

On December 2, 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released guidance for acceptable alternatives to the 14-day quarantine period for individuals who might have been exposed to COVID-19.

NOTE: Contacts who can maintain a 14-day quarantine should do so.

Releasing Individuals from Quarantine

Duration of quarantine applies from the last date of exposure to an infectious case (Day 0).

<p>Option 1: Quarantine period can end after Day 14 without testing. Post-quarantine transmission risk: 0%-3%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day 0-14 quarantine for close contacts can end if no symptoms develop during daily self-monitoring. Persons quarantined for 14 days without testing. This option maximally reduces risk of post-quarantine transmission and is the strategy with the greatest collective experience at present. This is recommended in settings where there are high-risk individuals and closed congregate settings.
<p>Option 2: Quarantine period can end after Day 10 without testing and if no symptoms have been identified during daily self-monitoring. Post-quarantine transmission risk: 1%-10%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day 0-10 quarantine for close contacts can end if no symptoms develop during daily self-monitoring without testing. Self-monitoring and mask wearing should be continued through Day 14. If an individual develops symptoms within the 14-day quarantine period, immediately isolate and contact the local health department to report change in clinical status. Persons should be educated on correct and consistent mask use, social distancing, cough hygiene, environmental cleaning and disinfection, avoiding crowds, ensuring adequate indoor ventilation, and self-monitoring for symptoms.
<p>Option 3: Quarantine period can end after Day 7 if someone tests negative (PCR or antigen test) and if no symptoms have been identified during daily self-monitoring. Post-quarantine transmission risk: 5%-12%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day 0-7 quarantine for close contact can end if COVID-19 test is negative and if no symptoms develop during daily self-monitoring. Specimen may be collected and tested within 48 hours before the time of planned quarantine discontinuation. Self-monitoring and mask wearing should be continued through Day 14. If an individual develops symptoms within the 14-day quarantine period, immediately isolate and contact public health to report change in clinical status. Persons should be educated on correct and consistent mask use, social distancing, cough hygiene, environmental cleaning and disinfection, avoiding crowds, ensuring adequate indoor ventilation, and self-monitoring for symptoms.

Exceptions

A 14-day quarantine period should remain in effect for individuals living in high-risk congregate settings or among individuals who are unable to wear a mask correctly and consistently. These settings include:

- Residents in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, or other long-term care facilities.
- Inmates in correctional facilities.

Household Contacts

A household contact is an individual who shares any living spaces with someone diagnosed with COVID-19. This includes bedrooms, bathrooms, living rooms, kitchens, etc. Household contacts must be quarantined after exposure to a case, regardless of whether the case is symptomatic.

When does quarantine start?

Household contacts must quarantine as long as they are exposed to the case, and for a 7- to 14-day period beyond their last exposure.

If the contact can separate from the case within the home, then they are no longer exposed. Separation requirements:

- The case must never be in the same room as household members.
- The case cannot share plates, cups, dishes, or phones with household members.
- The case should have their own bathroom. If that isn't possible, the household must conduct daily cleaning.

If the contact cannot separate from the case within the home, the contact must quarantine for the case's (minimum) 10-day isolation period plus an additional 7-14 days.

When does quarantine end?

Once exposure is no longer occurring (either the case has completed their 10-day isolation or the case and contact have separated within the home), then quarantine can end:

- After Day 14 as recommended by DHHR and CDC.
- After Day 10 (returning to regular activities on Day 11) without testing if the contact does not have symptoms.
- After Day 7 (returning to regular activities on Day 8) if the contact does not have symptoms and if they test negative by PCR or antigen test starting at Day 5 or later.

Contacts should continue to self-monitor for symptoms and wear a face mask through Day 14. Mask wearing is especially important through Day 14 and should continue beyond the quarantine period.

If a household contact develops symptoms of COVID-19, they become a case. They should begin isolation as a case and consider getting tested.

Non-Household Contacts

Non-household contacts must be quarantined after exposure* to a case, regardless of whether the case was symptomatic. DHHR and CDC recommend a 14-day quarantine. Acceptable alternatives to a 14-day quarantine include:

- After Day 10 (returning to regular activities on Day 11) without testing if the contact does not have symptoms.
- After Day 7 (returning to regular activities on Day 8) if the contact does not have symptoms and if they test negative by PCR or antigen test starting at Day 5 or later.

Contacts should continue to self-monitor for symptoms and wear a face mask through Day 14. Mask wearing is especially important through Day 14 and should continue beyond the quarantine period.

*Exposure means contact with a case during the time period beginning two days prior to the case's symptom onset (or specimen collection date if case never experiences symptoms) through the end of the case's isolation period.

Questions and concerns can also be directed to the 24/7, toll-free COVID-19 information hotline: [1-800-887-4304](tel:1-800-887-4304)

