



# COVID-19 Guidance for ISOLATION AND EXPOSURE

## CASES: What to do if you are a COVID-19 Case in 4 steps

### 1. Stay home for at least 5 days (Isolation)

- The day your symptoms start is day zero. If you do not have symptoms, the day you tested positive is day zero.
- For days 1- 5, stay home and isolate from others in your home.
- Stay in a separate area of your home, away from family members (including using a separate bedroom and bathroom). If you must be around other family members, wear a mask.
- Try to [improve ventilation](#) in your home (open windows, etc.).
- If you are an older adult or a person at higher risk for severe disease, talk to your doctor right away about if [COVID-19 treatment](#) options are right for you and watch for [emergency symptoms](#).
- You may end isolation after day 5 (on day 6) if:
  - You are fever-free for 24 hours (without using fever-reducing medications), **and**
  - Your symptoms are improving
- After day 5, if you still have fever or your symptoms have not improved, continue to isolate and stay away from others until they improve.
- Some people may need to stay home longer than 5 days:
  - People who have moderate illness (experience shortness of breath or difficulty breathing) should stay home for 10 days as they may be more likely to be infectious longer than people with mild illness.
  - People who are immunocompromised should stay home for 10 days as they may be more likely to be infectious longer than people who are not immunocompromised.
  - People who have severe illness and require hospital care should talk to their doctor or hospital team about when they can discontinue isolation and return to normal activities as they may be infectious longer than people with mild illness.

### 2. Wear a mask for a full 10 days

- Wear a well-fitting mask through day 10 when around others in your home or in public.
- You may remove your mask sooner than day 10, if:
  - You obtain 2 [negative](#) antigen tests.
  - The first test must be taken on day 6 or later.
  - The second test must be taken 48 hours after the first test. For example, test on days 6 and 8, or days 7 and 9.
  - Note: If your antigen test results are positive, you may still be infectious. You should continue wearing a mask and wait at least 48 hours before taking another test. Continue taking antigen tests until you have two negative tests 48 hours apart. This may mean you need to continue wearing a mask and testing beyond day 10.

### 3. Notify others that you were around

- Please reach out to anyone you may have been around beginning 48 hours prior to symptom onset (or if asymptomatic, 48 hours prior to the positive test).
- An exposure would be defined as 6 feet or less for 15 minutes or more (cumulative in a 24-hour period) when one or both individuals were not wearing a mask

### 4. Report your positive test to the Health District

- Click [HERE](#) to report a positive test.  
<https://forms.delawarehealth.org/Forms/COVID19CaseInterview>

For additional guidance on COVID-19 illness, visit:

[Isolation and Precautions for People with COVID-19 | CDC](#)  
[If You Are Sick or Caring for Someone | CDC](#)

## **EXPOSURES: What to do if you were exposed to a COVID-19 Case in 4 steps**

- 1. Wear a well-fitting mask for 10 days from your last exposure whether or not you are vaccinated or had COVID-19 in the past.**
- 2. Wear a mask any time you are around others or inside your home.**
  - Day zero is the day of your last exposure to someone with COVID-19.\*
  - Do not go places where you are unable to wear a mask, including travel and public transportation settings.
- 3. Monitor for symptoms ([Symptoms of COVID-19 | CDC](#)).** If you develop symptoms, isolate immediately.
- 4. Get tested at least 5 full days after your last exposure (day 6 or later). Test even if you don't develop symptoms.** [COVID-19 Testing: What You Need to Know | CDC](#)
  - If you test negative, continue taking precautions including wearing a mask through day 10. You can still develop COVID-19 up to 10 days after you have been exposed.
  - If you test positive, isolate immediately.
  - If you already had COVID-19 in the past 90 days, [see specific testing recommendations](#).

\*Date of last exposure is day zero for counting the days. If the contact lives in the home of a COVID-19 case, this can result in up to 20 days of public health restrictions for the contact.

For additional guidance on COVID-19 exposure:

[Understanding Exposure Risks | CDC](#)  
[What to Do If You Were Exposed to COVID-19 | CDC](#)