



HEALTH ALERT

Date: July 24, 2020

To: Healthcare Providers

From: David Ghilarducci, MD, FACEP, Interim Health Officer

Subject: CDC Updated COVID-19 Isolation Discontinuance Criteria

The purpose of this alert is to provide the medical and health care community with updated and unified COVID-19 isolation discontinuance (clearance) criteria. San Benito County Public Health Services is the local health jurisdiction authority and lead health care agency responsible for containment, mitigation, isolation and quarantine of the COVID-19 disease outbreak.

Public Health staff investigates all reported laboratory confirmed positive COVID-19 cases. Specially trained staff conduct associated patient assessments, contact tracing, initiate isolation of persons that test positive, quarantine their contacts, and determine when to discontinue isolation and quarantine for each reported case based on CDC evidence-based criteria. Public Health staff also provides patients with work clearance documentation if required by their employers.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has recently updated criteria for discontinuance of isolation for persons with COVID-19. Accumulating evidence supports ending isolation and precautions for persons with COVID-19 using a symptom-based strategy. *A test-based strategy is no longer recommended to determine when to discontinue isolation and precautions, except for rare situations such as in severely immunocompromised patients. Test-based strategy can result in prolonged isolation of patients who continue to shed detectable SARS-CoV-2 RNA but are no longer infectious as well as unnecessary use of laboratory testing resources.*

The updated CDC criteria that San Benito County Public Health Services follows to clear COVID-19 patients from isolation is as follows:

Symptom-based strategy

Persons with mild to moderate COVID-19 symptoms who are not severely immunocompromised will be discontinued from isolation when:

- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared* AND
- At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without use of antipyretics AND
- Symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved

**Note: for Persons who are asymptomatic and not severely immunocompromised use at least 10 days since date of their first positive COVID-19 viral diagnostic test.*

Persons with severe to critical COVID-19 symptoms or who are severely immunocompromised will be discontinued from isolation when:

- At least 20 days have passed since symptoms first appeared* AND
- At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without use of antipyretics AND
- Symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved

**Note: for Persons who are asymptomatic and severely immunocompromised use at least 20 days since date of their first positive COVID-19 viral diagnostic test*

Test-based strategy if must be considered (e.g., severely immunocompromised in consultation with infectious disease expert)

Persons with COVID-19 symptoms will be discontinued from isolation when:

- Resolution of fever without use of antipyretics AND
- Symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved AND
- Negative results from at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected \geq 24 hours apart tested using a molecular viral assay to detect SARS-CoV-2 RNA

Persons who are asymptomatic will be discontinued from isolation when:

- Negative results from at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected \geq 24 hours apart tested using a molecular viral assay to detect SARS-CoV-2 RNA

For additional information please see links below for CDC published guidance:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-hospitalized-patients.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/duration-isolation.html>

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