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GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

Guidance After Exposure to a Person Confirmed to have COVID-19:
Precautions, Quarantine and Testing

This guidance describes what to do if you are exposed to a person who has tested positive for COVID-19. Follow these instructions to help prevent the spread of the virus in the community.

Definitions:

Asymptomatic infection: When a person has an infection but does not experience any symptoms of the infection (i.e., does not feel sick). Many COVID-19 infections are asymptomatic.

Close contact: Someone who was within 6 feet of a person who tested positive for COVID-19 for a cumulative 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period, while that person was infectious. **(This definition is currently only for healthcare settings and congregate settings as described on page 2 of this guidance.)**

Exposure to COVID-19: The definition of exposure currently varies by setting:
- For healthcare and congregate settings: Determining whether a person was exposed to COVID-19 should be based on a comprehensive risk assessment including the "Close Contact" definition listed above.
- For all other community settings (homes, businesses, schools etc.): Determining whether a person was exposed to COVID-19 should take into account factors including time, distance, mask use, ventilation, activities, and severity of symptoms. More information on exposure risk can be found at cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/risks-exposure.html.

Immunocompromised: Someone who has a weakened immune system due to a medical condition or from taking medications that suppress the immune system. This includes but is not limited to: people on chemotherapy, people with blood cancers like leukemia, people who have had an organ transplants or stem cell transplant, and people on dialysis.

Symptoms of COVID-19: may include fever (subjective or 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit), 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, or diarrhea.

What to do after exposure

- If you were exposed to COVID-19, begin taking **precautions** immediately, regardless of your vaccination status or history of prior infection. You should:
  - Wear a well-fitting mask or respirator[1] anytime you are around others indoors. Avoid places where you are unable to wear a mask.
  - Avoid being around people who are immunocompromised, unvaccinated, not up to date with their COVID-19 vaccine, or at high risk for severe COVID-19.
    - For more information, see *People with Certain Medical Conditions* at cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html.
  - Monitor yourself for symptoms of COVID-19.
    - If you develop symptoms:
      - Isolate immediately
      - Get tested

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[1] For the rest of this guidance, the term mask will be used to refer to either masks *or* respirators. For more information about masks and respirators, see cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/masks.html.

    ➢ Stay home until you know your results.
   ■ If you test is positive, isolate and follow instructions in *Guidance for Isolation: People who Test Positive for COVID-19 and Their Household Members* at coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance.

- **Continue precautions for 10 full days after exposure.**
  - o For calculating the duration of precautions, the date of exposure is considered **Day 0**. The first full day after date of exposure is **Day 1**.
  - o **People who are unable to wear a mask when around others (including children under 2) should follow the other precautions through day 10 and consider adding additional measures to prevent transmission (e.g., physical distancing).**

People who have been exposed to COVID-19, regardless of their vaccination status or prior infection, should:

- Get a COVID-19 test **5 full days** (Day 6) after the date they were exposed.
  - o **What kind of test to get?**
    - ■ Either an antigen test or a nucleic acid amplification test (NAAT i.e., PCR) test may be used.
  - o If the test is positive, isolate and follow instructions in *Guidance for Isolation: People who Test Positive for COVID-19 and Their Household Members* at coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance.
- Monitor themselves for COVID-19 symptoms for a full 10 days after exposure (Days 0 through 10) and isolate and test if symptoms develop.
- Wear a mask when around other people (including household members) for 10 days after their exposure (through day 10).

Quarantine in healthcare and congregate settings:

- **Healthcare facility and congregate setting residents, patients, and persons supported** who are exposed to COVID-19 **must quarantine (regardless of vaccination status),** due to the higher risk of severe disease and death in these settings.
  - o Close contacts must:
    - ■ Quarantine for 10 days after exposure.
      AND
    - ■ Get tested immediately (but not earlier than 24 hours after exposure) and, if negative, repeat testing on days 5-7 and 9-10 after exposure.
      - ➢ **If testing is NOT performed, close contacts must quarantine for a full 14 days.**
  - o **Quarantine may be waived for close contacts in this setting who have had confirmed COVID-19 (symptomatic or asymptomatic) within the last 90 days with recovery if they do not develop any symptoms of COVID-19. Those who develop symptoms must isolate and get a viral test.**
  - o Healthcare personnel[2] who have been exposed to COVID-19 must follow *Guidance for Healthcare Personnel Monitoring, Restriction, and Return to Work* at coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance.
- Staff and clients/residents of correctional/detention facilities and homeless shelters who are exposed to COVID-19 **must adhere to 10 days of quarantine, but do not require a negative test to come out of quarantine.**
- **Unless instructed differently by DC Health in response to a suspected or confirmed outbreak**, intermediate care facilities (ICF) and community residence facilities

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[2] **Healthcare personnel** are all paid or unpaid persons serving in healthcare settings who have the potential for direct or indirect exposure to patients or infectious materials.

(CRF) may choose to allow <u>residents and persons supported</u> to follow guidance for the community after exposure to a person with COVID-19 instead of the health care quarantine guidance described above.

Getting tested for COVID-19

- If you do not have access to an at home test kit, you can get tested through your healthcare provider or at a free public testing site, including a self-testing option "Test Yourself DC" at a community facility near you. Formore information see coronavirus.dc.gov/testyourself.
- If you need to go for in person testing, wear a mask and keep at least 6 feet of distance from other people,
- Isolate if the test is positive and follow recommendations in *Guidance for Isolation: People who Test Positive for COVID-19 and Their Household Members* at coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance.

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