



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs): Close Contacts to Positive COVID-19 Cases

Local public health authorities determine and establish the quarantine options for their jurisdictions. By identifying and isolating close contacts, individuals who *might have been exposed to COVID-19* are separated from others. This helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms.

WHAT COUNTS AS CLOSE CONTACT?

- You were within 6 feet of someone who has COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more
- You provided care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19
- You had direct physical contact with the person (hugged or kissed them)
- You shared eating or drinking utensils
- They sneezed, coughed, or somehow got respiratory droplets on you
- Household members

I'VE BEEN IDENTIFIED AS A CLOSE CONTACT, WHAT SHOULD I DO?

- Stay home for 14 days after your last contact with a person who has COVID-19.
- Self-monitor for symptoms. Watch for fever (100.4°F), cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19
- Stay away from others, especially people who are at higher risk for getting very sick from COVID-19, such as older adults and people with other medical conditions, if possible

EXAMPLE OF HOW TO CALCULATE ESTIMATED LAST DAY OF ISOLATION/QUARANTINE:



SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19 MAY INCLUDE:

- Fever or 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

’M A CLOSE CONTACT, SHOULD I GET TESTED FOR COVID-19?

Individuals who have been identified as close contacts to a positive case of COVID-19 should seek testing if they begin to develop symptoms. There can be individuals who carry COVID-19 who never develop symptoms therefore, some individuals may still want to seek testing if they are an asymptomatic close contact due to their line of work, family members who are high risk, etc. If you are one of these individuals, we would not recommend getting tested any earlier than day 7. Even if you test negative for COVID-19 or feel healthy, you should continue to stay home (no work, school, extra curriculars, etc.) since symptoms may appear 2 to 14 days after exposure to the virus.

’M A CLOSE CONTACT, BUT TESTED NEGATIVE. CAN I GO BACK TO WORK AND OTHER REGULAR ACTIVITIES?

Even if you test negative for COVID-19 or feel healthy, you should continue to stay home (no work, school, extra curriculars, etc.) since symptoms may appear 2 to 14 days after exposure to the virus.

CDC RELEASED NEW QUARANTINE OPTIONS, IS PERRY COUNTY FOLLOWING THOSE?

At this time, Perry County is still utilizing a 14-day quarantine for close contacts of positive COVID-19 cases.

The CDC released options for Local Health Department to consider to reduce the length of quarantine for close contacts of positive cases who have no symptoms. These options included release after day 10 without testing OR after day 7 if someone received a negative test result that was taken on day 5 or later. Both options included continuing to monitor for symptoms through day 14.

Local public health authorities determine and establish the quarantine options for their jurisdictions. CDC continues to recommend quarantine for 14 days as the most effective and cautious approach. Guidance from the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services on this topic includes that counties should consider not reducing restrictions until the community is at within the category 3 or better within the Governor’s County Level Action Plan ([found here](#)).

DO HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS OF A POSITIVE CASE HAVE TO QUARANTINE LONGER THAN OTHERS?

The 14-day quarantine for close contacts starts after the last day close contact occurred with the positive case. For some households, depending on the size of the house or living situation, the positive case is not able to isolate from other members of the household. Therefore, other household members may not start their quarantine until after the positive case is recovered and no longer considered contagious.

ARE QUARANTINE GUIDELINES DIFFERENT FOR ESSENTIAL WORKERS?

The CDC has released guidance specifically for essential workers who are identified as close contacts. These individuals are allowed to break quarantine strictly for those purpose of working. This means close contacts of positive cases who are essential workers are only allowed to go to work and go home. They are not allowed to go to the store, attend social gatherings, etc.

When an essential worker is notified by the Health Department that they are a close contact, they are instructed to double check with their employer and if their employer is ok with it, then they can continue to go to work as long as the following conditions are met:

- They currently have no symptoms.
- They wear a mask the entire time they are at work
- IF they would start to experience any symptoms of COVID-19 at any time, they exclude from work immediately.
- They adjust their work activities in any way possible in order to stay 6 feet away from others. For example, do not car pool with others to work, do not eat in the lunch room with others, etc.

I'M A CLOSE CONTACT TO A POSITIVE CASE FROM ANOTHER COUNTY WHOSE QUARANTINE GUIDELINES ARE DIFFERENT THAN PERRY COUNTY'S WHERE I LIVE. WHICH SHOULD I FOLLOW?

- Regardless of where the positive case in which you are a close contact lives, we would encourage all Perry County residents to follow quarantine guidelines for positive cases set forth by the Perry County Health Department.

I'M A BUSINESS OWNER WITH EMPLOYEES FROM SEVERAL COUNTIES WHOSE RULES ALL SEEM TO BE DIFFERENT, WHAT DO I DO?

The Local Health Department for the county in which an employee lives has the power to quarantine positive cases within their jurisdiction and set the length of time for that quarantine. As a business within Perry County, we ask that you follow local guidelines and recommendations when it comes to identifying close contacts within the work place.

MY WORK IS REQUIRING A LETTER STATING I'M A CLOSE CONTACT. DOES THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT PROVIDE THOSE?

Letters verifying individuals are a close contact, with a date on when they can return to normal activities, can be provided upon request. Letters are only provided for close contacts of Perry County Residents, who are close contact to a lab-confirmed or probable case.

Information on this FAQs is to provide general guidance. Guidelines and recommendations may vary based on specific circumstances, state guidance, or information gathered during a contact investigation.