

DHSS Statement on Newly-Modified CDC Guidance Regarding COVID Quarantine for Asymptomatic Individuals

DHSS concurs with the newly-modified guidance released from CDC on December 2, 2020 in whole as clarified within this statement. The newly-modified CDC guidance is prospective for those entering quarantine on or after December 2, 2020. Anything not contained within the new guidance or clarified here remains in effect.

The Newly-Modified CDC guidance may be viewed here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/scientific-brief-options-to-reduce-quarantine.html>.

The newly-modified guidance from CDC continues to recommend the existing 14 day quarantine period. Additionally, guidance regarding Isolation for confirmed or probable cases remains unchanged, as does the existing Isolation guidance for SYMPTOMATIC close contacts. This newly-modified CDC guidance is not authorized for reduced timeframes for quarantine in nursing facilities or long-term care facilities.

However, CDC is providing additional options for certain circumstances; it is not intended to serve as a reduction to 7 days with a test out or a 10 day end to quarantine for entire communities. Instead, it is intended to provide local authorities with additional flexibility to identify specific categories of circumstances where it makes sense to choose earlier ends to quarantine. The science has not changed; shorter quarantines increase the risk of transmissions and likelihood of additional illness.

In short, CDC recommends the 14 day quarantine should continue to be the standard, but is providing three options that can be operated together as a package based upon the level of risk to particular groups or risk-associated categories within a local community. ASYMPTOMATIC individuals must not have had any symptom at any time during the quarantine period to be eligible for either of these options.

- End to quarantine after the completion of 10 full days for ASYMPTOMATIC individuals, provided that monitoring continues throughout the full 14 days and, if a symptom develops, the individual immediately isolate and contact a public health authority or healthcare provider.
- End to quarantine after the completion of quarantine Day 7 for ASYMPTOMATIC individuals provided they receive a negative result of a COVID diagnostic test, defined as a PCR test or Antigen test only, that is collected on or after day 5 of quarantine. Even if the negative result is received on quarantine Day 5 (to account for testing turnaround delays), the quarantine may not end before completing quarantine Day 7. Additionally, monitoring should continue throughout the full 14 days and if a symptom develops, the individual must immediately isolate and contact a public health authority or healthcare provider.

DHSS is establishing the following clarifications as specific guidance to be followed:

- Under the newly-modified CDC guidance, if a local public health authority chooses to implement a quarantine Day 7 test out option, there is a built in period of 24-48 hours for laboratory time to run the test and report the result. Any test collected, whether on quarantine Day 5, Day 6, or Day 7 that demonstrates a negative result does not release an individual from quarantine until the completion of quarantine Day 7. A decision by a local public health authority to allow for a quarantine Day 7 test out option should weigh safety needs of the individual to be tested, the individual that will be collecting the test, and others at the testing location.
- A local public health authority may allow BinaxNOW tests provided through the State of Missouri to school districts to be used to test out of quarantine only if the specimen is collected on or after quarantine Day 7 so as to reduce risk of a false negative result.
- Where active monitoring by a local public health authority is not possible, due to resource constraints, individuals should be advised to self-monitor using CDC's checklist of signs and symptoms, and report the development of any COVID-related symptoms to a healthcare provider or local public health authority.
- Local decisions regarding the implementation of a quarantine Day 7 test out option or a quarantine Day 10 end should consider a tiered- approach that includes reduced restrictions when the local community is within a County Action Plan Level 3 status or better, and should consider key risk factors such as residence in a congregate care facility, hypertension, Diabetes, and similar COVID risk factors. Testing availability should also be considered as a factor that will impact these decisions. County Action Plan Levels may be reviewed here:

<https://health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/communicable/novel-coronavirus/pdf/advisory-20201119.pdf>

- DHSS advises that the determination of the initiation point of the time period for a household contact will still be calculated from the final isolation day as the last possible exposure for the household contact and has, if approved by the local public health authority and the contact remains ASYMPTOMATIC, the option of being reduced according to the CDC guidance outlined above.
- For all Missourians, DHSS continues to advise citizens should engage in social distancing, wear a mask in accordance with recommended guidance, use proper self hygiene and hand washing techniques, and avoid contact with symptomatic individuals.

DHSS will continue to assist local public health authorities, where possible, to provide additional clarity and consistency to this statement.

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