

# RELEASING COVID-19 CASES AND CONTACTS FROM ISOLATION AND QUARANTINE

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## CASES

Must be isolated for a minimum of 10 days\* after symptom onset (or specimen collection date if asymptomatic) and can be released when the following criteria are met:

- Case is afebrile (without fever-reducing medication) for at least 24 hours **and** with improvement of COVID-19 symptoms

### Time-based Strategy for Release from Isolation



OR

- Case has 2 negative COVID-19 PCR tests in a row, with testing done at least 24 hours apart  
*A test-based strategy is no longer recommended in the majority of cases. Consult with infectious disease physician.*

\*A limited number of persons with severe illness or who are severely immunosuppressed may produce replication-competent virus beyond 10 days; this may warrant extending duration of isolation and precautions for **up to 20 days after symptom onset or first positive test (if no symptoms)**. Consult with the infectious disease physician.

For hospitalized cases and discontinuing transmission-based precautions, see:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-hospitalized-patients.html>

## CLOSE CONTACTS<sup>1</sup>

- Must be quarantined for 14 days after the last/most recent contact with the case when the case was infectious.
- If a close contact develops symptoms, they should follow isolation rules for cases.

Contact Scenario	Quarantine Period
• Has close contact with someone who has COVID-19 and will not have further close contact	• 14 days from the date of last close contact
• Has close contact with someone who has COVID-19 and lives with the case but can avoid further close contact	• 14 days from when the person with COVID-19 began home isolation away from other members of the household
• Is under quarantine and had additional close contact with someone else who has COVID-19	• Restart quarantine from the last day close contact occurred with anyone who has COVID-19. Any time a new household member gets sick with COVID-19 and close contact occurs, quarantine will need to be restarted.
• Lives with someone who has COVID-19 and cannot avoid continued close contact (e.g., shared kitchen/bathroom)	• Quarantine for 14 days after the person who has COVID-19 meets the <u>criteria to end home isolation</u> (see Cases information).

<sup>1</sup> For COVID-19, a close contact is defined as any individual who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to positive specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.

### Guidance for Healthcare Worker Contacts:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/return-to-work.html>

### Guidance for Critical Workers in Essential Infrastructure:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/critical-workers/implementing-safety-practices.html>

### References

- **Isolation:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/duration-isolation.html>
- **Quarantine:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>