

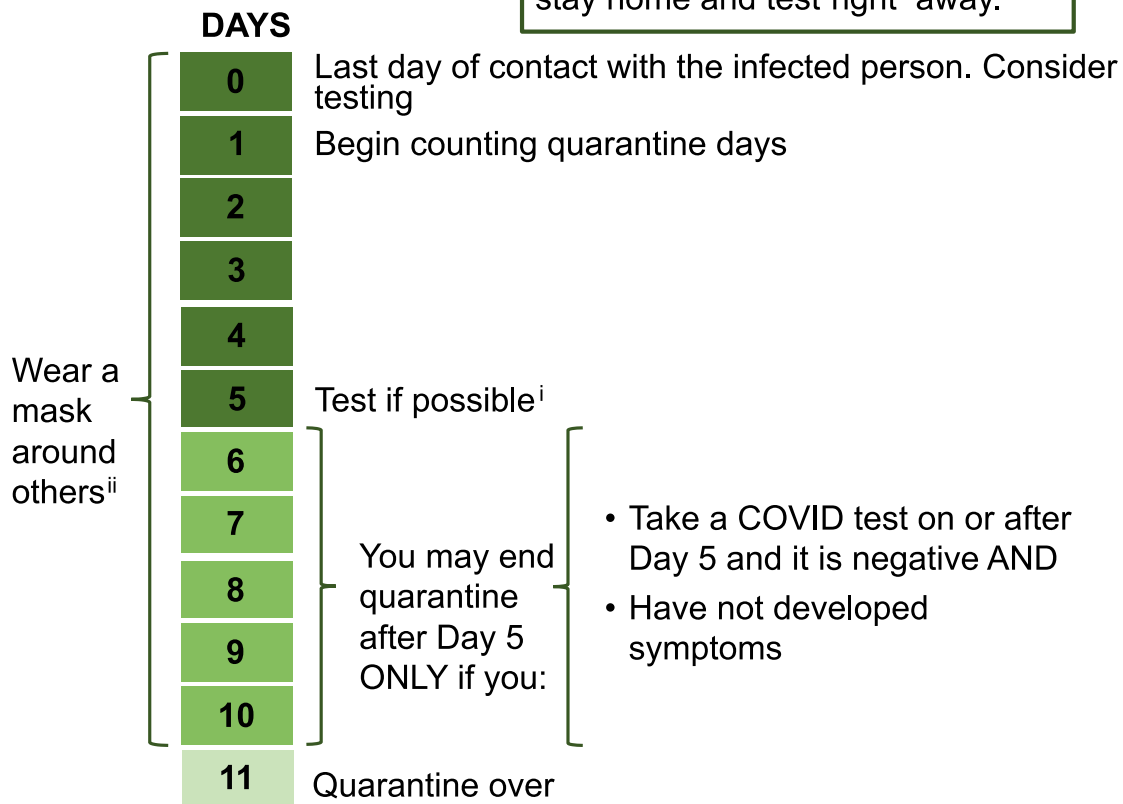
# COVID-19: Quarantine and Other Instructions for Close Contacts

This document is updated often. Visit the English webpage at [ph.lacounty.gov/covidquarantine](https://ph.lacounty.gov/covidquarantine) for the most up to date information. To view the information in another language, click on "Translate" in the top left corner of the page and select desired language.

## SUMMARY

### QUARANTINE

If symptoms develop at any time, stay home and test right<sup>i</sup> away.



- i. If test is positive, follow isolation instructions.  
 ii. When in quarantine, you must wear a highly protective mask around others even in your own home. If you end quarantine after Day 5, it is *strongly recommended* that you wear a mask through Day 10.

For more information, visit [ph.lacounty.gov/covidquarantine](https://ph.lacounty.gov/covidquarantine).

Call **1-833-540-0473** 7 days a week, 8:00 am – 8:30 pm if you need assistance or help with resources.

## INTRODUCTION

Quarantine is used to keep someone who has been exposed to a person with COVID-19 away from others. Quarantine helps prevent the spread of disease before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms. In Los Angeles County, if you have been in close contact with a

person diagnosed with COVID-19 you are required to quarantine unless you are exempt<sup>1</sup>. Even if you do not have to quarantine, you are still required to take other steps – see below.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR CLOSE CONTACTS**

**What is a Close Contact?**

You are a “close contact” if you were exposed to someone who tested positive\* for COVID-19 while they were infectious<sup>2</sup> if:

- a. You were within 6 feet of someone with COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.
- b. You had unprotected contact with body fluids and/or secretions from someone with COVID-19. For example, you were coughed or sneezed on, you shared a drinking cup or eating utensils, you kissed, or you provided care to them without wearing the right protective equipment.

\* Tested positive means they had a positive COVID-19 viral test.

**IF YOU ARE NOT UP TO DATE WITH YOUR COVID-19 VACCINES, YOU MUST QUARANTINE**

- Unvaccinated/have not completed your primary vaccine series (not fully vaccinated), OR
- Fully vaccinated and booster-eligible but have not yet received your booster dose

**If you are exposed to someone with COVID-19 and you are not up to date with your vaccines, you are:**

**Required**

- **Stay home**
  - Quarantine can end after Day 5 only if you do not have symptoms **and** a COVID-19 viral test\* collected on Day 5 or later is negative.
  - You can end quarantine after Day 10 if you do not test on Day 5 or later and do not have symptoms.

Students in grades TK-12 and some employees may be allowed to go to work or school - see below.

- **Wear a highly protective mask**

While you are in quarantine, you **must** wear a highly protective mask if you need to be around others, including people you live with.

If you meet the criteria to leave quarantine after Day 5, it is **strongly recommended** that you continue to wear a highly protective mask around others, especially indoors, through Day 10.

Note: if you return to work after Day 5, you are required to wear a mask at the workplace for a total of 10 days after your exposure. See [Return to Work \(Non-Healthcare\) Summary Table](#).

<sup>1</sup> You are not required to quarantine (you are exempt) if you **do not have symptoms** AND you are up to date on your COVID-19 vaccines. Up to date on your COVID-19 vaccines mean that you are either: fully vaccinated and boosted, OR fully vaccinated but not yet booster-eligible.

<sup>2</sup> A person with COVID-19 is considered to be able to spread the virus to others (infectious):

- if symptomatic-- from 2 days before their symptoms first started until their isolation period ends OR
- if symptoms never develop--from 2 days before their positive viral test was taken until their isolation period ends

A [highly protective mask](#) is one that fits and filters well such as a well-fitting respirator (such as an N95 or KN95), a double mask (a cloth mask over a medical mask), a well-fitting medical mask, or well-fitting, high-filtration cloth (“reusable”) mask with a nose-wire. Well-fitting respirators provide the most protection. See [ph.lacounty.gov/masks](https://ph.lacounty.gov/masks) for more details about masks that offer the best protection.

- **Monitor your health for 10 days.** If symptoms develop, test\* and stay home. If you test positive, follow isolation requirements at [ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation](https://ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation).

### **Recommended**

- **Get tested\*** on Day 5 (or later) if possible.

If you or someone you live with is at [higher risk for severe illness](#), consider getting tested right away. This is because if you test positive, you can get [medicine to prevent severe illness](#) (if eligible) as soon as possible and you can tell your close contacts about their exposure. If negative, test again on Day 5 (or later), if possible. Test immediately if you get symptoms.

If you test positive at any time, follow isolation requirements at [ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation](https://ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation).

\*The test should be an [FDA-authorized](#) COVID-19 viral test such as an antigen or NAAT/PCR test. Self-tests are acceptable, but if used for return to work the test must be observed or reported in a certain way. For more information check with your employer and see [Cal-OSHA Testing FAQs](#).

**Note:** Day 0 is the day of your last contact (exposure) with the infected person. Day 1 is the first full day after your last exposure.

### **Exceptions:**

- **Students in grades TK-12:** If you do not have any symptoms, you may be permitted to attend in-person school and participate in other school related activities during their quarantine period. Contact your school to learn more. In addition, if you are fully vaccinated, you may be allowed to participate in organized sports, regardless of whether you have received a booster dose of vaccine. Refer to [ph.lacounty.gov/EducationToolkitTK12](https://ph.lacounty.gov/EducationToolkitTK12) for details.
- **Employees<sup>‡</sup> who are fully vaccinated and due for a booster dose but have not received it:** If you do not have symptoms, your employer may allow you to go to work if you:
  - Get a viral test 3-5 days after their last exposure to the infected person and the result is negative; and
  - Wear a well-fitting respirator (preferred) or mask around others indoors and outdoors for a total of 10 days and do not eat or drink around others; and
  - Continue to have no symptoms; and
  - Quarantine at home when they are not at work.

See [Return to Work \(Non-Healthcare\) Summary Table](#).

<sup>‡</sup>This does not apply to healthcare personnel who should follow [Infection Prevention Guidance for Healthcare Personnel](#)

### When does my first day of quarantine start?

Day 1 is the first full day after your last contact with the infected person.

- If you live with or care for a person with COVID-19 and cannot avoid close contact with them while they are in isolation you must quarantine. To calculate the end of your quarantine, use the day after the infected person ends isolation as your Day 1.
- If you received a [Public Health Emergency Quarantine Order](#) and you don't know when you were exposed to the infected person, use the date the order was issued as the date of your last contact with the infected person.

### Restrictions during quarantine

To prevent you from spreading COVID-19, you must restrict activities and limit actions that may put you in contact with others.

- Stay home. Do not go to work, school, or public areas (see note for when TK-12 students and certain employees may be allowed to go to school and work). Only leave your place of quarantine to get medical care and don't allow non-essential visitors.
- Separate yourself from others in your home (unless they are also in quarantine). If you need to be in the same room as other household members, in addition to wearing your mask:
  - Keep 6 feet away. If you have to share a room, try setting up the room so that you can stay 6 feet apart, if possible. It is important to stay away from people who are at [higher risk of serious illness](#).
  - Open windows to [improve ventilation](#) (if safe to do so) or use air filters and exhaust fans.
  - Use a separate bathroom. If this is not possible, disinfect the bathroom after use.
- Do not make or serve food to others, if possible. If there is no one else to prepare and serve food, then be sure to wear a mask and wash your hands frequently.
- [Wash or sanitize your hands](#) often.
- Clean or disinfect high touch surfaces often, especially if you must share spaces with other household members.
- If you need help getting food or other supplies, call 2-1-1, or visit [211LA.org](#), or visit the Public Health [resource webpage](#).
- If you are experiencing homelessness or are unable to safely isolate or quarantine at home, call the COVID Info line 833-540-0473, open daily 8:00am–8:30pm.

### IF YOU ARE UP TO DATE WITH YOUR COVID-19 VACCINES OR HAD COVID-19 IN THE PAST 90 DAYS, YOU DO NOT NEED TO QUARANTINE – but you must follow other instructions for close contacts

- Have no symptoms, **AND**
  - Are up to date on all COVID-19 vaccines (fully vaccinated + boosted or fully vaccinated but not yet eligible for a booster dose), OR
  - Tested positive for COVID-19 using a viral COVID-19 test\* within the last 90 days and recovered. (Recovered means you completed the isolation period for your COVID-19 infection.)

### Recommended

- **Wear a highly protective mask**  
It is **strongly recommended** that you wear a highly protective mask around others, especially indoors, through Day 10.

Note: you are required to wear a mask at the workplace for a total of 10 days after your exposure. See [Return to Work \(Non-Healthcare\) Summary Table](#).

A [highly protective mask](#) is one that fits and filters well such as a well-fitting respirator (such as an N95 or KN95), a double mask (a cloth mask over a medical mask), a well-fitting medical mask, or well-fitting, high-filtration cloth (“reusable”) mask with a nose-wire. Well-fitting respirators provide the most protection See [ph.lacounty.gov/masks](http://ph.lacounty.gov/masks) for more details about masks that offer the best protection.

- **Monitor your health for 10 days.** If symptoms develop, stay home and test. If you test positive, follow isolation requirements at [ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation](http://ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation).
- **Get tested\*** on Day 5 (or later) if possible.  
If you or someone you live with is at [increased risk for severe illness](#), consider getting tested right away. This is because if you test positive, you can get [medicine to prevent severe illness](#) (if eligible) as soon as possible and you can tell your close contacts they were exposed. If you test negative, test again on Day 5 (or later), if possible. Test immediately if symptoms develop.

If you tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days, testing is not recommended unless you develop symptoms.

\*The test should be an [FDA-authorized](#) COVID-19 viral test such as an antigen or NAAT/PCR test. Self-tests are acceptable, but if used for return to work the test must be observed or reported in a certain way. For more information check with your employer and see [Cal-OSHA Testing FAQs](#).

**Note:** Day 0 is the day of your last contact (exposure) with the infected person. Day 1 is the first full day after your last exposure.

‡[Healthcare personnel](#) should follow [Infection Prevention Guidance for Healthcare Personnel](#).

**Recent travel:** For information about testing and quarantine after travel follow CDC [domestic](#) and [international](#) travel recommendations. See [LAC DPH Travel Advisory and Guidance](#) for more details.

## CONTACT TRACING

Contact tracing is a simple, confidential process that is being used to help slow the spread of COVID-19. If you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 you should expect a call from a public health specialist.

- If you get a call or message from "LA PublicHealth" or 1-833-641-0305, please do your part by taking the call. You will be asked about your health and the places you have been.
- The public health specialist can answer your questions and provide information like how to get a COVID-19 test or how to find a doctor or get help while you are in quarantine.
- Discussions with public health specialist are confidential. This means that your personal and medical information will be kept private and only shared with those who may need to know, like your doctor.
- Click [here](#) for more information about contact tracing.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- For more information, visit the Public Health website [ph.lacounty.gov/Coronavirus](https://ph.lacounty.gov/Coronavirus) or call 2-1-1 (which is available 24/7).
- Please call your doctor for any questions about your health. If you need help finding a doctor, call 2-1-1.
- **Dealing with stress**
  - COVID-19 and quarantine may be stressful for people. Visit the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health's [COVID-19 webpage](#) and the 211LA webpage ([211la.org/resources/subcategory/mental-health](https://211la.org/resources/subcategory/mental-health)) for local resources to help with mental health & wellbeing concerns. Guidance and resources, including information on crisis hotlines, are also available on the CDC webpage [Coping with stress](#).
  - LA County residents have free access to [iPrevail.com](https://iPrevail.com), an online mental health resource to help with life's everyday stressors. After a short assessment, you are connected to customized support which may include on-demand chat with peer coaches, self-paced lessons to improve wellbeing, and community support groups. iPrevail is available 24/7 offered in English and Spanish.
  - If you need to speak with someone about your mental health, contact your doctor or the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Access Center 24/7 Helpline at (800) 854-7771. This number is available 24/7. You can also text "LA" to 74174.