



Summary of Current New York City COVID-19 Guidance for Quarantine, Isolation and Transmission-Based Precautions

The following guidance applies to people with positive SARS-CoV-2 viral RNA (PCR-based test) or a positive antigen test (hereinafter “diagnostic test”). It does not apply to people with a positive serology or antibody test.

- If a person falls into more than one category, use the more conservative guideline or longest duration.
- Before discontinuing isolation, a person who was symptomatic must be fever-free without the use of antipyretics and have an improvement in symptoms.
- Health care personnel should notify their employer if they are diagnosed with COVID-19, have symptoms consistent with COVID-19, or have an exposure to a person diagnosed with COVID-19. Health care personnel must adhere to their employer’s guidance, which may be more conservative than that of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), or New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYC Health Department).
- NYSDOH has made exceptions for some essential workers in regard to quarantine and isolation recommendations. See the NYSDOH’s [Protocols for Essential Personnel to Return to Work Following COVID-19 Exposure or Infection](#).
- For more information on symptoms and home isolation, visit the NYC Health Department’s [COVID-19 Symptoms and What to Do When Sick](#) webpage.

Definitions

- **Quarantine** is the separation of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick.
- **Isolation** is the separation of sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick.
- **Transmission-based precautions** are the second tier of basic infection control and are to be used in addition to standard precautions for patients who may be infected with certain infectious agents like SARS-CoV-2 for which additional precautions are needed to prevent infection transmission. For complete infection-control guidance for SARS-CoV-2, see the Center for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) web page titled Interim Infection Protection and Control Recommendations for Patients with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 in Healthcare Settings.

Overview of Quarantine, Isolation and Transmission-Based Precautions: Guidance for a Person With or Exposed to a Person With a Positive SARS-CoV-2 Viral RNA or Antigen Test

	What to do if a person has a positive diagnostic test for or symptoms of COVID-19 ^a	When to discontinue isolation or transmission-based precautions for people receiving medical care
Non-hospitalized people, including most essential and health care personnel; see NYC Health Department Health Advisory #14 for additional guidance (Does not apply to people who work in a nursing home or adult care facility)		
Symptomatic	Isolation at home or residence ^b	At least 10 days after symptom onset ^c
Asymptomatic	Isolation at home or residence ^b	10 days after first positive diagnostic test (based on specimen collection date)
Hospitalized people; see NYC Health Department Health Advisory #14 for additional guidance		
Symptomatic	Isolation and transmission-based precautions	At least 14 days after symptom onset ^c OR test-based strategy ^d
Asymptomatic	Isolation and transmission-based precautions	14 days after first positive diagnostic test (based on specimen collection date) OR test-based strategy ^e
Being discharged to nursing home	NYSDOH Executive Order No. 202.30 requires that in addition to at least 14 days isolation, ^c a patient must have a negative diagnostic test result prior to discharge to a nursing home.	
Immunocompromised people in any setting; see NYC Health Department Health Advisory #14 for additional guidance		
Low-level immunosuppression ^f	Isolation, or transmission-based precautions for those receiving medical care	Symptomatic person: at least 14 days after symptom onset ^c OR test-based strategy ^d
		Asymptomatic person: 14 days after first positive diagnostic test (based on specimen collection date) OR test-based strategy ^e
Severely immunocompromised ^g	Isolation, or transmission-based precautions for those receiving medical care	Test-based strategy ^{d,e}

	What to do if a person has a positive diagnostic test for or symptoms of COVID-19 ^a	When to discontinue isolation or transmission-based precautions for people receiving medical care
Residents of long-term care and other congregate living facilities with vulnerable populations; ^h see NYC Health Department Health Advisory #14 and NYS DOH Health Advisory for additional guidance		
Symptomatic	Isolation, or transmission-based precautions for those receiving medical care	At least 14 days after symptom onset ^c OR test-based strategy ^d
Asymptomatic	Isolation, or transmission-based precautions for those receiving medical care	14 days after first positive diagnostic test (based on specimen collection date) OR test-based strategy ^e
Employees of nursing homes and adult care facilities; see NYSDOH Commissioner of Health's letter and NYSDOH frequently asked questions about Executive Order 202.30 for additional guidance		
Symptomatic	Isolation at home or residence ^b	At least 14 days after symptom onset AND a negative diagnostic test
Asymptomatic	Isolation at home or residence ^b	14 days after first positive diagnostic test (based on specimen collection date) AND a negative diagnostic test
A person in quarantine due to close contactⁱ with someone (a case) who has a positive COVID-19 diagnostic test		
Symptomatic	If a person develops symptoms of COVID-19, they should contact a health care provider to arrange for COVID-19 evaluation and diagnostic testing; if they test positive, the provider should refer them to the appropriate isolation guidance	Not applicable
Asymptomatic	Quarantine at home or residence; ^b if the person has a positive diagnostic test during quarantine, the provider should refer them to the appropriate isolation guidance	Discontinue quarantine 14 days after last exposure to lab-confirmed COVID-19 case while the case was contagious; exceptions are possible for people deemed essential workers by their employer ^j

	What to do if a person had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19	When to discontinue quarantine
Quarantine or exclusion of health care personnel with an exposure^k at work to a person with a positive COVID-19 diagnostic test (see NYC Health Department Health Advisory #20 for additional guidance)		
Symptomatic	If health care personnel develop symptoms of COVID-19, they should contact a health care provider to arrange for COVID-19 evaluation and diagnostic testing; if they test positive, the provider should refer them to the appropriate isolation guidance	Not applicable
Asymptomatic	Quarantine at home or residence ^b	Discontinue quarantine 14 days after last exposure to lab-confirmed COVID-19 case while the case was contagious

Notes

^a See NYC Health Department [COVID-19: Symptoms and What to Do When Sick](#).

^b Includes isolation in a NYC COVID-19 Hotel Program hotel; the program provides free hotel rooms to eligible New Yorkers who cannot isolate or quarantine where they live and to frontline workers in the health care industry who wish to reduce the risk of transmission at home. For details, visit nyc.gov/covidhotels.

^c Prior to discontinuing isolation, people should also be fever-free (with temperature less than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or 38.0 degrees Celsius) for at least three days without the use of fever-reducing medications plus have resolving symptoms.

^d Test-based strategy for symptomatic patients: Must be fever-free (temperature less than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit) without fever-reducing medications; AND improvement in respiratory symptoms (such as cough and shortness of breath); AND negative results of a COVID-19 molecular assay for detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA from at least two consecutive tests conducted on recommended specimens (nasopharyngeal, nasal and oropharyngeal, or nasal and saliva), collected at least 24 hours apart.

^e For patients who were asymptomatic at the time of their first positive test and who remain asymptomatic, testing for release from isolation may begin a minimum of ten days after the first positive test; these patients must have negative results of a COVID-19 molecular assay for detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA from at least two consecutive tests conducted on recommended specimens (nasopharyngeal, nasal and oropharyngeal, or nasal and saliva) that were collected at least 24 hours apart.

^f People with low-level immunosuppression may include those with chronic lung, heart, kidney, or liver disease; diabetes; HIV infection with CD4 count more than 200; or dialysis-dependent.

^g People with a severely weakened immune system may include those receiving chemotherapy or radiation for malignancies; those who are immunosuppressed following solid-organ

transplant, or those during conditioning and 12 months following hematopoietic stem cell transplant; those taking biologic therapy (rituximab, IL-17, IL-6, or TNF inhibitors); those receiving at least 20 milligrams (mg) or 2 mg per kilogram (kg) body weight of prednisone (or equivalent) per day for 14 or more days; or those who are immunosuppressed because of severe inherited or acquired immunodeficiencies (such as HIV infection with CD4 count less than 200).

^h Includes people residing in nursing homes or other adult care facilities (for example, those for people with developmental disabilities), and residents of supportive housing and shelters where people share bathrooms, kitchens or sleeping areas.

ⁱ For definition of a “close contact,” see NYC Health + Hospitals’ [Test & Trace Corps webpage](#).

^j See NYSDOH [Interim Guidance for Public and Private Employees Returning to Work Following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure](#).

^k Exposure defined as health care personnel (HCP) who was not wearing a face mask or respirator and spent 15 or more minutes within 6 feet of a person with confirmed COVID-19; OR, HCP who was not wearing eye protection and spent 15 or more minutes within 6 feet of a person with confirmed COVID-19 who was not wearing a cloth face covering or face mask; OR, HCP who did not wear all recommended personal protective equipment — such as gloves, gown, N95 respirator, and either goggles or face shield — when a procedure was performed that can generate aerosols (such as intubation, suctioning, high-flow oxygen, nebulizer).

The NYC Health Department may change recommendations as the situation evolves.

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