

Protocol for Isolation and Quarantine Instructions for the General Public

Persons Who Test Positive for COVID-19 (Isolation) - Everyone, regardless of vaccination status, previous infection, or lack of symptoms.

Recommended action:

- Stay home for at least 5 days; after start of symptoms (or after date of first positive test if no symptoms).
- Isolation can end after day 5 if symptoms are not present or are resolving **and** a diagnostic specimen¹ collected on day 5 or later tests negative.
- If unable to test or choosing not to test, and symptoms are not present or are resolving, isolation can end after day 10.
- If fever is present, isolation should be continued until at least 24 hours have passed since fever resolution without use of fever reducing medication.
- If symptoms, other than fever, are not resolving continue to isolate until symptoms are resolving or until after day 10.
- Per CDPH masking guidance, infected persons should wear a well-fitting mask around others for a total of 10 days, especially in indoor settings².

¹ Antigen test preferred

² Masking: During the days following isolation or exposure when masks are worn, all persons should optimize mask fit and filtration ideally through use of surgical masks or respirator

Persons Who Display Symptoms³ of COVID-19

Regardless of vaccination status or previous infection.

Recommended Action:

- Self-isolate and test as soon as possible
 - *For symptomatic persons who have tested positive within the previous 90 days, antigen testing is preferred.*
- Remain in isolation while waiting for testing results.
- If unable to test or choosing not to test, and symptoms are not present or are resolving, isolation must continue through day 10.
- If test result is positive, follow isolation requirements above.

³ Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever or chills, cough, 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, and/or diarrhea.

Persons Who are Exposed⁴ to Someone with COVID-19 - Everyone, regardless of vaccination status, previous infection, or lack of symptoms.

Work Exclusion is no longer required unless symptoms develop.

Recommended Action:

- Test within 3-5 days after last exposure even if without symptoms.
- If symptoms develop, test, and stay home.
- If test result is positive, follow isolation instructions above
- If symptomatic and unable to test or choosing not to test, quarantine is recommended through day 10.
- Per CDPH masking guidance, infected persons should wear a well-fitting mask around others for a total of 10 days, especially in indoor settings²
- Strongly encouraged to get vaccinated or boosted.

** Persons infected within the prior 90 days do not need to be tested, quarantined, or excluded from work unless symptoms develop*

² Masking: During the days following isolation or exposure when masks are worn all persons should optimize mask fit and filtration ideally through use of surgical masks or respirators (e.g., an N95 mask)

⁴ Exposure definition: A close contact is someone sharing the same indoor airspace, e.g., home, clinic waiting room, airplane etc., for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (for example, three individual 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes) during an infected person's (laboratory-confirmed or a [clinical diagnosis](#)) infectious period.

For more information about isolation and quarantine guidance, please visit:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Guidance-on-Isolation-and-Quarantine-for-COVID-19-Contact-Tracing.aspx>

For information about employer responsibilities under CalOSHA COVID Emergency Temporary Standards, please visit:

[COVID-19 Prevention Emergency Temporary Standards - Fact Sheets, Model Written Program and Other Resources \(ca.gov\)](#)

In employer situations, Cal OSHA ETS takes precedence and has requirements for post exposure management or return from isolation.