



COLORADO

Department of Public Health & Environment

HEALTH ALERT NETWORK BROADCAST

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FROM: CO-CDPHE

SUBJECT: HAN Advisory - Changes to COVID-19 Quarantine Guidance

RECIPIENTS: Local Public Health Agencies / IPs / Clinical Labs / EDs / ID Physicians

RECIPIENT INSTRUCTIONS: Local Public Health Agencies - please forward to healthcare providers

This information is for the public health and health care community. Do not post this document on a public web or social media site

HEALTH ADVISORY | Changes to COVID-19 Quarantine Guidance | 12/02/2020

Health care providers: Please distribute widely in your office

Key points

- CDC has published options to reduce the length of quarantine for COVID-19 from the standard 14 days. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/scientific-brief-options-to-reduce-quarantine.html>
- Colorado will implement this change in guidance immediately.
- For everyone who has been in close contact to someone with COVID-19, a 14-day quarantine remains the gold standard. All contacts, regardless of quarantine duration, should monitor themselves for symptoms of COVID-19 daily throughout the 14-day incubation period following exposure.
- Options for shortening the quarantine period are described in more detail below:
 - Contacts who remain asymptomatic during quarantine can end quarantine after 10 days.
 - Contacts who remain asymptomatic during quarantine and have a negative result on a molecular or antigen test collected within 48 hours before quarantine is discontinued can end quarantine after 7 days.
 - In no circumstances can quarantine be discontinued before 7 days have passed since exposure.

Background information

On Dec. 2, 2020, CDC published options for reducing the length of quarantine following exposure to COVID-19. (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/scientific-brief-options-to-reduce-quarantine.html>) Data analysis and modeling indicate that there is low risk of discontinuing quarantine early for people who remain asymptomatic after exposure to COVID-19. With the options outlined below for reducing quarantine length, the post-quarantine transmission risk is estimated at about 5% (upper limit of about 12%) for discontinuation after seven days with negative testing and about 1% (upper limit of about 10%) for discontinuation after 10 days with no testing. In both cases, continued symptom monitoring and other nonpharmaceutical interventions such as masking and physical distancing are important in reducing risk of transmission.

Due to the continued risk of transmission for people who live in a congregate and/or residential care setting (long-term care facilities, prisons and jails, homeless shelters, etc.), quarantine generally should not be shortened from 14 days without public health consultation. Quarantine length recommendations for staff in these facilities are in development and may vary based on community transmission levels and facility outbreak status.

Recommendations / guidance

CDC and CDPHE continue to recommend a COVID-19 quarantine period of 14 days following exposure. The following options to shorten quarantine are acceptable alternatives:

- For contacts who have monitored themselves daily and have not had **any** symptoms of COVID-19, quarantine can end **after** 10 days. In this instance, individuals meeting these criteria could resume their usual activities beginning on day 11 after exposure. They should continue to monitor themselves daily for symptoms for the full 14 days following exposure.
- For contacts who have monitored themselves daily for symptoms, have not had **any** symptoms of COVID-19, and **have tested negative on a molecular or antigen test* collected within 48 hours before quarantine is discontinued**, quarantine can end **after** 7 days. In this instance, individuals meeting these criteria could resume their usual activities beginning on day 8 after exposure. They should continue to monitor themselves daily for symptoms for the full 14 days.

In no circumstances can quarantine be discontinued before 7 full days of quarantine have passed since exposure.

Regardless of whether someone is released from quarantine early, if they develop any [symptoms of COVID-19 illness](#) in the 14 days following their exposure, they must [isolate](#) immediately and notify public health.

*Serologic testing should not be used for release from quarantine.

*When offering testing during quarantine, LPHAs should work to ensure equitable access for all affected people and communities in their jurisdiction. Additionally, CDC recommends that community diagnostic testing should be prioritized over testing for the purposes of discontinuing quarantine early in instances where testing capacity is limited.

More Information

- CDPHE COVID-19 web page: covid19.colorado.gov
- CDC COVID-19 web page: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- For questions about COVID-19 in Colorado, call the **CDPHE Disease Reporting Line: 303-692-2700** or 303-370-9395 (after hours)
- Health care provider FAQs from CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/faq.html>
- CDC Clinician Outreach and Communication Activity (COCA) Calls: <https://emergency.cdc.gov/coca/calls/index.asp>
- List of updated CDC guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/whats-new-all.html>