

MEMORANDUM

TO: DuPage County Healthcare and Community Partners
FROM: Karen Ayala, MPH, Executive Director
Rashmi Chugh, MD, MPH, Medical Officer
DATE: November 10, 2021
SUBJECT: **Updated COVID-19 Quarantine and Testing Recommendations for Persons Living, Learning, or Working in DuPage County**

As COVID-19 community transmission level remains [high](#) in DuPage County, **containment** (e.g., isolation of cases, quarantine of close contacts) and **mitigation** (e.g., indoor masking, physical distancing) measures remain essential to reduce and prevent spread of infection and illness. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [quarantine recommendations](#) include the following opening statements: **“Local public health authorities determine and establish the quarantine options for their jurisdictions. CDC currently recommends a quarantine period of 14 days.”** CDC also provides additional, acceptable alternatives for consideration based on local circumstances and resources to shorten quarantine for COVID-19 close contacts.

DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) advises COVID-19 [close contacts](#) to *ideally* complete a 14-day [quarantine](#) period. **At a *minimum*, a 10-day quarantine period must be completed; in both options, additional criteria must be met with daily symptom monitoring for COVID-19 illness, continued masking, and physical distancing through Day 14.**

NOTE: A 7-day quarantine option is currently not permitted in DuPage County, due to ongoing high level of COVID-19 community transmission, predominance of the more easily transmissible Delta variant, and a significant proportion of the local population who remain unvaccinated against COVID-19 (either due to ineligibility or choice).

COVID-19 viral [testing](#) is also recommended for people who have had a **known exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.**

- [People who are fully vaccinated](#) should get **tested 5-7 days after exposure (even if you don’t have symptoms)**, continue wearing a mask in public indoor settings, and **monitor symptoms daily for 14 days.** Fully vaccinated persons without symptoms do NOT need to quarantine.
- [People who are not fully vaccinated](#) need to [quarantine](#), monitor symptoms daily for 14 days, and be **tested immediately** after being identified, and **if negative, tested again in 5–7 days after last exposure or immediately if symptoms develop during quarantine.**

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- People who have [tested positive for current COVID-19 infection within the past 3 months and recovered](#), as long as they monitor symptoms daily for 14 days and do not develop new symptoms, do not need to get tested and do NOT need to quarantine.

DuPage County Health Department continues to recommend only the full 14-day quarantine period in high-risk congregate settings, such as long-term care facilities, correctional and detention facilities, and college/university student housing. Any option to shorten quarantine risks being less effective than the currently recommended 14-day quarantine. The variability of SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) transmission observed to-date indicates that while a shorter quarantine substantially reduces secondary transmission risk, there may be settings (e.g., with high contact rates) where even a small risk of post-quarantine transmission could still result in substantial secondary clusters.

For persons in other community settings (e.g., critical infrastructure workers, schools, offices), DCHD recommends COVID-19 close contacts complete at least a 10-day quarantine period and ideally a full 14-day quarantine period. In both options, additional criteria must be met with daily symptom monitoring for COVID-19 illness, continued masking, and physical distancing through Day 14.

In school settings, as announced on 9/13/2021, although DCHD does not currently endorse or recommend the “Test-to-Stay” with modified quarantine option provided by Illinois Department of Public Health and Illinois State Board of Education, schools and/or districts in DuPage County may choose to implement this option.

DCHD strongly urges all eligible residents to get [vaccinated](#) against COVID-19 as soon as possible. All persons are also advised to use effective COVID-19 prevention strategies including wearing a well-fitted mask correctly and consistently in public indoor settings, physical distancing, hand and cough hygiene, environmental cleaning and disinfection, avoiding crowds, ensuring adequate indoor ventilation, and self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19 illness. These strategies are also summarized [here](#). Quarantined persons and fully vaccinated close contacts who develop symptoms need to contact their healthcare provider for medical evaluation, diagnostic testing, and appropriate care.

The recommendation for a 14-day quarantine has been based on estimates of the upper bounds of the COVID-19 incubation period (i.e., 2-14 days). Quarantine’s importance grew after it was evident that **persons are able to transmit SARS-CoV-2 before symptoms develop**, and that a substantial portion of infected persons (likely somewhere between 20% to 40%) never develop symptomatic illness but can still transmit the virus. In this context, **quarantine is a critical measure to control transmission.**

Additional information and resources on COVID-19 are available at: www.dupagehealth.org/covid19.

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