

As if the COVID-19 quarantine rules were not confusing enough, the CDC and MDH has now adjusted and changed them. First and foremost, I want to make it very clear that if you have been exposed to COVID-19 it can (and in many scenarios has) take as much as 14 days for your COVID-19 symptoms to start. Therefore, the SAFEST option will always be to quarantine yourself away from others for 14 days when you have been exposed to COVID-19. The CDC and MDH are very clear that the main reason they are making these changes only to make it so that people will more likely follow the quarantine dates to the end.

Please also note that quarantine days for those have already tested positive and recovered from COVID-19 do not apply. After someone tests positive for COVID-19 and does their initial isolation, they do not need to quarantine for the three months following. THOUGH- if you have tested positive for COVID-19, you STILL need to stay away from others if you feel ill or have symptoms.

Keeping the above in mind, the new quarantine is ten days after a known COVID-19 exposure. You can shorten the quarantine to NO SHORTER THAN seven days, if after a FULL five days following your exposure you get a **NON-RAPID** (PCR) COVID-19 test, and its result is negative.

You are only allowed to do these shortened quarantine days if you follow these rules:

1. You cannot shorten quarantine if you live in the same home or facility (long-term care, dormitories etc.) as someone who has a current diagnosis of COVID-19 or work in a healthcare facility.
2. You agree to carefully watch for symptoms AND ISOLATE yourself immediately if you have **ANY** illness symptoms until 14 days following your COVID-19 exposure.
3. Make sure you are wearing a mask, washing your hands, avoiding crowds, wiping-down surfaces that you have contact with, and staying six feet away from others until 14 days following exposure.
4. Some places of employment may continue to require the 14-day quarantine regardless because of the risk of those they serve. At this time, the Wrens Club/State Mandated Daycare will continue to require the 14-day quarantine to provide the safest environment possible for the tier one employees that they serve.

* *Helpful tip: Your day of exposure is # zero when counting days**

Please note that the definition of close contact to COVID-19 has also changed:

1. Within 6 feet of someone who is contagious with COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more.
2. You provided care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19.
3. You had direct physical contact with a person with COVID-19 (such as hugged, kissed, or touched).
4. You shared eating or drinking utensils with a person who tests positive for COVID-19.
5. A person who tests positive for COVID-19 has sneezed, coughed, or somehow got respiratory droplets on you.

For more information:

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/quarguide.pdf>

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/news/pressrel/2020/covid120720.html>

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/MNMDH/bulletins/2b002eb>

Please remember to contact COVID@isd100.org if you have had a COVID exposure, have tested positive for COVID-19 or have COVID-19 related questions.