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Help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Wear your mask.

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Clark County adopts shortened COVID-19 quarantine options for some close contacts

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The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention last week announced options for shortening the recommended 14-day quarantine for people exposed to COVID-19. The Washington State Department of Health adopted those options, and Clark County Public Health and other health departments across Southwest Washington are also adopting the options for people who do not live or work in high-priority settings.

The CDC, state Department of Health and Clark County Public Health continue to recommend that people who have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for COVID-19 quarantine at home for 14 days.

Close contacts should stay home and monitor themselves for symptoms of COVID-19. They should not go to work, school, church or child care, and should avoid public places for 14 days after their last exposure with the person who tested positive.

People who live or work in a high-priority setting should quarantine for the full 14-day period, due to the increased risk for a potential outbreak in congregate settings. High-priority settings include long-term care facilities, health care facilities, food processing facilities, the jail, schools and child care facilities.

People who are in quarantine and do not live or work in a high-priority setting may shorten their quarantine in the following circumstances:

- If a person who is in quarantine has no symptoms, quarantine can end after Day 10.
- If a person who is in quarantine receives a negative COVID-19 test and has no symptoms, quarantine can end after Day 7. The person must be tested on or after Day 5, and quarantine cannot be discontinued earlier than Day 8. Even if a negative test is received before Day 8, the quarantine period should still be a full seven days.

There is a small chance that people who choose to shorten their quarantine period may transmit the infection to others post-quarantine. Anyone who has been in quarantine should continue to monitor their symptoms and wear a face covering around others through Day 14. If they develop symptoms, they should isolate themselves immediately to avoid infecting others and seek testing for COVID-19.

“While a 14-day quarantine for all close contacts is ideal, we recognize the mental, emotional and financial burden a 14-day quarantine may impose on individuals and households,” said Dr. Alan Melnick, Clark County health officer and Public Health director. “The options for shortened quarantine for those who do not live or work in high-priority settings aim to lessen those burdens, while also continuing to keep the community safe.”

Additional information about COVID-19 and quarantine of close contacts is available on the [Public Health website](#).

CONTACT

Marissa Armstrong
senior communications specialist
Public Health
marissa.armstrong@clark.wa.gov

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