

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** DuPage County Healthcare and Community Partners

**FROM:** Karen Ayala, MPH, Executive Director  
Rashmi Chugh, MD, MPH, Medical Officer

**DATE:** August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021

**SUBJECT:** **Updated Quarantine Recommendations for Persons Living, Learning, or Working in DuPage County**

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Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [quarantine recommendations](#) include the following opening statements: **“Local public health authorities determine and establish the quarantine options for their jurisdictions. CDC currently recommends a quarantine period of 14 days.”** CDC also provided additional, acceptable alternatives for consideration based on local circumstances and resources to shorten quarantine for COVID-19 close contacts.

DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) advises COVID-19 [close contacts](#) to *ideally* complete a 14-day [quarantine](#) period. *At a minimum*, a 10-day quarantine period must be completed; in both options, additional criteria must be met with daily symptom monitoring and continued masking for COVID-19 illness through Day 14.

DuPage County Health Department continues to recommend only the full 14-day quarantine period in high-risk, congregate settings, such as long-term care facilities, correctional and detention facilities, and college/university student housing. Any option to shorten quarantine risks being less effective than the currently recommended 14-day quarantine. The variability of SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) transmission observed to-date indicates that while a shorter quarantine substantially reduces secondary transmission risk, there may be settings (e.g., with high contact rates) where even a small risk of post-quarantine transmission could still result in substantial secondary clusters.

For persons in other community settings (e.g., critical infrastructure workers, schools, offices), DCHD recommends COVID-19 close contacts complete *at least* a 10-day quarantine period and *ideally* a full 14-day quarantine period. In both options, additional criteria must be met with daily symptom monitoring and continued masking for COVID-19 illness through Day 14.

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At this time, the Test-to-Stay strategy is not an acceptable process for schools to follow to exempt an individual from quarantine. DCHD is in active communication with IDPH on this issue, and we are awaiting further clarification. Updates regarding DCHD's adoption of Test-to-Stay will be shared with schools when they become available.

**DCHD strongly urges all eligible residents to get vaccinated against COVID-19 as soon as possible. All persons are also advised to use effective COVID-19 prevention strategies** including correct and consistent mask use, physical distancing, hand and cough hygiene, environmental cleaning and disinfection, avoiding crowds, ensuring adequate indoor ventilation, and self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19 illness. These are also summarized [here](#). **Quarantined persons and fully vaccinated close contacts who develop symptoms need to contact their healthcare provider for medical evaluation, diagnostic testing, and appropriate care.**

Timing is suboptimal to decrease days of quarantine when DuPage County is seeing spread of the highly contagious Delta variant and increased COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations. DuPage County is at the highest level of Community Transmission, "High", according to county-level data from CDC.

The recommendation for a 14-day quarantine has been based on estimates of the upper bounds of the COVID-19 incubation period (i.e., 2-14 days). Quarantine's importance grew after it was evident that persons are able to transmit SARS-CoV-2 before symptoms develop, and that a substantial portion of infected persons (likely somewhere between 20% to 40%) never develop symptomatic illness but can still transmit the virus. In this context, **quarantine is a critical measure to control transmission.**

Additional information and resources on COVID-19 are available at: [www.dupagehealth.org/covid19](http://www.dupagehealth.org/covid19).