



**REVISED ISOLATION/QUARANTINE GUIDANCE FOR GENERAL POPULATIONS \***  
**January 14, 2022**

In response to the recent changes in COVID-19 isolation and quarantine recommendations for the general public put forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services is providing the following interim guidance for the general population. Please note that this guidance is not applicable to the following populations. These populations should continue to follow the recommendations outlined in the current guidance available for those settings, ensuring adherence to all applicable state and federal orders and regulations

- School systems, nonpublic schools, and childcare programs (See January 14<sup>th</sup> Guidance for Schools and Childcare);
- Healthcare settings, including health care personnel, residents or patients residing in healthcare facilities;
- [Long-term care](#) and other specific [congregate living](#) settings (including nursing homes, group homes, and assisted living facilities); and
- [Staff and residents of correctional and detention facilities](#).

This guidance may not apply to employees in whose absence would cause operational deficiencies in key services (e.g. fire, police, sheriffs, and corrections).

Persons Who Have Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19 (Isolation)	
<p><b>For a full 10 days, <u>all</u> persons should:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Wear a well-fitting mask when around others</b></li> <li>○ <b>Avoid being around people who are at high risk<sup>1</sup></b></li> <li>○ <b>Avoid travel</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Additionally:</b></p>	
<p><b>1. All persons 5 and older who test<sup>2</sup> positive for COVID-19 or have suspected COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status.</b></p>	<p><b>These persons <u>should complete isolation</u> as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Stay home for at least 5 full days from the date of symptom onset if symptomatic<sup>3</sup> or the date of the positive test if no symptoms.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Day 1 is considered the first full day after symptoms started in symptomatic persons or the first full day after the person tested positive if asymptomatic.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>After Day 5, if the person has no symptoms or if symptoms are improved and they have had no fever for at least 24 hours without medication, they may leave isolation PROVIDED they wear a well-fitting mask when around others** for an additional 5 days.</b></li> <li>• If the person is unable to wear a mask around others, they should remain at home for a full 10 days.</li> </ul>

<p><b>2. All persons under 5 years old, who test<sup>2</sup> positive for COVID-19 or have suspected COVID-19.</b></p>	<p><b>These children <u>should complete isolation</u> as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay home for at least 10 full days from the date of symptom onset if symptomatic<sup>3</sup> or the date of the positive test if no symptoms. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Day 1 is considered the first full day after symptoms started in symptomatic persons or the first full day after the person tested positive if asymptomatic.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>3. All persons who have COVID-like symptoms</b> and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Test negative for COVID-19 following the onset of symptoms, or</li> <li>• Have not been tested or received a result for COVID-19.</li> </ul>	<p><b>These persons <u>should isolate at home</u> until their symptoms improve</b> and they have had no fever for at least 24 hours without medication.</p> <p>For persistent symptoms, recommend consultation with a health care provider for consideration of repeat testing or alternative diagnosis.</p> <p>If symptomatic and negative test is a rapid antigen test, a confirmatory test with a PCR test is recommended.</p>

**Persons Who Are Exposed to Someone with COVID-19 and Remain Asymptomatic (Quarantine)**

**For a full 10 days, all persons should:**

- **Wear a well-fitting mask when around others**
- **Avoid being around people who are at high risk<sup>1</sup>**
- **Avoid travel**

**Additionally:**

<p>1. The following recommendations apply to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Adults 18 years and older who have been boosted OR completed the primary series</b> of Pfizer within the last 5 months or Moderna vaccine within the last 6 months OR completed the primary series of J&amp;J vaccine within the last 2 months <b>AND they have no symptoms;</b></li> <li>• <b>Children 5-17 years old</b> who have completed the Pfizer vaccine series as recommended <b>AND they have no symptoms;</b> and</li> <li>• <b>Persons who had confirmed COVID-19 within the last 90 days</b> (i.e. tested positive using a viral test) <b>AND have no symptoms.</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>These persons <u>do not need to quarantine after exposure</u> <u>but should:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Wear a well-fitting mask around others** for 10 days</b> after the last close contact<sup>4</sup> with the person with COVID-19 (Day 1 is considered the first full day after the date of last close contact).</li> <li>• <b>Get tested at least 5 days after the last close contact</b> (persons who had confirmed COVID-19 within the last 90 days do not need to test).</li> <li>• If the person tests positive or develops symptoms they should stay home and follow recommendations for isolation above.</li> <li>• If the person tests negative or is unable to get a test, they should continue to wear a well-fitting mask** around others for 10 days after the last close contact.</li> </ul>
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<p>2. The following recommendations apply to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Persons 5 and older who have not completed a primary set of vaccinations;</b> and</li> <li>• <b>Adults 18 years and older</b> who have completed the primary series of Pfizer vaccine over 5 months ago or Moderna vaccine over 6 months ago and <b>are not boosted</b> OR completed the primary series of J&amp;J over 2 months ago and are not boosted.</li> </ul>	<p><b>These persons <u>should quarantine</u> after exposure as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Stay home for at least 5 days after the last close contact<sup>4</sup></b> with the person with COVID-19 (Day 1 is considered the first full day after the date of last close contact).</li> <li>• <b>If no symptoms, get tested at least 5 days after the last close contact.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>If the person tests negative, they may leave quarantine PROVIDED they wear a well-fitting mask when around others** until 10 days after their last close contact;</b></li> <li>○ If the person tests positive, they should follow the recommendations for isolation above;</li> <li>○ If the person is unable to get a test, they may leave quarantine after Day 5 IF they wear a well-fitting mask when around others** until 10 days after their last close contact.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• If the person develops symptoms they should get tested immediately and remain at home; if the test is positive, they should follow the recommendations for isolation above.</li> <li>• If the person is unable to mask around others, they should remain at home for 10 days from the date of last close contact.</li> </ul>
<p>3. The following recommendations apply to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Children younger than 5 years old.</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>These children <u>should quarantine</u> after exposure as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay home for at least 10 days after the last close contact<sup>4</sup> with the person with COVID-19 (Day 1 is considered the first full day after the date of last close contact)</li> <li>• If the person develops symptoms they should get tested immediately and remain at home; if the test is positive, they should follow the recommendations for isolation above.</li> <li>• If no symptoms, get tested at least 5 days after the last close contact. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If the child tests negative or unable to get a test, they may return to childcare 10 days after their last close contact;</li> <li>○ If the child tests positive, they should follow the recommendations for isolation above.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## NOTES

\* **Corrected** to add that persons who isolate or quarantine should, for 10 full days, wear a well-fitting mask when around others, avoid being around people who are at high risk, and avoid travel.

\*\* **Mask requirements** for people who are returning either from isolation (after a positive COVID-19 test) or quarantine (after exposure): Unmasked time should be minimized and physical distancing and ventilation maximized during these times. People should not be participating in any other activities unmasked. All individuals are strongly encouraged to wear size appropriate (child or adult size) tight-fitting masks, such as KN95 masks.

<sup>1</sup> Individuals at high risk for COVID-19 includes those 65 and older and people of any age with certain medical conditions. Please see the CDC's [full list of high risk medical conditions](#).

<sup>2</sup> **Diagnostic tests** for COVID-19 include molecular (RT-PCR, sometimes just called PCR) and viral antigen tests, but not antibody tests. More information on different types of diagnostic tests can be found on the [CDC website](#). [Self-testing](#), using over-the-counter or home rapid tests, if positive, maybe used as indication of current infection. If a rapid home test is used, it should be used as directed, including a repeat test, and may need to be confirmed with a molecular (PCR) test.

<sup>3</sup> [Symptoms of COVID-19](#) include: fever or chills, cough (either new or different than usual), 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, or diarrhea.

<sup>4</sup> A **close contact** of someone with COVID-19 (or suspected of having COVID-19) includes, but is not necessarily limited to, being within 6 feet of infected persons for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (e.g., three 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes). For more information on close contact, see the revised [CDC guidance on close contact](#).