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GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

Coronavirus (COVID-19): Guidance for Close Contacts of a Person Confirmed to have COVID-19

This guidance is for close contacts of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19. DC Health recommends that you follow the steps below to help prevent the spread of the virus in the home and community. This guidance is intended for the general public. It is not for use in healthcare settings or congregate settings (including correctional/detention facilities, homeless shelters, intermediate care facilities, community residence facilities, and supported living facilities).

Definitions:

Close contact: Someone who was within 6 feet of a person who tested positive for COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes over a 24-hour period, while that person was infectious.

Infectious period: The time period during which someone is able to spread their infection to others. The infectious period for COVID-19 starts two days before symptom onset and typically ends 10 days after symptom onset (or test date for people who don't have symptoms).

Incubation period: The time period between when someone is exposed to an infectious agent and when the first symptoms may appear. The incubation period for COVID-19 can be as little as 2 day and as long as 14 days.

Fully Vaccinated: An individual is considered fully vaccinated at day 14 after completion of a COVID-19 vaccination series (after the second dose of a 2-dose series, or after one dose of a single-dose vaccine)[1].

Quarantine: The process of separating individuals who have been exposed to an infectious agent (like COVID-19) before they develop symptoms of infection or test positive for infection, for the duration of time that covers the incubation period for the pathogen. Quarantine is a powerful tool for preventing the spread of COVID-19.

Quarantine Recommendations:

- **Persons who have been identified as a close contact of a person with COVID-19 are NOT required to quarantine if:**
    - They have had COVID-19 (symptomatic or asymptomatic) within the last 90 days AND do not have any symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 infection
    OR
    - They are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 AND do not have any symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 infection.
- **NOTE:** Persons who are not required to quarantine as per the conditions outlined above must still self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days after the date of their exposure. If a close contact develops symptoms of COVID-19 during this time period, they must isolate and follow up with their healthcare provider for testing.
- **All other persons who have been identified as a close contact of a person with COVID-19 should begin self-quarantine as soon as they are notified of their exposure.**

How to Quarantine:

For COVID-19, quarantining for 14 days is the safest option. However, ending quarantine after 10 days may be acceptable. For information on reduced quarantine periods, see *Quarantine after COVID-19 Exposure at* coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance.

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[1] Day an individual received final dose of vaccine=Day 0

- **Separate yourself from other people** at your home as much as possible during your quarantine period.
  - o Use a separate bedroom and bathroom, if available.
- **Avoid leaving the house:**
  - o Do not participate in public activities or gatherings (e.g., grocery shopping, places of worship, parties, etc.).
  - o Do not leave home to go to work or school.
  - o Work from home (telework) or utilize sick leave if possible.
  - o If you are a student, make alternate arrangements to obtain class materials.
  - o Do not use public transportation (e.g., Metro buses or trains), taxis, or rideshare services.
  - o Do not travel (airline, cruise ship, etc.).
  - o Prohibit non-essential visitors to your home.
- **Avoid sharing household items.** You should not share dishes, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding, or other items. After you use these items, wash them thoroughly.
- If you have a pet, see the *Guidance for Pet Owners* at coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance.
- **Answer the phone** when you get a call from the DC Health Contact Trace Team.

Getting Tested for COVID-19
- Contacts should be tested between 3 and 5 days after you've been exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19.
- You can get tested through your healthcare provider or at free public testing sites. Information on options for COVID-19 testing in the District of Columbia is available at coronavirus.dc.gov/testing.
- When you go for testing, wear a mask or cloth face covering and keep at least 6 feet of distance from other people.
  - o If your test results are negative for COVID-19, you should still complete your full quarantine period and continue monitoring for symptoms.
- If your test results are positive for COVID-19, please be aware that the DC Health Contact Trace Team will call you to ask you about your contacts

Monitor Yourself for Symptoms of COVID-19
- Check your temperature twice a day and be alert for possible symptoms of COVID-19 for the entire 14-day incubation period.
  - o Symptoms may include fever, chills, cough, 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, diarrhea, or otherwise feeling unwell.
- If you develop symptoms:
  - o Please separate yourself from other and contact your healthcare provider. Let them know about your exposure to someone who tested positive for COVID-19.
  - o **If you have a medical emergency**, please call 911. Be sure to let them know about your exposure someone who tested positive for COVID-19.
- **Visits to a healthcare facility for any reason must be via medical transport (e.g., ambulance) or private vehicle.** Be sure to call ahead and wear a mask or cloth face covering.

Information for Contacts who have Previously had Laboratory-Confirmed COVID-19
- If you have previously tested positive for COVID-19 within the **3 months** leading to your current exposure **AND do not have new symptoms** consistent with COVID-19 you do

not need to quarantine or get re-tested.

- If you **develop new symptoms** consistent with COVID-19, isolate yourself and call you healthcare provider to see if you need to be tested.

The guidelines above will continue to be updated as the outbreak evolves. Please visit coronavirus.dc.gov regularly for the most current information.