

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**A Negative COVID-19 Test Result Does Not Dismiss The 14-Day Quarantine Requirement**

What is a close contact?

- A close contact is anyone who has known exposure defined as being within 6 feet of a COVID-19 infected person for a cumulative 15 minutes or more within 24 hours. For example, a close contact might be within 6 feet of a COVID-19 positive person for 5 minutes each at 8 a.m., noon and 5 p.m.
- A person who is a close contact to a confirmed or probable COVID-19 case must complete at least a 14-day quarantine period even if a face covering or mask was worn and regardless of whether the close contact is symptomatic or asymptomatic.
- Persons with known exposure who are determined to meet the close contact definition cannot leave quarantine, regardless of whether they test negative for COVID-19. This means that a negative result will not allow them to return to work, school or participate in sports or other activities. This is because after exposure, a close contact can become infected anywhere from 2 to 14 days later.
- Close contacts should wait 5 to 6 days after exposure before getting tested unless he or she develops symptoms sooner.

When can a positive COVID-19 patient return to work or school?

- If tested for COVID-19, persons must isolate at home while awaiting test results.
- If someone receives a positive test result, they must stay home for a minimum of 10 days and until after symptoms improve and the individual is fever free for 24 hours without medication.
- Positive cases must isolate from others at home to reduce the risk of spread. Otherwise, household members must quarantine until 14 days after the positive person is released from isolation.
- A negative COVID-19 test result should not be required for employees or students to return to work or school. Test results can remain positive long after someone is no longer infectious. Instead, symptom or time-based methods are recommended. However, this does not mean someone with COVID-19 can return to work or school before the infection is resolved.
- Positive cases that have recovered do not need to be quarantined again or be re-tested for at least 90 days unless they develop new symptoms consistent with COVID-19 infection.

We will continue to provide updates as changes occur. Please follow our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/MarshallCountyHD/> or go to the Indiana State Department of Health's website at [www.isdh.in.gov/coronavirus](http://www.isdh.in.gov/coronavirus) for up-to-date information on COVID-19.

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