



## HEALTH ADVISORY: CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Updated: CDC Guidance for Contacts

December 3, 2020

According to the CDC's December 2, 2020 guidance *Options to Reduce Quarantine for Contacts of Persons with SARS-CoV-2 Infection Using Symptom Monitoring and Diagnostic Testing*, "local public health authorities determine and establish the quarantine options for their jurisdictions. CDC currently recommends a quarantine period of 14 days. However, based on local circumstances and resources, the following options to shorten quarantine are acceptable alternatives."

Dr. Scott Milton, Public Health Authority Amarillo Area Public Health District, recommends adherence to the established 14-day quarantine, from break in contact, for all contacts to COVID-19. While local hospital capacity is stressed beyond the breaking point and the rate of COVID-19 transmission is at an all-time high, it is irresponsible to reduce quarantine time. We must be able ensure healthcare to all people in Potter/Randall Counties, and we currently cannot do so.

If you, as a healthcare provider, choose to utilize the December 2, 2020 *Options to Reduce Quarantine for Contacts of Persons with SARS-CoV-2 Infection Using Symptom Monitoring and Diagnostic Testing*, you must ensure the following:

- Daily monitoring of contacts through the duration of their quarantine up to the date of release and through Day 14.
- The specimen collected and tested must be within 48 hours before the time of planned quarantine discontinuation, but quarantine cannot be discontinued earlier than after Day 7.
- Contacts must be counseled and agree to strictly adhere, through Day 14, to all recommended non-pharmaceutical intervention. (correct and consistent mask use, social distancing, hand and cough hygiene, cleaning and disinfection, avoiding crowds, and adequate ventilation)
- If any symptoms develop, the contact should be advised to immediately self-isolate and contact their healthcare provider or local public health to be tested.
- You as the healthcare provider will be responsible for the return to work note for contacts you release from quarantine.

Below are the implementation criteria for *Options to Reduce Quarantine for Contacts of Persons with SARS-CoV-2 Infection Using Symptom Monitoring and Diagnostic Testing*:

1. CDC recommends the following alternative options to a 14-day quarantine:
  - Quarantine can end after Day 10 without testing and if no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring.
    - With this strategy, residual post-quarantine transmission risk is estimated to be about 1% with an upper limit of about 10%.

### Amarillo Public Health

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- *When diagnostic testing resources are sufficient and available (see bullet 3, below), then quarantine can end after Day 7 if a diagnostic specimen tests negative and if no symptoms were reported during daily monitoring. The specimen may be collected and tested within 48 hours before the time of planned quarantine discontinuation (e.g., in anticipation of testing delays), but quarantine cannot be discontinued earlier than after Day 7.*
  - With this strategy, the residual post-quarantine transmission risk is estimated to be about 5% with an upper limit of about 12%.
- 2. Persons can discontinue quarantine at these time points only if the following criteria are also met:
  - No clinical evidence of COVID-19 has been elicited by daily symptom monitoring<sup>†</sup> during the entirety of quarantine up to the time at which quarantine is discontinued; and,
  - Daily symptom monitoring continues through quarantine Day 14; and,
  - Persons are counseled regarding the need to adhere strictly through quarantine Day 14 to all recommended non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs<sup>±</sup>, a.k.a. mitigation strategies), especially. They should be advised that if any symptoms develop, they should immediately self-isolate and contact the local public health authority or their healthcare provider to report this change in clinical status.
- 3. Testing for the purpose of earlier discontinuation of quarantine should be considered only if it will have no impact on community diagnostic testing. Testing of persons seeking evaluation for infection must be prioritized.
- 4. **Persons can continue to be quarantined for 14 days without testing per existing recommendations.** This option maximally reduces risk of post-quarantine transmission risk and is the strategy with the greatest collective experience at present.

These recommendations for quarantine options shorter than 14 days balance reduced burden against a small but non-zero risk of post-quarantine infection that is informed by new and emerging science.

**Serologic testing:** The utility of serologic testing to provide evidence of prior infection that would permit exclusion from quarantine has not been established and is not recommended for this purpose at this time.

<sup>†</sup> Monitoring can be conducted using any method acceptable to local public health authorities and could include self-monitoring using an approved checklist of signs and symptoms, direct contact daily by public health authorities or their designates, or automated communications systems (e.g., on-line or texting self-checkers).

<sup>±</sup> NPIs that can be practiced by individuals include the following: correct and consistent mask use, social distancing, hand and cough hygiene, environmental cleaning and disinfection, avoiding crowds, ensuring adequate indoor ventilation, and self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19 illness.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/scientific-brief-options-to-reduce-quarantine.html>

For additional questions, please email [covid@amarillo.gov](mailto:covid@amarillo.gov)