

Phase Two

Coronavirus (COVID-19): Guidance for Persons Who Tested Positive for COVID-19

This guidance is for people who were diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider. If you tested positive for the virus that causes COVID-19 and your healthcare provider determined that you do not need to be hospitalized, DC Health recommends that you follow the steps below.

Actions You Can Take to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19

Take the steps below to isolate yourself from others to prevent the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19 to your friends, family, and community.

- **Stay home except to get medical care.** Do not go to work, school, or public areas. Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.
- **Separate yourself from other people in your home.** As much as possible, stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. Use a separate bathroom, if available.
- **Prohibit visitors** who do not have an essential need to be in the home.
- **If you have household members or intimate partners, see the guidance at coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance.** Share this document with your household members and intimate partners.
- **Notify your employer.** This is especially important if your occupation requires you to be around older adults and people with severe underlying health conditions.
- **Restrict contact with pets and other animals.** If possible, another household member should care for animals. For more information, please see the guidance at coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance.
- **You must wear a cloth face covering or face mask** if you need to be around other people. If you are not able to wear a cloth face covering (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then people who live with you should wear a cloth face covering if they need to be in the same room as you.
- **Cover your coughs and sneezes.** Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw used tissues in a lined trash can; immediately wash your hands.
- **Clean your hands often.** Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with a store-bought alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. Soap and water should be used if hands are visibly dirty. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. Do not make your own hand sanitizer.
- **Do not share personal household items.** You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in your home. After using these items, they should be washed thoroughly with soap and water.
- **Clean all “high-touch” surfaces every day.** Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces at least daily. Make sure you clean visible dirt with soap and water before you disinfect. Visit cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/cleaning-disinfection.html for more information.

Be Prepared for DC Health Follow-up

- Answer the phone when you get a call from the DC Health Contact Trace Team.
- Be prepared to share information about your activities and close contacts starting 48 hours before your first COVID-19 symptoms appeared. This information will only be used to inform public health action such as contacting those who need to be quarantined to prevent further spread.
- DC Health will follow up with you regularly throughout your isolation period to ask how you are doing, to find out if you are having any trouble isolating yourself, and to identify any resources we can share with you.

Monitor Your Symptoms

- Consult with your healthcare provider if you have not yet been medically evaluated (i.e., were tested at a free public health site). Seek prompt medical attention if your illness is worsening (e.g., difficulty breathing).
- Call 911 if you have a medical emergency (such as difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion or inability to arouse, bluish lips or face). Please consult your medical provider for any other symptom that is severe or concerning.
- Call ahead before visiting your doctor. Reschedule all non-essential medical appointments. If you must go to a medical appointment, call the healthcare provider and tell them that you have COVID-19.
- Visits to a healthcare facility must be by way of medical transport or private vehicle; do not use ride shares or public transportation.
- If possible, put on a cloth face covering (or mask, if one is provided by your healthcare provider) before you enter any healthcare facility.

Stopping Home Isolation

Home isolation can stop when you are no longer infectious. This is based on how long it has been since your symptoms began, and if they are improving.

- Patients with confirmed COVID-19 should stay at home until:
 - **At least 10 days*** have passed since your symptoms first started
 - AND**
 - At least 24 hours after your fever resolves without medication
 - AND**
 - Your other symptoms have improved.
- * Persons who experienced **severe illness** are recommended to consult with their doctors as they may have to isolate until 20 days have passed since symptoms first started.
- If you tested positive but never had any symptoms, then wait until at least 10 days have passed since you were tested.

Your actions matter. Following these guidelines will help to prevent the spread of COVID-19. What you do will help to protect our most vulnerable people. Please visit coronavirus.dc.gov regularly for the most current information.