

## **CDC Updates to COVID-19 Quarantine Length**

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At the onset and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, IRMA has remained vigilant in monitoring and distributing updates from local, state, and federal authorities. As of December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020, the CDC has updated its recommendations to reduce the 14 day quarantine for potential exposure incidents under certain circumstances. Additionally, as of November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020, the recommendations for self-isolation of those infected with COVID-19 have not changed and are included here for reference. The CDC defines Quarantine as keeping an individual who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others. Isolation is used to separate those infected with COVID-19 from people who are not infected.

### **New CDC Quarantine Guidance**

The CDC now recommends two additional options for how long quarantine should last. Based on local availability of viral testing, for people without symptoms quarantine can end:

- On day 10 without testing; or
- On day 7 after receiving a negative test result.

After stopping quarantine, people should:

- Watch for symptoms until 14 days after exposure.
- If they have symptoms, immediately self-isolate and contact their local public health authority or healthcare provider.
- Wear a mask, stay at least 6 feet from others, wash their hands, avoid crowds, and take other steps to [prevent the spread of COVID-19](#).

The CDC continues to endorse quarantine for 14 days and recognizes that any quarantine shorter than 14 days balances reduced burden against a small possibility of spreading the virus.

### **CDC Guidance on When to End Home Isolation:**

***I think or know I had COVID-19, and I had symptoms. You can be around others (end home isolation):***

- **10 days** since symptoms first appeared **and**
- **24 hours** with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
- **Other COVID-19 symptoms have improved** (for example, cough, shortness of breath)

*Most people do not require testing to decide when they can be around others; however, if your healthcare provider recommends testing, they will let you know when you can resume being around others based on your test results.*

*Note that these recommendations **do not** apply to persons with severe COVID-19 or with severely weakened immune systems (immunocompromised). These persons should follow the guidance below for [“I was severely ill with COVID-19 or have a severely weakened immune system \(immunocompromised\) due to a health condition or medication. When can I be around others?”](#)*

***I tested positive for COVID-19 but had no symptoms:***

- *If you continue to have no symptoms, you can be with others after **10 days** have passed since you had a positive viral test for COVID-19.*

*Most people do not require testing to decide when they can be around others; however, if your healthcare provider recommends testing, they will let you know when you can resume being around others based on your test results.*

*If you develop symptoms after testing positive, follow the guidance above for [“I think or know I had COVID-19, and I had symptoms.”](#)*

*Consistent with [CDC’s recommendations](#), workers with COVID-19 symptoms should be referred to a healthcare provider for evaluation and potential testing. Waiting for test results prior to returning to work is preferred to keep potentially infected workers out of the workplace.*

IRMA will continue to recommend that individuals follow the CDC’s guidance for a 14-day quarantine with the new alternatives as acceptable options when circumstances warrant. Continue to consult with employee healthcare providers for guidance on further testing or isolation needs. Employers should ensure anyone returning from quarantine continue to monitor symptoms and continue stringent social distance, hygiene, and face covering practices. All employee guidance and COVID-19 policies should be updated to reflect CDC’s current recommendations and distributed to employees.

**Resources:**

[CDC - When to Quarantine](#)

[CDC - When to Isolate](#)

[CDC - When You Can Be Around Others](#)