If you have confirmed or suspected COVID-19, you should isolate (stay home and away from others)

- This applies when you have a positive COVID-19 test – even if you have been vaccinated and even if you do not have symptoms. It also applies to when you have symptoms and are waiting on a test result or are unable to get tested.
- Stay home for at least 5 days (Days 0–5)
  - If you have symptoms, count the day that your first symptom appeared as Day 0
  - If you do not have symptoms, count the day that you got tested as Day 0
- During isolation at home:
  - Monitor your health and contact your healthcare provider if your symptoms worsen
  - Separate yourself from other people and pets as much as possible
  - Wear a well-fitting mask if you cannot separate from others
  - Stay in a separate “sick room” and use a separate bathroom, if possible
  - Do not go to public settings or travel
  - If you are able and willing to get tested, get tested with an antigen test on or soon after Day 5. If your test is positive, stay home through Day 10. If your test is negative, you may be able to end your isolation after Day 5.

If you have COVID-19 symptoms, you can end isolation (leave your home) after Day 5 if these things have happened:

- At least 5 full days have passed since symptoms first appeared, and
- You are fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication, and
- Your other symptoms have improved
  - Note that loss of taste and smell might persist for weeks or months and this should not delay the end of isolation.

If you did not have COVID-19 symptoms, you can end isolation (leave your home) after Day 5 if this has happened:

- At least 5 full days have passed since you were tested

If you end isolation after Day 5, you should still follow these steps on Days 6–10:

- Wear a well-fitting mask around others at home and in public. If you cannot wear a mask around others, continue to isolate at home until Day 10.
- Do not travel, avoid people who have weakened immune systems or who are at high risk for severe COVID-19, avoid places where you are unable to wear a mask, and avoid other people when you are eating.

*Based on CDC guidance for Quarantine and Isolation. This VDH guidance applies to general community settings, including K-12 schools, colleges and universities, and workplaces. Child care facilities may apply this guidance for children ages 2 years and older and staff who can consistently and correctly wear well-fitting masks. It does not apply to healthcare facilities or high-risk congregate settings (e.g., correctional and detention facilities, homeless shelters, or cruise ships). People with severe COVID-19 or weakened immune systems might need to isolate (stay home) longer than 10 days. They should talk with their healthcare provider about when it is safe to be around others.
If you had close contact with a person who has COVID-19 while they were contagious, you should take steps to protect yourself and others for 10 days after the close contact. You may need to quarantine (stay home and away from others).

Close contact means

→ Being within 6 feet of a person who has COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period or
→ Having exposure to respiratory secretions (e.g., being coughed or sneezed on; sharing a drinking glass or utensils; kissing) from a person who has COVID-19.

You do not need to quarantine after close contact if you:

→ Are up to date with your COVID-19 vaccines.
→ Had COVID-19 within the last 6 months (you tested positive using a viral test).

Count the last close contact date as Day 0 and take these steps on Days 0–10:

→ Monitor your health for COVID-19 symptoms. If you develop symptoms, get tested with a viral test (antigen or PCR test) and follow isolation guidance.

You need to quarantine after close contact if you:

→ Are not up to date with your COVID-19 vaccines. This includes people who are not vaccinated.*

*Students, teachers, and staff in childcare, K-12 schools, and day camp settings who are asymptomatic are not recommended to quarantine. These individuals may continue to attend programming as long as they do not develop symptoms. For more guidance for these settings, please visit the VDH K-12 and Child Care Guidance Webpage.

Follow the steps listed above and also these:

→ Quarantine (stay home) and separate yourself from other people and pets as much as possible for at least 5 days (Days 0–5) after your last exposure.
→ Get tested on or soon after Day 5, if possible. If your test is positive, follow the isolation guidance.
→ You can end quarantine (leave your home) after Day 5 if you have no symptoms and can wear a mask when around others for Days 6–10. If you cannot wear a mask around others, quarantine at home until Day 10.
→ If you end quarantine after Day 5, you should avoid areas where you cannot wear a mask, avoid people with weakened immune systems or who are at high risk for severe COVID-19, avoid other people when you are eating, and avoid travel for Days 6–10.
Notes about Isolation and Quarantine

When to get tested and what kind of test

→ If you are able and willing to get tested, getting tested on Day 5 of isolation or quarantine is preferred. Getting tested soon after Day 5 is also acceptable.

→ For people isolating at home, an antigen test is recommended. For people quarantining at home, an antigen test or PCR test is recommended.

Special Situations for Quarantine

Household close contacts or caregivers who cannot separate from the person with COVID-19 who is in isolation at home

→ While someone is isolating at home, try to minimize close contact with others in the household as much as possible. This includes having the person with COVID-19 in a separate bedroom and using a separate bathroom if possible, staying at least 6 feet apart, minimizing time spent with each other, wearing well-fitted masks, and improving air flow by opening a window.

→ If a household member has close contact with the person isolating at home during their 5-day isolation, then the household member needs to take steps to protect themselves and might need to quarantine. Count the date of last contact as Day 0 and follow the quarantine guidance on the previous page.

→ Close contacts who are not up to date with vaccines should get tested at least 5 days after the end of isolation of the infected person who lives with them. Close contacts who are up to date with vaccines can consider getting tested at least 5 days after their first exposure and at least 5 days after the end of the infected person’s isolation period.

Healthcare Settings

→ The VDH guidance for quarantine and isolation does not apply to healthcare settings. CDC guidance for healthcare staff and residents should be followed.

High-risk congregate settings (correctional and detention facilities, homeless shelters, cruise ships)

→ The VDH guidance for quarantine and isolation does not apply to these settings. CDC guidance for these settings should be followed.

Summary of Recent Changes

→ 7/14/2022: On page 2, updated language about specific settings (childcare, K-12 schools, day camps) in which people who are not up to date on their COVID-19 vaccinations are no longer recommended to quarantine after exposure as long as they remain asymptomatic.

→ 6/15/2022: On page 2, the time frame for when quarantine and testing are not required if you have recently had COVID-19 was extended from 90 days to 6 months. Removed recommendation for masking and testing for close contacts who are not required to quarantine. Updated age range for schools forgoing quarantine from 12-17 to 5-11 years. On page 3, updated wording for up-to-date close contacts from “should get tested at least 5 days after” to “can consider getting tested ...” Updated link from CDC Quarantine Guidance to VDH Quarantine Guidance.

→ 2/1/22: Updated footnotes on pages 1 and 3 to reflect that shortened isolation and quarantine guidance may be applied in child care facilities for children ages 2 years and older and staff who can consistently and correctly wear well-fitting masks. On page 3, added testing guidance for household close contacts.

→ 1/25/22: On page 1 for people isolating at home who have a positive test, changed wording to stay home from “until Day 10” to “through Day 10.”

*Based on CDC guidance for Quarantine and Isolation. This VDH guidance applies to general community settings, including K-12 schools, colleges and universities, and workplaces. Child care facilities may apply this guidance for children ages 2 years and older and staff who can consistently and correctly wear well-fitting masks. It does not apply to healthcare facilities or high-risk congregate settings (e.g., correctional and detention facilities, homeless shelters, or cruise ships).