirement to have a negative laboratory result to be released from isolation, as long as these time and symptom criteria are met. This is consistent with CDC's recommended time-based strategy: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html. There is substantial evidence that an individual may continue to have positive laboratory results beyond their infectious period.

As long as the individual recovers and remains asymptomatic after recovery, we do not recommend retesting for COVID-19 within the 3 months from the initial onset of COVID-19 symptoms.

We strongly recommend that businesses implement measures to reduce the risk of transmission within the workplace: encourage all to wear cloth face masks, screen employees for symptoms upon entry, require individuals to stay home when they are ill, and socially distance within the workplace.

Sincerely,



John Dunn
State Epidemiologist