



Gaston County Public Health

Self-Quarantine Recommendations for COVID-19

WHO Needs to Quarantine After Exposure to COVID-19?

Anyone who was in **close contact** to a person with COVID-19 should **quarantine** to prevent further spread in the community.

- A close contact is any individual who was within **6 feet** of a person with COVID-19 for **at least 15 minutes total** during a 24 hour period **starting from 2 days before the person with COVID-19 got sick** (or 2 days before they tested positive if the person doesn't have symptoms), regardless of whether masks were worn.
- Close contacts should quarantine by **staying home, avoiding close contact with others, and monitoring for symptoms.**

HOW Long Should I Quarantine After Exposure to COVID-19

The recommended quarantine period is 14 days.

- This timeframe results in the **lowest risk** for spread of COVID-19.
- 14-day quarantine should still **always** be used in congregate living facilities, including nursing homes, residential care facilities, shelters, and correctional facilities

WHAT are Other Options for Ending Home Quarantine?

Two other options to end the home quarantine may be considered ONLY IF you are able to follow strict precautions at ALL times:

- **10 days** of quarantine have been completed **AND** you do not have any symptoms
 - *You are still at risk for developing and spreading COVID and must still follow the precautions below, including through the end of the 14-day quarantine period.*
- **7 days** of quarantine have been completed **AND** you do not have any symptoms **AND** you have had a negative test **no earlier than day 5** after **last contact** with the person who tested positive.
 - *A negative test does **not** rule out COVID infection.*
 - *You are still at risk for developing and spreading COVID and must still follow the precautions below, including through the end of the 14-day quarantine period.*
 - *PCR tests are more accurate tests. Healthcare providers should prioritize rapid tests for symptomatic patients or testing as part of an outbreak investigation.*

Strict precautions include:

- **Monitoring closely for symptoms and isolate immediately if any symptoms develop**
- **Wearing a face covering at all times in public settings**
- **Practicing social distancing**

Additional quarantine restrictions may apply prior to returning to work or school based on your occupation and your employer's or institution's policies (See *Considerations for Employers and Considerations for Educational Institutions* sections below)

CONSIDERATIONS For EMPLOYERS

- **14-day quarantine period is still the recommended option by the CDC. The following employers should continue to employ a 14-day quarantine:**
 - Employers with difficulty implementing and/or maintaining social distancing* and masking in the workplace.
 - Congregate living settings (e.g. long-term care facilities, correctional facilities)
 - Other settings in which the increased risk for spread due to a shorter quarantine period is unacceptably high



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- If an employer decides to adopt alternative quarantine option, the employer should ensure the following:
 - A clear process for ensuring that social distancing* and masking will be strictly followed
 - Clear policies regarding employees to not come to work if symptomatic
 - Sufficient resources to ensure frequent hand hygiene and cleaning/disinfection of surfaces occurs.
 - Use of testing resources by employees does not adversely impact access to testing in the community
- All employers should have strong masking policies in place and readily enforced

**Special considerations for PPE use in the healthcare setting may apply*

Note: First Responders should continue to follow their specific occupational health guidance

CONSIDERATIONS For EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

- 14-day quarantine period is still the recommended option by the CDC and the following should continue to employ a 14-day quarantine:
 - Students or staff who live in congregate living settings (e.g. dormitories)
 - Educational institutions who will have difficulty implementing social distancing and masking requirements.
- **Extracurricular** activities (including athletics) in which social distancing and masking cannot be maintained should continue to employ a 14-day quarantine.

WHERE Can I Learn More About Quarantine or Other Questions?

Call **704-862-5303** for more information on quarantine recommendations, testing information, and other COVID questions and concerns.

