

## CALL CENTER DETECTS POSITIVE COVID-19 SHEDDER BEFORE EMPLOYEE TESTS POSITIVE USING EUROFINS CORONAVIRUS SURFACE MONITORING

A Midwest call center proactively deployed a temporary remote working mandate to avoid a sitewide facility outbreak. Before bringing employees back to work, the center wanted to understand the current state of the office environment and implement a plan to proactively monitor and react rapidly if necessary.

### FACING CHALLENGES FOR CORPORATE OFFICE ENVIRONMENTS

Call centers are integral to customer-centric businesses worldwide. Maintaining functional customer care during these unprecedented times is critical to the health and sustainability of all businesses. The inherent nature of closed-air spaces, such as office environments, brings into account several different factors that can influence coronavirus transmission risk, including employee proximity, employee traffic flow, and shared spaces.

### DEVELOPING A STRATEGY FOR ONGOING MONITORING

Coronavirus surface monitoring is an excellent tool not only to verify the effectiveness of sanitation procedures but also to understand how and where the virus is moving throughout a facility. Together, the call center and Eurofins identified the most strategic sites for sampling, including high-traffic areas and common touchpoints. By utilizing Eurofins' coronavirus environmental monitoring program (EMP), the call center could detect the presence of the virus in their workplace and get an early warning of workplace infection before employees show any symptoms.



## THE EUROFINS SOLUTION

The day before sample collection, a call center employee called in sick. The employee's supervisor followed up with a wellness check call. During the call, the supervisor was able to discuss with the employee their routine at work the previous day. Based on the brief interview with the employee, the supervisor was able to identify key locations for sampling at the elevator, breakroom, lavatory, adjacent exercise area, and the employee's workstation. Twenty-four swabs were collected from door handles, elevator buttons, lavatory door push plate, flush handle, work-out equipment, sneeze guard at the grill, computer mouse, keyboard, office chair, telephone, and mailbox. The swabs were placed in an express mailer and sent to a Eurofins laboratory for analysis.

## THE RESULTS

Eurofins delivered next-day results for the samples collected by the call center. Of the 24 swabs collected, six swabs returned detectable SARS-CoV-2 primarily associated with the suspect employee's (who called in sick) workstation (see Table 1). One swab returned positive from a common area touchpoint.

One sample, from the employee's telephone that called in sick, confirmed for SARS-CoV-2. The employee was confirmed to have COVID-19 seven days later. Early detection enabled the call center to enhance its protocols and mitigate the potential spread of the virus.

### Timeline:

Day 0 – Samples collected and sent to laboratory

Day 1 – Samples tested and reported

Day 4 – Sick employee gets tested for COVID-19

Day 6 – Employee confirms positive for COVID-19

The company's corporate SAFER@WORK™ program manager pre-positioned sampling supplies at each of its locations at the start of the pandemic. Site supervisors had created plans for their course of action in responding to an employee call-in, which included how to uniquely label samples with a serial number, room, and sampling point. This pre-planning enabled a quick response to the current situation.

## NEW STEPS

Immediately following sample collection, the facility followed its plan to clean and disinfect common and high touch point surfaces. Special emphasis was placed on the COVID-19 positive employee's workstation where longer exposures were likely. The next day, with confirmation of SARS-CoV-2 in the office, an additional 24 swabs were collected from the positive areas determined in the first sampling plus other selected areas.

Results returned the following day showed detection of SARS-CoV-2, indicating the initial cleaning and disinfection (fogging) protocol was not effective (see Table 1). The corporate office reviewed protocols, confirmed with operations their understanding, and a third round of testing was completed with all swabbed areas returning 'not detected.'

## LEADING THE WAY WITH SAFER@WORK STRATEGIES

The Eurofins SAFER@WORK program allowed the company to quickly execute its reaction plan for COVID-19 exposure in the workplace. Masks, social distancing, contact tracing, and rapid turnaround of results allowed business continuity and employee satisfaction that responses and planning were superior. Follow up environmental testing resulted in improvements to the call center's remediation protocols.

## SAFER@WORK SOLUTIONS INCLUDE:

- COVID-19 sampling and test protocol design and action plans;
- Detecting presence of the virus within teams in a given site or community through wastewater testing;
- Evaluate indoor spaces for the presence of SARS-CoV-2 virus in the air via air testing;
- Testing for the virus on all types of environmental surfaces in the workplace to detect risks early and monitor the effectiveness of cleaning protocols;
- Testing of employees, when needed and as decided by a qualified physician within the guidelines of healthcare authorities in each country (with a range of methods including PCR testing and/or serology testing for various antibodies);
- Additional related solutions ranging from assurance and consultative services, relevant product testing, and self-assessment or e-learning tools.

Eurofins experts and consulting partners design and implement the SAFER@WORK program, for which testing is performed by Eurofins' government-licensed clinical laboratories, in compliance with local regulations. The program's breadth of offerings ensures each business receives the best combination of testing and associated services customized for its staff and customers to keep them SAFER@WORK.

# EUROFINS SAFER@WORK™ COVID-19 CASE STUDY: CORPORATE CALL CENTER



ID	SAMPLE REFERENCE	DAY 0 (Cq) <i>After First Cleaning</i>	DAY +1 (Cq) <i>Before Second Cleaning</i>	DAY +1 (Cq) <i>After Second Cleaning</i>	DAY +5 <i>After Third Cleaning</i>
1	Exit Door Handle	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected
2	Passenger Elevator "UP" Button	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected
3	Ladies Room Push Plate	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected
4	Entrance Door Handles	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected
5	Squat Machine - Weight Bar Handle	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected
6	Bench Press Machine - Weight Bar	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected
7	Smith Press Machine Handles	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected
8	Separator Wall Top Rail at Entrance	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected
9	Counter at Grill Station	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected
10	Sneeze Guard at Grill Station	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected
11	Sneeze Guard over Condiments	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected
12	Cooler Front of Drink Shelf	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected
13	Cooler Front of Salad/Sandwich Shelf	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected
14	Self-Serve Checkout Receipt Printer	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected
15	Mouse	34	37	35	Not Detected
16	Keyboard Space Bar	36	Not Detected	38	Not Detected
17	Right Chair Handle	29	36	Not Detected	Not Detected
18	Desktop Work Surface	33	31	32	Not Detected
19	Mouthpiece on Phone & Headset Receivers	38	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected
20	Handle on Plexiglass Door to Mailbox	35	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected
21	Cooler Door Handles	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected
22	Coffee Pot Pull Handle	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected
23	Flush Handle in Stall #1	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected
24	Passenger Elevator "DOWN" Button	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected	Not Detected

Notes: Cq values are the number of PCR cycles leading to a response in the amplification of the DNA transcript from the RNA extraction. A threshold Cq value of >38 is considered a "Not Detected" result. The smaller Cq value the less cycles it took to receive a signal, meaning there was more native DNA available to amplify (a higher concentration of starting virus either infective or non-infective).



PCR TESTING



ANTIBODY TESTING



COLLECTION SERVICES



ENVIRONMENTAL SURFACE PCR TESTING



SITE WASTEWATER TESTING



AIR TESTING



PRODUCT TESTING



CONSULTING SERVICES