

Recent Updates

12/22/21 – Added link to new quarantine and isolation guidance promulgated through an emergency rule pursuant to T.C.A. § 14-4-101 and the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act

1/11/22 – Updated to reflect new CDC guidelines

Isolation Guidance for Cases

TDH adopted guidelines for use by the state or a local government in accordance with T.C.A. § 14-4-101 when requiring a person to isolate or quarantine through promulgation of a new emergency rule on December 22, 2021, which may be viewed here. https://publications.tnsosfiles.com/rules_filings/12-22-21.pdf.

Because the formal rulemaking process is relatively lengthy, TDH’s isolation and quarantine guidance may lag behind the latest CDC best practices. Following promulgation of the TDH’s emergency rule on December 22, 2021, which was consistent with CDC guidance at the time, the CDC adopted the following new standards, some of which are less stringent than TDH’s guidance. While not legally binding, TDH posts the latest CDC recommendation below so that citizens are informed of the latest advice to assist them in making their personal healthcare choices.

The new CDC recommendations provide that cases should isolate for a minimum of 5 days after onset and may be released after they are without fever for 24 hours (without fever-reducing medication) and show improvement in symptoms. Cases without symptoms should isolate through 5 days after their specimen collection date. Regardless of symptoms, CDC recommends wearing a well-fitting mask when around others for 10 days following onset/specimen collection.

CDC recommends that a case may consider using an antigen test towards the end of the 5-day isolation period to make decisions about extending at-home isolation. If the test result is positive, CDC recommends the individual should continue to isolate until day 10. If the test result is negative (or testing is not performed), they can end isolation, but should **continue to wear a well-fitting mask around others at home and in public until day 10.**



Notes:

- Some severely ill patients may need to isolate for a longer time period.
- Lingering cough or loss of taste or smell should not prevent a case from being released from isolation.
- If a follow-up PCR test is positive, cases do not need to re-enter isolation as long as they have completed the 5-day isolation and had symptom improvement for a minimum of 24 hours.

Quarantine Guidance for Close Contacts

Who DOES NOT need to quarantine at home?

CDC recommends that close contacts do not need to quarantine if they meet any of the following:

- Are ages 12 or older and have received all [recommended vaccine doses](#), including [boosters](#) and [additional primary shots](#) for some immunocompromised people.
- Are ages 5-17 years and have completed the [primary series](#) of COVID-19 vaccines.
- Had confirmed COVID-19 within the last 90 days (tested positive using a [viral test](#)) and remain without COVID-19 symptoms.

NON-HOUSEHOLD CONTACT

CDC recommends that contacts should wear a well-fitting mask around others for 10 days from the date of their last close contact with someone with COVID-19 (the date of last close contact is considered day 0). Get tested at least 5 days after they last had close contact with someone with COVID-19. If they test positive or develop COVID-19 symptoms, they should isolate from other people and follow isolation recommendations.

HOUSEHOLD CONTACT

CDC defines a household contact as an individual who shares any living spaces with a case, including bedrooms, bathrooms, living rooms, kitchens, etc., and advises the following

- **If the contact can separate from the case within the home**, then they can follow the non-household guidance. To separate, the case 1) should never be in the same room as household members, 2) should not share plates, cups, dishes, or phones with household members, and 3) should have their own bathroom (or conduct daily bathroom cleaning).
- **If the contact cannot separate from the case in the home**, they should get tested 5 days after initial exposure to the case and again 5 days after the end of the case's isolation. The contact should wear a mask indoors in public for 10 days following last exposure. If they test positive, they should isolate.

Who NEEDS to quarantine at home?

CDC recommends that close contacts should quarantine if they meet any of the following:

- They are not vaccinated or have not completed a [primary vaccine series](#).
- They are ages 12 or older and completed the [primary series](#) of recommended vaccine, but have not received a [recommended](#) booster shot when eligible.

CDC recommends that close contacts should quarantine regardless of whether the case was symptomatic.

NON-HOUSEHOLD CONTACT

CDC recommends that close contacts should wear a well-fitting mask around others for 10 days from the date of their last close contact with someone with COVID-19 (the date of last close contact is considered day 0), quarantine at home for 5 days, and get tested at least 5 days after they last had close contact with someone with COVID-19. If they test positive or develop COVID-19 symptoms, they should isolate from other people and follow isolation recommendations.

5 days quarantine at home

DAY 0 – Contact begins quarantine. Wear a mask when around others.

5 additional days masking while around others

DAY 5 – Get tested. If no symptoms or negative result, return to normal activities. Continue to wear a mask when around others.

**DAY 10
Complete self-monitoring for symptoms.**

Who NEEDS to quarantine at home? (cont.)

HOUSEHOLD CONTACT

CDC defines a household contact as an individual who shares any living spaces with a case. This includes bedrooms, bathrooms, living rooms, kitchens, etc.

Quarantine start: CDC recommends that household contacts should quarantine as long as they are exposed to the case, and for a 5-day period beyond their last exposure.

- **If the contact can separate from the case within the home**, then CDC recommends they can follow the non-household guidance above. To separate, the case 1) should never be in the same room as household members 2) should not share plates, cups, dishes, or phones with household members 3) should have their own bathroom (or conduct daily bathroom cleaning).
- **If the contact cannot separate from the case in the home**, CDC recommends they should get tested 5 days after initial exposure to the case and again 5 days after the end of the case's isolation. The contact should wear a mask when around others for 10 days following last exposure. If they test positive, they should isolate.

Quarantine end: CDC recommends that once exposure is no longer occurring (either the case has completed their 5-day isolation or the case and contact have separated within the home), then at-home quarantine can end after Day 5. The contact should monitor for symptoms and wear a mask for 5 additional days.

Notes:

- If a household contact develops symptoms of COVID-19, they become a case. They should begin isolation as a case and consider getting tested.
- Household contacts will often need to remain at home longer than the initial case.
- If a case has been released from isolation and symptoms return, household contacts do not need to restart the 5-day period as long as the case has completed the minimum 5-day isolation and had symptom resolution for a minimum of 24 hours.

5 days minimum. Stay home while exposure is ongoing.

5 additional days quarantine at home after last exposure.

5 additional days masking while around others

DAY 0 –
Case's onset date. Both case and contact should stay home. Risk of transmission is reduced if both parties wear masks.

DAY 5 –
Case completed minimum isolation; Contact's quarantine begins. Both parties should continue to mask if around others.

DAY 10 –
Get tested. If no symptoms or negative result, return to normal activities. Contact should continue to wear a mask when around others.

DAY 15 –
Complete self-monitoring for symptoms.

Healthcare Personnel

CDC recommends that healthcare personnel (including those working in long term care facilities) should refer to guidance below for isolation and quarantine guidance:

- [Interim Guidance for Managing Healthcare Personnel with SARS-CoV-2 Infection or Exposure to SARS-CoV-2](#)
- [Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Pandemic](#)
- [Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations to Prevent SARS-CoV-2 Spread in Nursing Homes](#)

K-12 Schools

Under the new emergency rule, schools are allowed to adopt their own quarantine guidance.