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## Maine Health Alert Network (HAN) System

# PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

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**To:** All Health Care  
**From:** Dr. Siiri Bennett, State Epidemiologist  
**Subject:** **COVID-19 Updates: Quarantine and Testing**  
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### COVID-19 UPDATES: QUARANTINE AND TESTING

With Maine's increased COVID-19 infection rates and rollout of COVID-19 vaccinations, Maine CDC is updating its guidance regarding:

- quarantine of individuals who are identified as close contacts of a COVID-19 case, and
- use of antigen testing.

#### QUARANTINE

For close contacts of a COVID-19 case where the close contact has had previous, documented COVID-19 infection and/or has been completed their COVID-19 vaccination series:

- An individual with a previous COVID-19 infection documented by a positive NAAT (a nucleic acid amplification test, such as PCR) or a positive COVID-19 antigen test (*e.g.*, BinaxNOW) who is exposed to an individual with COVID-19 does not need to quarantine so long as the exposure to a positive case occurred within 90 days of the date of the positive COVID-19 test.
- An individual who believes they had a previous COVID-19 infection but did not have a positive COVID-19 NAAT or antigen test must still quarantine after an exposure.
- An individual who has completed a COVID-19 vaccine series and has been exposed to a COVID-19 case does not need to quarantine so long as the exposure occurred more than 14 days after the individual's completion of the COVID-19 vaccine series.

Travelers coming to or returning to Maine should continue to follow the Governor's applicable [Executive Order](#) regarding testing or quarantine. Licensed long-term care facilities should continue to follow Federal CMS

guidelines. All individuals should continue to wear face coverings and adhere to physical distancing guidelines regardless of whether they have recovered from COVID-19 infection or received vaccine.

### **POST-EXPOSURE TESTING**

For an individual diagnosed with COVID-19 via a positive NAAT (such as PCR) or positive COVID-19 antigen test (*e.g.*, BinaxNOW):

- An individual who tests positive via either testing method for the first time must complete isolation per Maine CDC guidelines.
- PCR confirmation of a positive antigen test is no longer required, regardless of whether the individual is symptomatic, provided that the antigen test is conducted on an individual with a known exposure to a COVID-19 positive case.
- In general, individuals who test positive should not be retested for 90 days following the date of the positive test result.
- However, an individual who develops new onset symptoms consistent with COVID-19 infection during the 90-day period following the initial positive result should be retested and should isolate until 24 hours after symptoms have resolved.
- An individual who tests positive again 90 days after the last positive test must complete isolation following the new, positive result.

Testing of close contacts:

- A close contact of a COVID-19 case who has not previously tested positive for COVID-19 by either NAAT or antigen test within the last 90 days should seek testing as soon as possible, regardless of symptoms.
  - If that test is negative, the close contact should be re-tested for COVID-19 five to seven days later.
- A close contact of a COVID-19 case who has completed the COVID-19 vaccine series does not need to be tested so long as the exposure occurred more than 14 days after the close contact's completion of the vaccine series.

### **DEFINITIONS**

**A Close Contact** of someone with COVID-19 is someone who has been within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. Note, this is irrespective of whether the person with COVID-19 or the contact was wearing a mask or whether the contact was wearing respiratory personal protective equipment (PPE)

**Isolation** refers to the separation of a person from others for a designated period of time because that person 1) is infected with the COVID-19 virus and has tested positive, or 2) is probably infected because they are a close contact of a COVID-19 case and have symptoms, though they may not have been tested. For most individuals with COVID-19 infection, that period is 10 days or more, depending on resolution of symptoms.

**Quarantine** refers to the separation of a person from others for a designated period of time because that person may have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus but is not currently symptomatic. There is the chance that the person exposed may develop COVID-19 infection in the 10 days following exposure and could infect others. Quarantine starts from date of the person's last exposure to the individual with COVID-19.

For both self-quarantine and self-isolation:

- Stay home.
- Do not go to public places even for essential reasons, including grocery stores. Plan to have enough food available or arrange to have it delivered to you to complete your quarantine/isolation.
- Do not use public transportation including buses, trains, planes, taxis, Lyft/Uber, etc.
- Do not have visitors in your home.
- Keep a distance of at least 6 feet from other people.

#### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

- Maine's COVID-19 website: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/coronavirus>
- US CDC's COVID website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

*All guidance is subject to change as more information becomes available.*