VDH
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

WHEN IT IS SAFE TO BE AROUND OTHERS: ENDING ISOLATION IN NON-HEALTHCARE SETTINGS
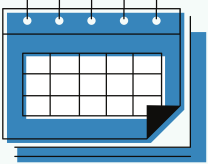
For persons with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 to know when they are likely no longer contagious:
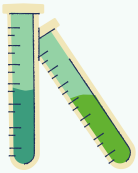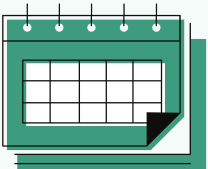
Symptom-based strategy

If you had COVID-19 symptoms and were directed to care for yourself at home, you can leave your "sick room" and home after these 3 things have happened:

✓ At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, **and**

✓ At least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication, **and**

✓ Other symptoms have improved.*

*Note that loss of taste or smell might persist for weeks or months and this should not delay the end of isolation

Time-based strategy

If you tested positive for COVID-19 and never had <u>any</u> symptoms and were directed to care for yourself at home, you can leave your "sick room" and home if:

✓ At least 10 days have passed since the date of your first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test, **and**

✓ You continue to have no symptoms since the test.

Persons with COVID-19 who have [severe to critical illness](#) or who are [severely immunocompromised](#) might need to stay home longer than 10 days. These persons can consider using a test-based strategy to discontinue isolation, in consultation with an infectious disease expert.

- *A longer time frame after recovery may be desired to minimize the chance of prolonged shedding of active virus for 1) healthcare personnel in close contact with vulnerable persons at high-risk for severe COVID-19 and 2) persons who have conditions that might weaken their immune system. Such persons should consult with their healthcare provider.*
- *Healthcare personnel should be excluded from work during isolation and then follow [Return to Work Practices and Work Restrictions](#) of universal source control and self-monitoring for symptoms.*
- *Based on CDC guidance for [Discontinuation of Isolation in Non-Healthcare Settings](#) aimed to prevent most instances of further spread.*

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People who have been in close contact with a person who has COVID-19 while they are contagious* need to quarantine.
Close contact includes:

- Living with a person who has COVID-19, or
- Providing care for a person who has COVID-19, or
- Being within 6 feet of a person who has COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes, or
- Having exposure to respiratory secretions (e.g., being coughed or sneezed on; sharing a drinking glass or utensils; kissing) from a person who has COVID-19.

*A person with COVID-19 is considered to be contagious starting from 2 days before they became sick (or 2 days before they tested positive if they never had symptoms) until they meet the criteria to discontinue isolation.

HOUSEHOLD CONTACTS

Self-quarantine (stay home) and monitor for symptoms while the person is home and for 14 days after the person has been released from isolation (because exposure is considered ongoing within the house)**.

Person's onset date — Person released from isolation — **14 Days** — Household contact is released from quarantine if not sick.

***If you are able to have **complete separation** from the person in your house with COVID-19 (this means no contact, no time together in the same room, no sharing of any spaces, such as same bathroom or bedroom), then follow timeframe for non-household contact*

NON-HOUSEHOLD CONTACTS

Self-quarantine (stay home) and monitor for symptoms until 14 days after the date of last close contact with the person infected with COVID-19.

Date of last close contact with person — **14 Days** — Non-household contact is released from quarantine if not sick.
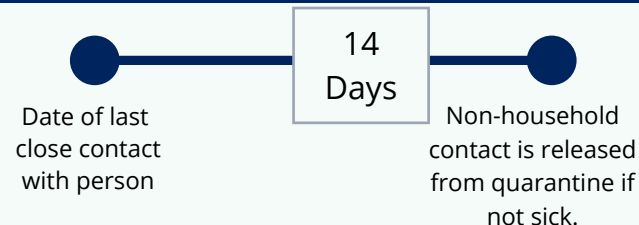
HEALTHCARE PERSONNEL

Asymptomatic healthcare personnel (HCP) with potential exposure to patients, visitors, or other HCP with COVID-19 may be assessed for exposures and advised on work restrictions for 14 days after their last exposure. Exposures include close contact when appropriate PPE is not used, especially for aerosol-generating procedures. If staffing shortages occur, it might not be possible to exclude exposed HCP from work; see CDC strategies to mitigate HCP staffing shortages.
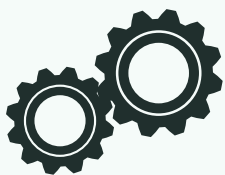
CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE WORKERS

Personnel filling essential critical infrastructure roles (as defined in CISA Framework) should self-quarantine for 14 days after their last exposure. Exposed critical infrastructure workers, except for education sector workers, may continue to work if they do not have any symptoms and additional precautions are taken to protect them and the community. Follow VDH recommendations for critical infrastructure workers (non-healthcare) potentially exposed to COVID-19.

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