2019 Coronavirus (COVID-19) Frequently Asked Questions*
*Information is current as of 6/22/2021 and is subject to change

Please note: Text in this color denotes information updated in the last version of this document
Text in this color denotes information updated since the last version of this document

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Situation in Maine

What happens when a case of COVID-19 is identified in Maine? (6/18/2021)

- When a person is tested for COVID-19, they should self-isolate at home if they are well enough or are isolated in hospital if required. This continues until they meet criteria for release from isolation.
- When Maine CDC is notified of a positive result, a case investigator may reach out to the patient to conduct an investigation. Close contacts named by the positive person as exposed are identified and contacted. If these individuals are not fully vaccinated, they are instructed to quarantine for 10 days and monitor for symptoms for 4 more days. A negative test result when someone is identified as a close contact does not mean that they can forgo the quarantine.
- Out-of-state travelers who test positive in Maine are reported by the state of their primary residence. This is to ensure an accurate national tally of COVID-19 cases under guidance from US CDC.

Can I stay at a hotel, motel, or short-term rental? (5/17/21)

- People traveling to Maine or returning to Maine from exempt states may stay in lodging establishments in Maine and are exempt from the testing and 10-day travel quarantine requirement.
- People traveling to Maine or returning to Maine from non-exempt states will be asked to sign a Certificate of Compliance at check-in at all Maine lodging, campgrounds, seasonal rentals, overnight camps, and other commercial lodging (Airbnb, etc.).

What is the guidance for indoor gatherings in Maine? (5/25/21)

- All capacity limits and physical distancing requirements in public indoor venues are lifted.

What is the guidance for outdoor gatherings in Maine? (5/25/21)

- All capacity limits and requirements to physically distance in all public outdoor settings are lifted.

I would like to volunteer to help with the COVID-19 response (including contact tracing and vaccine distribution). How can I do this? (3/4/21)

- Please visit www.maineresponds.org to register as a volunteer to provide services during a disaster or emergency situation.
- Please see Maine CDC’s COVID-19 response positions and see jobs postings page.

Where can I find information on COVID-19 vaccination in Maine? (1/19/21)

- Please visit Governor Mills’ COVID-19 Vaccine page for more information on who can currently be vaccinated, how many vaccines have already been given, major updates, and other frequently asked questions.
- The Office of the Governor also has a page on COVID-19 vaccine sites in Maine.
- Find Maine Immunization Program’s frequently asked questions here under the “Other Questions” heading.

Prevention and Protection

What is the definition of a close contact? (3/4/21)

- Close contact includes:
  - Being within 6 feet of an infected person for a total of 15 cumulative minutes or more over 24 hours
  - Providing care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19
  - Direct physical contact with an infectious person (ex: hugging/kissing)
  - Sharing eating or drinking utensils
  - Being exposed to respiratory droplets from an infectious person (ex: sneezing/coughing)
What should I do if I had contact with someone with COVID-19 (not a health care or critical infrastructure worker)? (3/4/21)

- These guidelines apply to people who are not considered health care or critical infrastructure workers.
- If you had close contact with a COVID-19 case while they were symptomatic or within 48 hours before their symptoms started (or if asymptomatic, starting 48 hours prior to specimen collection), please follow the quarantine recommendations.
  - If you are fully vaccinated, follow these recommendations.
  - You should avoid contact with people in your household as much as possible.
    - Your household members can continue to leave the house if they are not also in quarantine.
  - You should get tested immediately upon finding out that you are a close contact and 5-7 days after your exposure.
    - A close contact does not need to get tested if they are asymptomatic and the exposure occurred more than 14 days after the close contact completed their vaccination series.
    - A close contact does not need to get tested if they are asymptomatic and are within 90 days after their first positive antigen or PCR test.
  - If you live in the same household as the COVID case and they are not fully isolated from you, you should remain in quarantine until 10 days after they are released from isolation.
  - Your employer can have stricter guidance.
  - You can leave quarantine once you meet the release from quarantine criteria.
  - Whether fully vaccinated or not, if you become symptomatic after close contact with a COVID-19 case, immediately isolate and call a healthcare provider.
- For other types of contact, please follow the educational document to determine the recommendation.

What should I do if I am a healthcare worker or critical infrastructure worker and had contact with someone with COVID-19? (6/22/2021)

- These guidelines apply for people who are considered health care or critical infrastructure workers.
- If you are unsure if you are designated as a critical infrastructure worker, please reach out to Maine’s Department of Economic and Community Development.
- Asymptomatic critical infrastructure workers may continue to work following potential exposure to COVID-19 only as a last resort if the workplace would have to close without them or if their absence may cause serious harm or danger to public health or safety.
  - Potential exposure means being a household contact or having close contact with an individual with COVID-19.
  - This contact period includes up to 48 hours before the sick individual became symptomatic.
  - For 14 days following a potential exposure, please follow these guidelines.
  - For fully vaccinated critical infrastructure workers, follow these guidelines.
- Asymptomatic health care providers should follow the recommended self-quarantine at home for 14 days if their facility can remain open without the asymptomatic health care worker.
  - If the facility would have to close in their absence, then the asymptomatic person can continue to work following these guidelines for 14 days after a potential exposure.
- You should get tested immediately upon finding out that you are a close contact and 5-7 days after your exposure.
  - A close contact does not need to get tested if they are asymptomatic and the exposure occurred more than 14 days after the close contact completed their vaccination series.
  - A close contact does not need to get tested if they are asymptomatic and are within 90 days after their first positive antigen or PCR test.
- If the employee shows symptoms of COVID-19, they must be sent home immediately.
- This and further guidance can be found at US CDC Interim Guidance for Critical Infrastructure Workers page.
What should I do if I had contact with someone who is a close contact of someone with COVID-19? (11/20/20)
• If you are a contact of someone who is a close contact of a COVID-19 case, you are not required to quarantine. Continue to practice everyday prevention measures as you normally would.

If already had COVID-19, do I need to quarantine if I am a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case? (6/22/2021)
• If you had a positive molecular COVID-19 (PCR, NAAT, or isothermal) or antigen test, you do not need to quarantine if you are a close contact of a COVID-19 positive case within 90 days (3 months) after your first positive test, if you remain asymptomatic.
  o After this 90-day period from your first positive test, you will need to quarantine if you become a close contact of a COVID-19 positive case.
  o This does not apply to individuals with a positive at-home COVID-19 test.
• An individual who believes they had a previous COVID-19 infection but did not have a positive COVID-19 molecular or antigen test must still quarantine after an exposure.
• An individual who has completed a COVID-19 vaccination series and is exposed to a COVID-19 case does not need to quarantine so long as the exposure is more than 14 days after the individual’s completion of the COVID-19 vaccine series.

I am fully vaccinated and had close contact with a COVID-19 case. Do I need to quarantine? (4/13/21)
• An individual who has completed a COVID-19 vaccination series and is exposed to a COVID-19 case does not need to quarantine so long as the exposure is more than 14 days after the individual’s completion of the COVID-19 vaccine series.

Do I need to wear a face covering indoors? (5/25/21)
• Maine requires face coverings to be worn in schools and childcare settings while indoors for people ages 5 and older. Face coverings are not required outdoors at these settings.
• US CDC requires that people wear face coverings in all forms of public transportation, such as planes, buses, and trains.
• US CDC specifically recommends that people wear face coverings in healthcare settings and in congregate living settings like jails and shelters.

Do I need to wear a face covering outdoors? (5/21/21)
• As of May 24, 2021, requirements to physically distance and wear face coverings in all outdoor public settings are eliminated.

I am not fully vaccinated. Do I need to wear a face covering? (5/21/2021)
• US CDC guidance recommends that people age 5 and older wear face coverings while at indoor public settings until they are fully vaccinated.
• Aside from vaccination, wearing a face covering remains one of the most effective ways of protecting yourself and your family against the virus that causes COVID-19.
• You are considered fully vaccinated after at least 14 days following the completion of your COVID-19 vaccination series. For individuals who receive the two-shot Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, this starts after the second dose. For individuals receiving the single-shot Johnson and Johnson vaccine, this starts after the single dose.

I am fully vaccinated. Do I need to wear a face covering? (5/21/2021)
• US CDC has detailed guidance for people who are fully vaccinated.
• People who are fully vaccinated could consider wearing a face covering in public places as an example to children until a vaccine is available to them, but is not required.

• You are considered fully vaccinated after at least 14 days following the completion of your COVID-19 vaccination series. For individuals who receive the two-shot Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, this starts after the second dose. For individuals receiving the single-shot Johnson and Johnson vaccine, this starts after the single dose.

Can businesses or organizations require face coverings? (5/21/2021)
• Yes. Businesses and other organizations may adopt policies for their employees or clients that require wearing a face covering, require vaccination, or require proof of vaccination in order to avoid wearing a face covering.

How does wearing a face covering prevent the spread of COVID-19? (5/21/2021)
• COVID-19 is an airborne virus that most commonly spreads between people who are in close contact with one another. It spreads through respiratory droplets or small particles, such as those in aerosols, produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, sings, talks, or breathes.

• Because it helps contain respiratory droplets, wearing a face covering has been proven to be one of the most significant, effective, and easiest ways to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Are there any cleaning recommendations to prevent COVID-19? (7/7/20)
• Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces (tables, countertops, light switches, doorknobs, cabinet handles, etc.) daily using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

• Find cleaning recommendations for households with suspected/confirmed COVID-19 cases here.

What is the difference between isolation and quarantine? What is involved? (12/29/20)
• **Self-quarantine** means that you need to separate yourself from others because you may have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus but are not currently symptomatic.
  - During **self-quarantine**, you should avoid contact with people in your household as much as possible.
  - If you are self-quarantining, you may leave your house for outdoor exercise activities, such as swimming or hiking, provided that you abide by physical distancing guidelines and avoid contact with other people.
  - If you are in self-quarantine, you should remain in quarantine until 10 days after your last contact with the COVID case, then monitor for symptoms for 4 more days.

• **Self-isolation** means that you need to separate yourself from others because you may be infected with the COVID-19 virus and you are experiencing symptoms.
  - During **self-isolation**, you should avoid having contact with other members of your household as much as possible.
  - If you are self-isolating, you may not leave your house for exercise.
  - If you are in self-isolation, you should remain isolated until you meet the criteria for release from isolation.

Epidemiology

Can a person spread the COVID-19 virus even if they have no symptoms? (4/1/20)
• It is possible that people infected with COVID-19 may be infectious before showing symptoms.

• People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic/the sickest.

Can the COVID-19 virus be spread from contaminated surfaces? (12/10/20)
• The COVID-19 virus can be acquired from contaminated surfaces, but this is not the primary way the virus spreads.
This happens when an infected person coughs or sneezes and droplets land on surfaces. A person can become infected by touching the contaminated surface and then touching the eyes, nose, or mouth.

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Most often, spread of the virus happens among close contacts through respiratory droplets. Practice general prevention measures.

Can someone who has recovered from COVID-19 spread the illness to others?

- Someone who is actively sick with COVID-19 can spread the illness to others.
- Once a person with COVID-19 has been released from isolation and is no longer showing symptoms without the aid of medication (fever-reducers, cough suppressants), they are no longer considered able to spread the COVID-19 virus.
- Individuals who had COVID-19 can get it again and become infectious again.

What about people from out of state who test positive? Where are their results reported? (3/31/20)

- Out-of-state travelers who test positive in Maine are reported by the state of their primary residence. This is to ensure an accurate national tally of COVID-19 cases under guidance from US CDC.
- Patients may continue to receive treatment in the state where they are tested.

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Medical Information and Testing

What are the signs/symptoms of COVID-19 and when do they appear? (12/16/20)

- Signs and symptoms include:
  - Fever or chills.
  - Cough.
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing.
  - Fatigue.
  - Muscle or body aches.
  - Headache.
  - New loss of taste or smell.
  - Sore throat.
  - Congestion or runny nose.
  - Nausea or vomiting.
  - Diarrhea.
- Seek medical attention immediately if you experience any of these emergency warning signs for COVID-19:
  - Trouble breathing.
  - Persistent pain or pressure in the chest.
  - New confusion.
  - Inability to wake or stay awake.
  - Bluish lips, face, or unpigmented skin (gums, around the eyes, nail beds).
- Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus.

Where can I get tested for COVID-19 in Maine? (12/4/20)

- Please refer to the educational document “Where can I get tested for COVID-19 in Maine?”

I was tested for COVID-19. How long will my results take? How can I find results? (3/24/20)

- Contact the healthcare provider that tested you for a timeframe and for results.
- Maine CDC does not provide test results to individuals.
Why did I receive a text about a positive result? (12/29/20)
- People who test positive for COVID-19 and provide their telephone number to their testing site will receive a text message from Maine CDC indicating that they should isolate for 10 days at home and inform close contacts of potential exposure to the virus.
- Individuals will also be directed to more information.

How do I know if the positive result text from Maine CDC is legitimate? (12/29/20)
- Messages from Maine CDC will come from the number 22300.

What is the medical treatment for people affected by COVID-19? (10/23/20)
- The National Institutes of Health developed guidance on treatment.

How can a person be released from isolation at home? (12/4/20)
- Please see the release from isolation criteria.
- Specific criteria are available for healthcare workers with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 for release from isolation.

If one of my employees tested positive for COVID-19, do I need to report it to Maine CDC? (5/1/20)
- The places and people required to report any reportable disease, including COVID-19, are: health care providers, medical laboratories, health care facilities, administrators, health officers, and veterinarians.
- Any other employer or entity is not required to notify Maine CDC if an employee tests positive. The testing laboratory and health care provider are required to report this.

If one of my employees tested positive for COVID-19, should I notify the rest of my employees? (12/4/20)
- Inform your employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19. Employers should do contact tracing within their own facility and notify all close contacts of their need to quarantine.
- Employers must keep the identity of the individual who tested positive confidential.

What should I know about at-home COVID-19 testing? (5/25/21)
- Find information on at-home COVID-19 testing from US CDC here.
- If you test positive for COVID-19 using at at-home test, isolate immediately and inform your close contacts of their exposure.
  - Maine CDC does not recognize at-home tests for surveillance purposes.
- People who test positive via an at-home test are not exempt from quarantine for 90 days following a subsequent exposure. This is because their test result is not recognized by Maine CDC’s surveillance system. These individuals need to quarantine for each subsequent exposure after their positive test.
- Individuals who test positive with an at-home test but have ongoing exposure to a household member who is also positive will need to finish their isolation as well as their quarantine.
  - This means that if they have ongoing exposure, the individual will need to isolate and continue their quarantine as if they never tested positive.

What should I do if I already had COVID-19 within 90 days and become symptomatic again? (1/29/21)
- An individual who develops new onset of symptoms consistent with COVID-19 during the 90-day period following the initial positive result should be retested and should isolate.
  - If the test comes back positive, they will need to isolate for a minimum of 10 days from the new symptom onset.
  - If the test comes back negative, they will need to isolate until 24 hours after symptoms resolve without fever-reducing medication.
I was in quarantine for being a close contact. Can I get a release from quarantine letter for my employer? (4/13/21)

- Maine CDC does not provide release from quarantine letters.
- You should work with your employer to determine when you meet criteria to leave quarantine and safely return to work.

I had COVID-19 and was in isolation. Can I get a release from isolation letter for my employer? (4/13/21)

- Maine CDC does not provide release from isolation letters.
- You should work with your employer to determine when you meet criteria to leave isolation and safely return to work.

My employee is in isolation/quarantine. Should I require a release letter in order to let them come back to work? (4/13/21)

- No. Maine CDC does not provide release from isolation/quarantine letter.
- You should work with your employee directly to determine when it is safe for them to return to work.

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Daily Life and COVID-19
I need help with rent assistance/evictions due to COVID-19. Who can I contact? (12/21/20)

- Visit www.mainehousing.org/covidrent for more information on rent assistance during COVID-19.
- Please contact the Maine State Housing Authority for assistance at 207-626-4600.

I am in isolation or quarantine and need help with groceries or other social services. How can I get help? (12/4/20)

- The Department of Health and Human Services developed a referral form that individuals who need assistance can fill out.

I have split custody of my child/children. Should they continue to go to their other parent’s house as stipulated in a custody agreement? (4/1/20)

- It is essential that co-parents comply with custody agreements. If all parties abide by current guidelines, shared custody of children can continue.

How can I cope with stress during a COVID-19 outbreak in my community? (4/22/20)

- An outbreak of COVID-19 in your community may be very stressful. Maine CDC has information available for individuals who may be stressed, need to connect with someone, or are in crisis.
- A Frontline Warm Line is available for first responders, health care workers, those in law enforcement, and anyone else who is involved in the direct response to COVID-19.
  - Call 207-221-8196 or 866-367-4440 to connect with someone for support services.
  - Volunteers staffing the Warm Line include licensed psychiatrists, psychologists, therapists, social workers, and nurse practitioners.

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Travel

What are Maine’s policies for domestic travel for non-healthcare workers? (5/13/21)

- Maine moved to an “All states exempt unless specified” approach to travel quarantine. This means that travelers from or returning from exempt states are not required to test or quarantine upon arrival.
- Testing is still recommended.
- The list of non-exempt states can be found here.

What are Maine's policies for international travelers coming to Maine for non-healthcare workers? (5/13/21)

- For people who are fully vaccinated (at least 14 days past their final COVID-19 dose) who arrive in Maine:
  - Quarantine is not required unless you are experiencing symptoms.
  - Testing is recommended 3-5 days after arrival in the US.
    - If the COVID-19 test is positive, isolate.
- For all people who are not fully vaccinated and arrive in Maine within 7 days of entering the United States:
  - Quarantine for 7 days from arrival in the US AND get a COVID-19 molecular or antigen test 3-5 days after arrival in the US.
    - If the COVID-19 test is positive, isolate.
    - Even if the COVID-19 test is negative, complete the 7-day quarantine after travel.
    - If individuals arriving from international travel do not get a COVID-19 test after their arrival, they should quarantine for 10 days after their arrival in the US.
  - Avoid being around anyone who is at increased risk of severe COVID-19 illness for 14 days following arrival in the US, regardless of COVID-19 test results.
- For individuals who arrive in Maine more than 7 days after travel, follow guidelines for domestic travelers arriving in Maine.
- Travel guidance for all passengers coming to the United States, including US citizens, can be found here.

What are Maine’s policies for domestic travel for healthcare workers? (5/13/21)

- If fully vaccinated:
  - Healthcare worker can return to work and continue to practice source control, physical distancing, hand hygiene, and respiratory hygiene.
- If not fully vaccinated:
  - Healthcare worker should not return to work for 14 days, regardless of COVID-19 test result. If the facility is unable to maintain safe operations without the healthcare worker, the healthcare worker can return to work, but must follow these guidelines:
    - Face covering must be worn at all times while at work for 14 days. The healthcare worker can only remove the face covering for food/drink when outside or in a private room with the door closed and no other occupants.
    - Maintain physical distancing.
    - Practice hand and respiratory hygiene.
  - If the healthcare worker is ill after travel or becomes ill within 14 days after return, they must stay home or immediately leave the workplace.
  - View this healthcare travel decision tree for more information about work restrictions after travel.

What are Maine’s policies for international travel for healthcare workers? (5/13/21)

- If fully vaccinated:
  - Healthcare worker can return to work and continue to practice source control, physical distancing, hand hygiene, and respiratory hygiene.
  - COVID-19 testing is recommended at 3-5 days after arrival to U.S. from international travel.
- If not fully vaccinated:
o Healthcare worker should not return to work for 14 days, regardless of COVID-19 test result. International travel has an increased risk in exposure to SARS-CoV-2 variants. If the facility is unable to maintain safe operations without the healthcare worker, the healthcare worker can return to work, but must follow these guidelines:
  ▪ Face covering must be worn at all times while at work for 14 days. The healthcare worker can only remove the face covering for food/drink when outside or in a private room with the door closed and no other occupants.
  ▪ Maintain physical distancing.
  ▪ Practice hand and respiratory hygiene.
• If the healthcare worker is ill after travel or becomes ill within 14 days after return, they must not report to work or immediately leave the workplace.
• View this healthcare travel decision tree for more information about work restrictions after travel.

What type of test do I need to get if I am coming to Maine from outside the United States? (4/30/21)
• A negative SARS-CoV-2 antigen or molecular (PCR, NAAT, or isothermal) test.
• A negative antibody test is not accepted to forgo quarantine.

What are Maine’s policies for individuals who are fully vaccinated and traveling to Maine? (3/5/21)
• Individuals who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination series and are more than 14 days beyond the completion of the series are exempt from the testing and 10-day quarantine requirement.

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