



COVID-19 ISOLATION / QUARANTINE GUIDANCE
February 9, 2022

This guidance applies to K-12 schools and childcare, as well as the general population and supersedes any prior guidance. This guidance does not supersede any directions or orders issued by Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The following populations should continue to follow setting and profession specific recommendations as well as other applicable state and federal orders and regulations:

- Healthcare settings, including health care personnel, residents or patients residing in healthcare facilities,
- [Long-term care](#) and other specific [congregate living](#) settings (including nursing homes, group homes, assisted living facilities, and congregate shelters),
- [Staff and residents of correctional and detention facilities](#), and
- Where an employee’s absence would cause operational deficiencies in key services (e.g., fire, police, sheriffs, and corrections).

Persons Who Tested Positive for COVID-19 or Have Symptoms, Regardless of Vaccination Status (Isolation)	
<p>1. Persons who test positive for COVID-19</p> <p>* Day 1 is the first full day after symptoms started in symptomatic persons or the first full day after the person tested positive if asymptomatic.</p>	<p>Day 1-5*: Stay home, isolate, wear a well-fitting mask around others in your home.</p> <p>Day 6-10: You may leave your home if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you have no symptoms, or if your symptoms have improved, <u>and</u> • you have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without using fever reducing medication. <p><i>You must continue to stay home if you have symptoms that are not improving. If you cannot wear a well-fitting mask while around others through Day 10, you should remain in isolation through Day 10.</i></p> <p>Day 11: You may end isolation if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you have no symptoms, or if your symptoms have improved, <u>and</u> • you have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without using fever reducing medication. <p><i>You must continue to stay home and isolate if you still have symptoms that are not improving and should consult with a health care provider before ending isolation.</i></p> <p>All days: During isolation, you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wear a well-fitting mask if you must be around others, • avoid being around people who are high risk, and • avoid travel.

<p>2. Persons with symptoms (presumed positive) who have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tested negative, • Are awaiting test results, or • Unable to test due to test supply or unavailability. 	<p>All days: Stay home until:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your symptoms have improved, <u>and</u> you have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without using fever-reducing medication, or • you have a negative PCR test result. <p>During Isolation, you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wear a well-fitting mask if you must be around others, • avoid being around people who are high risk, and • avoid travel. <p>For persistent symptoms, you should consult with a health care provider.</p>
--	---

Persons Who Are Exposed to Someone with COVID-19 and Have No Symptoms (Quarantine)

<p>1. Persons who are not fully vaccinated or are not boosted, despite being eligible</p> <p>** Day 1 is considered the first full day after the date of last close contact.</p>	<p>Day 1-5**:</p> <p>Stay home.</p> <p>Day 5-10:</p> <p>Get tested.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If your result is negative, or you cannot get a test, you may leave your home on or after day 6 but should still wear a well-fitting mask whenever you are around others. • If you are unable to mask around others, you should remain at home. • If your result is positive, stay home and follow recommendations for isolation. <p>Day 11:</p> <p>You may end quarantine.</p> <p>All Days:</p> <p>During quarantine you should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wear a well-fitting mask whenever you are around others, • monitor for symptoms, • avoid being around people who are high risk, and • avoid travel. <p>If you develop symptoms, isolate immediately and get tested. Continue to stay home until you know the results. If positive follow recommendations for isolation.</p>
---	--

Persons Who Are Exposed to Someone with COVID-19, But Have No Symptoms And Are Fully Vaccinated/Boosted OR Have Recently Recovered from COVID-19

<p>1. Persons who are fully vaccinated and/or boosted</p> <p>** Day 1 is considered the first full day after the date of last close contact.</p>	<p>YOU DO NOT NEED TO QUARANTINE, BUT:</p> <p>For 10 days**: You should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wear a well-fitting mask whenever you are around others, • monitor for symptoms, • avoid being around people who are high risk, and • avoid travel. <p>Day 5-10: Get tested, if possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If your result is positive, stay home and follow recommendations for isolation. <p>If you develop symptoms, isolate immediately and get tested. Continue to stay home until you know the results. If positive follow recommendations for isolation.</p>
<p>2. Persons with any vaccination status who tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days</p>	<p>YOU DO NOT NEED TO QUARANTINE, BUT:</p> <p>For 10 days: You should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wear a well-fitting mask whenever you are around others, • monitor for symptoms, • avoid being around people who are high risk, and • avoid travel. <p>If you develop new symptoms after you recovered from the last time you tested positive, isolate immediately and get tested. Continue to stay home until you know the results. If positive follow recommendations for isolation.</p>

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Do I need to wear a mask during isolation or quarantine?

During periods of isolation or quarantine, unmasked time should be minimized, and physical distancing and ventilation should be maximized whenever you are around others. You should avoid participating in any unmasked activities with others (including eating and drinking). It is strongly encouraged that everyone wears size appropriate (child or adult size) well-fitting masks, such as KN95 masks.

What does “fully vaccinated and boosted” mean?

- Persons under 12 years old who have completed the primary series of Pfizer,
- Persons 12 years and older who have completed the primary series of vaccinations and have been boosted,
- Persons 12 years and older who have completed the primary series of Pfizer within the last 5 months,
- Persons 18 years and older who completed the primary series of Moderna within the last 5 months, or

- Persons 18 years and older who completed the primary series of J&J within the last 2 months.
- Persons with confirmed COVID-19 within the last 90 days

What does “high risk” mean?

Individuals who are more susceptible to complications from COVID. Individuals at high risk for COVID-19 include those 65 and older and people of any age with certain medical conditions. Please see the CDC’s [full list of high risk medical conditions](#).

What type of COVID-19 tests should I take?

There are two diagnostic tests to detect a current viral infection from COVID-19. These include molecular (RT-PCR, sometimes just called PCR) and viral antigen tests. Antibody tests are not recommended to identify a current COVID-19 infection. More information on different types of diagnostic tests can be found on the [CDC website](#). [Self-testing](#), using over the counter or home rapid tests, if positive, maybe used as indication of current infection. If a rapid home test is used, it should be used as directed, including a repeat test, and may need to be confirmed with a molecular (PCR) test.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

[Symptoms of COVID-19](#) include: fever or chills, cough (either new or different than usual), shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea. Watch for fever, which means feeling feverish or having a measured temperature of 100.4 degrees F or higher. If you take fever-reducing medication such as ibuprofen, wait 6 hours after taking your last dose before taking your temperature.

What is a close contact?

A close contact of someone with COVID-19 (or suspected of having COVID-19) includes, but is not necessarily limited to, being within 6 feet of infected persons for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (e.g., three 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes). For more information on close contact, see the revised [CDC guidance on close contact](#).

Can I “test-out” of isolation?

No. DHHS follows the CDC’s current guidance, which is based on a time and symptom-based return from a COVID-19 infection.

Are there times when children who have returned to school or childcare after 5 days from quarantine or isolation may remove masks?

Yes. Masks may be removed only when eating and during naptime. Unmasked time should be minimized and physical distancing and ventilation maximized during these times. People should not be participating in any other activities unmasked. The [CDC recommends](#) that Early Care and Education programs should separate children’s naptime mats or cribs and place them so that children are head to toe for sleeping with as much distance as possible between mats, ideally at least 6 feet apart. Layer additional strategies, such as improved ventilation, if possible. Masks should not be worn when sleeping, even by children who are within the 5-day period after returning from quarantine or isolation.

Can schools or childcare providers choose to implement the modified quarantine option Test To Stay as outlined in the [Maryland Department of Health October 27th K-12 School and Child Care COVID-19 Guidance](#)?

Yes, provided these organizations have the resources and can meet the requirements. Key requirements from the MDH guidance include: both the infected student and exposed student(s) were correctly and consistently wearing well-fitting masks for all exposures; exposed students are tested daily for at least 5 days (or a reasonable alternative such as days 1, 3, 5, and 7) following exposure and remain asymptomatic; the exposed student(s) should continue to wear a mask for at least 10 days following exposure when in school settings; schools should ensure that testing can

be done on-site. This option may also be considered in child care programs when all of the children are age 5 years and above and all of the conditions described above can be met.

Are children under 2 years of age recommended to return earlier than 10 days to a child care setting from isolation or quarantine?

Because children under 2 are not recommended to wear a mask, the [CDC currently advises](#) that the safest option is to continue to quarantine or isolation guidance, as applicable, for a full 10 days.

Additional Resources:

- Use [TellYourContacts.Org](#) to anonymously notify your contacts.
- Visit [Montgomery County's testing page](#) to find a testing site near you.
- Use the [Coronavirus Self Checker](#) to help you make decisions about seeking appropriate medical care. This system is not intended for the diagnosis or treatment of disease, including COVID-19.
- This guidance is based on the latest CDC recommendations, which can be found [here](#).