

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Interim Guidance on the Length of Quarantine for Contacts of Persons with SARS-CoV-2 Infection (12/16/20)

On December 2, 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published new quarantine guidance: [Options to Reduce Quarantine for Contacts of Persons with SARS-CoV-2 Infection Using Symptom Monitoring and Diagnostic Testing | CDC](#)

The incubation period of SARS-Cov-2 is between 2-14 days, with a median incubation of 5 days. It is for this reason that CDC continues to recommend a 14-day quarantine period. This quarantine period for persons who might have been exposed to COVID-19 has proven to be an effective strategy to prevent further transmission. It may, however, impose significant personal and community burdens in some circumstances and may dissuade individuals from responding to contact tracer outreach if the length of quarantine is perceived to be a burden.

Based on the updated guidance from CDC, the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) recommends changing the quarantine period for persons known to be close contacts of cases of COVID-19 to 10 days if:

- 1) Daily self-monitoring for COVID-19 symptoms has been done and the person has had no symptoms of COVID-19 during the whole 10-day quarantine (day 0 is the day of exposure); AND
- 2) Daily symptom monitoring continues after 10 days for an additional 4 days (days 11–14). If any symptoms develop, immediately self-isolate and contact their local public health department or their healthcare provider; AND
- 3) After 10 days, persons need to continue to take the measures needed to prevent COVID-19, including but not limited to: wearing a mask when out in public and avoiding gatherings with people who are not in your immediate household, are over 65 years old or who have medical conditions that place them at increased risk for COVID-19. These are also summarized here: [How to Protect Yourself & Others | CDC](#)

Based on the updated guidance from CDC, the Connecticut DPH also recommends that when diagnostic testing resources are sufficient and available, the quarantine period for persons known to be close contacts of COVID-19 can end after Day 7 if:

- 1) Daily self-monitoring for COVID-19 symptoms has been done and the person has had no symptoms of COVID-19 during the whole 7-day quarantine (day 0 is the day of exposure); AND
- 2) A negative diagnostic test (molecular or antigen) for coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) is obtained on day 5 or later and a negative test result has been received; AND
 - a) The quarantine period should not end before 7 days, even if a negative test result was obtained earlier
 - b) If a test result is still pending at day 7, the person cannot end quarantine until that result is received and is negative



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- 3) Daily symptom monitoring continues after 7 days for an additional 7 days (days 8–14). If any symptoms develop, immediately self-isolate and contact their local public health authority or their healthcare provider; AND
- 4) After 7 days, persons need to continue to take the measures needed to prevent COVID-19, including but not limited to: wearing a mask when out in public and avoiding gatherings with people who are not in your immediate household, are over 65 years old, or have medical conditions that place them at increased risk for COVID-19. These are also summarized here: [How to Protect Yourself & Others | CDC](#)

Post-Quarantine Transmission Risk by Length of Quarantine

It is important to note that a shorter quarantine period carries a risk that an exposed individual could become positive and potentially transmit COVID-19 to others after quarantine.

Length of Quarantine	Continued Symptom Monitoring Period	Test Required	Residual Risk of Positivity after Leaving Quarantine
14 days	None	None	0.1% (range 0–3%)
10 days	4 days	None	1.4% (range 0.1–10.6%)
7 days	7 days	Molecular (e.g., RT-PCR) at Day 5 or later	4.0% (range 2.3–8.6%)
7 days	7 days	Antigen at Day 5 or later	5.5% (range 3.1–11.9%)

Congregate Living Settings

COVID-19 can spread rapidly in congregate living settings and greatly increase the morbidity and mortality of the residents of these settings. A 14-day quarantine period should continue to be implemented for persons living or working in high-risk congregate settings including (but not limited to) long term care facilities (nursing homes, assisted living facilities, residential care homes), Department of Correction facilities, and other congregate living settings (such as homes for the developmentally disabled).

Healthcare Facilities

[CDC continues to recommend](#) a 14-day quarantine period for patients receiving healthcare and healthcare personnel with exposures to SARS-CoV-2 warranting [quarantine](#) or [work restrictions](#), respectively. The alternatives are not without risk in the healthcare setting but can be used as means of [mitigating staffing shortages](#) that would put patient safety and healthcare quality at risk.

References

1. CDC. Options to Reduce Quarantine for Contacts of Persons with SARS-CoV-2 Infection Using Symptom Monitoring and Diagnostic Testing: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/scientific-brief-options-to-reduce-quarantine.html>
2. CDC. How to Protect Yourself and Others: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>
3. CDC. Clinical Questions about COVID-19: Questions and Answers: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/faq.html#Infection-Control>
4. CDC. Strategies to Mitigate Healthcare Personnel Staffing Shortages: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/mitigating-staff-shortages.html>