

MEMORANDUM

TO: DuPage County Healthcare and Community Partners

FROM: Karen Ayala, MPH, Executive Director
Rashmi Chugh, MD, MPH, Medical Officer

DATE: December 11, 2020

SUBJECT: **Updated Quarantine Recommendations for Persons Living, Learning, or Working in DuPage County**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [updated quarantine recommendations](#) on December 2, 2020 with the following opening statements: **“Local public health authorities determine and establish the quarantine options for their jurisdictions. CDC currently recommends a quarantine period of 14 days.”** CDC also provided additional, acceptable alternatives for consideration based on local circumstances and resources to shorten quarantine for COVID-19 close contacts.

DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) advises COVID-19 [close contacts](#) to *ideally* complete a 14-day quarantine period per the CDC-endorsed recommendation. *At a minimum*, a 10-day quarantine period must be completed; in both options, additional criteria must be met with daily symptom monitoring and continued masking for COVID-19 illness through Day 14.

DuPage County Health Department continues to recommend only the full 14-day quarantine period in high-risk, congregate settings, such as long-term care facilities, correctional and detention facilities, and college/university student housing. Any option to shorten quarantine risks being less effective than the currently recommended 14-day quarantine. The variability of SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) transmission observed to-date indicates that while a shorter quarantine substantially reduces secondary transmission risk, there may be settings (e.g., with high contact rates) where even a small risk of post-quarantine transmission could still result in substantial secondary clusters.

For persons in other community settings (e.g., critical infrastructure workers, schools, offices), DCHD recommends COVID-19 close contacts complete *at least* a 10-day quarantine period and *ideally* a full 14-day quarantine period. In both options, additional criteria must be met with daily symptom monitoring and continued masking for COVID-19 illness through Day 14.

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All persons are advised to practice non-pharmaceutical interventions including correct and consistent mask use, physical distancing, hand and cough hygiene, environmental cleaning and disinfection, avoiding crowds, ensuring adequate indoor ventilation, and self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19 illness. These are also summarized [here](#). **Quarantined persons who develop symptoms need to contact their healthcare provider for medical evaluation, diagnostic testing, and appropriate care.**

Timing is not ideal to decrease days of quarantine when COVID-19 in DuPage County is currently surging at over four times peak case activity from May 2020, with rising hospitalizations and deaths, and anticipated continued surging for several weeks. On top of high case volumes and public health prioritization of case investigations by exposure/severity risk, most jurisdictions are conducting minimal contact tracing, rendering the more complex and even shorter alternative as logistically impractical.

The recommendation for a 14-day quarantine has been based on estimates of the upper bounds of the COVID-19 incubation period (i.e., 2-14 days). Quarantine's importance grew after it was evident that persons are able to transmit SARS-CoV-2 before symptoms develop, and that a substantial portion of infected persons (likely somewhere between 20% to 40%) never develop symptomatic illness but can still transmit the virus. In this context, **quarantine is a critical measure to control transmission.**

Additional information and resources on COVID-19 are available at: www.dupagehealth.org/covid19.