CHILD CARE: CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) QUARANTINE AND RETURN RECOMMENDATIONS

Last Updated: July 15, 2022

QUARANTINE: Physically separating an individual who has had <u>close contact</u> with someone who has a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19. The quarantine period helps monitor whether the close contact develops symptoms of COVID-19 and reduces the risk of transmission to others if the individual later tests positive for COVID-19. COVID-19 typically spreads between people who are in close contact (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets, created when someone talks, coughs, or sneezes.

CLOSE CONTACT: Someone who was within 6 feet of a person with COVID-19 for a cumulative total of 15 or more minutes over a 24-hour period, while that person was infectious.

INFECTIOUS PERIOD: The time period when someone with an infection is contagious to others. Recent scientific evidence shows that people with COVID-19, on average, are most contagious in the early part of their infection, from 2 days <u>before</u> their symptoms started or positive test result, to 3 days <u>after</u> their symptoms started or positive test result. The average person can remain contagious for a week or more after symptoms appear or positive test result.

If you or your child comes into close contact with someone with COVID-19:

- **RECOMMEND to quarantine** if unvaccinated or not up to date on COVID-19 vaccination.
- **NOT RECOMMENDED to quarantine if** up to date on COVID-19 vaccination or have had COVID-19 and recovered in the last 90 days. May return to child care immediately, but should:
  - Monitor for COVID-19 symptoms for a full 10 days after exposure and isolate and test if symptoms develop;
  - Wear a well-fitting mask when around other people (including household members) for 10 days after exposure; and
  - Get a COVID-19 test at least 5 days after the exposure date. If the test is positive or symptoms develop, isolate and follow the Child Care: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Isolation and Return Requirements resource, available on the OSSE COVID-19 Guidance and Resources website: osse.dc.gov/page/covid-19-guidance-and-resources.

WHAT TO DO WHILE IN **QUARANTINE:**

- Stay home (if it is safe to do so), except to get testing and medical care.
- Do not travel.
- Separate yourself from other people and pets in your home as much as possible, and if possible, use a separate room and bathroom (or clean between uses).
  - Especially separate from anyone immunocompromised, at higher risk for severe COVID-19, or unvaccinated or not up to date on their COVID-19 vaccination.
- Wear a well-fitting mask if you need to be near any other members of your household (caregivers should also wear a mask if they need to be near the person in quarantine. Note: Masks should not be worn while sleeping or on children under age 2).
- Do not allow visitors in your home.
- Do not go to places where you are unable to wear a mask, such as restaurants and gyms, and avoid eating around others at home and at work until 10 days after your last close contact with someone with COVID-19.
- Watch for COVID-19 symptoms for 10 days after exposure.
  - If symptoms develop, get tested immediately and isolate until you receive your test results; if positive, follow the Child Care: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Isolation and Return Requirements resource, available on the OSSE COVID-19 Guidance and Resources website: osse.dc.gov/page/covid-19-guidance-and-resources.

CALCULATING QUARANTINE: The date of exposure is considered day 0. Day 1 is the first full day after last contact with a person who has had COVID-19.

WHEN CAN I OR MY CHILD RETURN TO CHILD CARE OR SCHOOL AFTER CLOSE CONTACT?

Note: An individual is NOT RECOMMENDED to quarantine if up to date on COVID-19 vaccination or has had COVID-19 and recovered in the last 90 days. May return to child care immediately and should monitor symptoms for 10 days.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RETURNING FROM QUARANTINE FOR CLOSE CONTACTS	
UNDER AGE 2	AGE 2 AND OLDER AND ABLE TO WEAR A WELL-FITTING MASK
Return after at least 10 days from last date of exposure (e.g., return on day 11) *Note: Children under age 2 have a longer recommended quarantine because they cannot safely wear a mask*	Return after at least 5 days (e.g., on day 6) from date of last exposure if no symptoms have developed and a negative COVID-19 test (**may use either an antigen or NAAT [e.g., PCR] test**), if able. Should wear a well-fitting mask when around other people (including household members) for 10 days after exposure.

*Note: The recommended quarantine period for close contacts may be longer if the positive individual is a **household member** and they are **unable to isolate**. In this case, the close contact should quarantine throughout the entire isolation period of the household member with COVID-19 and for at least an additional five days.*

Whenever possible, it is recommended to keep children who are returning from quarantine before day 11 away from people who are at high risk for severe COVID-19 (e.g., those who with compromised immune systems) and 6 feet apart when masks are not worn.

When determining quarantine policies, child care facilities will consider multiple factors such as the impact of the loss of access to education and care on the well-being of children and families, the level of community transmission of COVID-19, presence of other people who are at high risk for severe illness, and the ability to use additional prevention strategies.