



# Updated General COVID-19 FAQ's

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## **What constitutes a high-risk close contact?**

Anyone within 6 feet of a confirmed case for 15 cumulative minutes or more is considered a high-risk close contact. For controlled, indoor school classroom settings where a mask mandate is in place, a close contact is anyone within 3 feet of a confirmed case for 15 minutes or more.

## **Are fully vaccinated individuals required to quarantine following an exposure to a positive case?**

If a person is fully vaccinated (have received all doses of vaccines, including booster if eligible) but is determined to be a high-risk close contact to a positive case, then they are not required to quarantine if they are asymptomatic (without symptoms). These individuals should wear a mask around others for 10 days and get tested on day 5 or after if possible.

## **What if a person has already had COVID-19? Are they required to quarantine after exposure?**

There may be new guidance coming on this issue, but at this time, if a person is within 90 days of a confirmed COVID-19 infection (meaning they received a positive test result from a test site) and they are asymptomatic (without symptoms), they are not required to quarantine after exposure.

## **Can I show proof of a positive antibody test to avoid quarantine?**

No. At this time, antibody tests are not accepted as proof of immunity. The only way to avoid quarantine is to show proof of being fully vaccinated or proof of a previous positive COVID-19 test from a test site within the past 90 days.

## **What if a person reports a positive test conducted using an “at-home” COVID-19 test kit?**

Historically, these tests have not been accepted in any fashion as they cannot be verified, are not reported to the local health department, and therefore are not counted in overall state and national case counts. However, due to significant test shortages, the Indiana Department of Health has changed their guidance to allow at-home tests to be used if the business, school or organization where the person attends work or school is willing to accept them. The Indiana Department of Health recommends these individuals provide a photo of the positive test result to their school or employer for documentation. It is then the school or employer's responsibility to store and track this information.

**It is important to note** that since at-home tests are not reported to the local health department or a laboratory, there will be no official documentation of the test and no work/school release or return notes can be provided based on an at-home test. If a person is planning on traveling or participating in ANY event that would require proof of a negative test within 90 days, they should go to an official test site to be tested as you could continue to test positive for up to 90 days. If there is no documentation that you were positive from the at-home test, the new test taken before travel would be counted as a new infection and that person would not be allowed to travel. Finally, positive at-home tests do not exempt someone from quarantine following an exposure with the following 90 days as they are not official results.

## **What is the current isolation guidance for people who test positive?**

The CDC recently updated their isolation and quarantine guidance for the general public. It is important to note that this guidance does not currently apply to early childhood centers, congregate living settings, jails

or prisons, long-term care communities or healthcare workers. These places need to continue to follow the traditional guidance for their sector found on the CDC's website. In addition, K-12 schools are to follow the guidance they were recently provided by the Indiana Department of Health.

For the general public, regardless of vaccination status, if a person tests positive for COVID-19 they must stay home for 5 days from the date their symptoms started. If they did not have symptoms, they must stay home for 5 days from the date of the positive test. Then, if they have no symptoms by the end of day 5, or their symptoms are resolving after those 5 days, they can leave isolation but they must diligently wear a mask when around others for an additional 5 days. If they cannot diligently wear a mask for the additional 5 days, they must remain in isolation for the full 10 days. **NOTE:** This lessened isolation guidance is solely based on the person's ability to mask at all times when no longer in isolation for days 6 through 10.

*Further, if they have a fever at the 5-day mark, they must continue to stay home until their fever has resolved for 24 hours without the use of medication.*

### **What are the current quarantine options?**

The CDC recently updated their isolation and quarantine guidance for the general public. It is important to note that this guidance does not currently apply to early childhood centers, congregate living situations, jails or prisons, long-term care communities or health care workers. These places should continue to follow the traditional guidance for their sector found on the CDC's website. In addition, K-12 school facilities are to follow the guidance they were recently provided by the Indiana Department of Health.

*For the general public, the CDC recently updated their quarantine guidance to the following:*

If you are fully vaccinated (have received all doses of vaccines, including booster if eligible), you are not required to quarantine if you are asymptomatic (without symptoms). You must wear a mask for 10 days from the last date of exposure to the positive case and get tested on day 5 if possible.

If you are partially vaccinated or unvaccinated, you must stay home for 5 days from the last date of exposure to the positive case. If you are asymptomatic at the end of the fifth full day, you can leave quarantine but should continue to diligently wear a mask for 5 additional days when around others. It is recommended to be tested on day 5 if possible.

### **Why doesn't the new CDC isolation and quarantine guidance apply to everyone?**

Some sectors, such as early childhood facilities, congregate living settings, long-term care facilities, health care workers, jails and prisons are high-risk settings for COVID-19 transmission. These settings often have individuals who are unable to distance and mask and have individuals with compromised immune systems. These settings have stricter guidelines to follow than the general public.

### **How do we determine when someone's infectious period starts, so we know who their high-risk close contacts are?**

If the person had symptoms, the start of the infectious period (the time when they can spread the disease to others) is determined by counting back 2 full days BEFORE the start of their symptoms. While the actual infectious period can last up to 10 days from that starting point, the CDC has amended its guidance for isolation, as stated earlier in this document, allowing early release from isolation (after day 5) if the diligent masking requirements stated are followed at all times when around others (for days 6 through 10). Again, if they are unable to diligently mask at all times on days 6 through 10 when around others, then they must

remain in isolation for the remainder of the full 10 days. This lessened isolation guidance is solely based on the person's ability to mask at all times when no longer in isolation for days 6 through 10.

(If the person did not have symptoms at all, the start of the infectious period is determined by counting back 2 full days before the test was collected and the early release timeline as well as the masking restrictions for days 6 through 10 noted above also apply to this scenario.)

**Can vaccinated people become infected with COVID-19?**

Yes. No vaccine is 100% effective. However, the vaccines for COVID-19 are very effective at preventing severe infection, hospitalizations and death. Breakthrough cases remain a *very small* portion of overall new COVID-19 cases.

**As a business or school, what symptoms should we screen for?**

Fever (100.4 degrees or higher), chills, sore throat, cough, shortness of breath, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, headache and new loss of taste or smell.

**Are masks required on school buses and public transportation?**

Per the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) order, individuals are required to wear masks on public transportation, including school buses, even if fully vaccinated.

**Can employers require proof of vaccination? Can employers require their employees to be vaccinated? Can employers limit meeting attendance to only those who are currently vaccinated?**

Health departments cannot provide legal guidance on employment matters. We recommend employers discuss and seek advice from a trusted legal professional who knows your business and the applicable laws.