

# Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)



## Discontinuation of Isolation for People who have Tested Positive

*If you have been tested and the laboratory results show that you are positive for COVID-19, whether or not you have symptoms, you must remain in isolation until you are no longer infectious.*

During the course of the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States, several different indicators have been used to determine when a person is no longer considered infectious after testing positive for COVID-19. As of April 27, 2020, the CDC guidance for clearance from isolation is

**FOR PEOPLE WHO TESTED POSITIVE AND HAD SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19:** Remain in isolation until:

- At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed *since recovery* defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications
- **and** improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath);
- **and**, at least 7 days have passed *since symptoms first appeared*
- This guidance could be different for those going to a long-term care facility

**FOR PEOPLE WHO TESTED POSITIVE AND HAD NO SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19:** Remain in isolation until:

- 7 days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test and have had no subsequent illness provided they remain asymptomatic.
- For an additional 3 days following discontinuation of isolation, these persons should continue to limit contact (stay 6 feet away from others) and limit potential of dispersal of respiratory secretions by wearing a covering for their nose and mouth whenever they are in settings where other persons are present.

### RETESTING

- While there are no indicators that guarantee 100% safety, the above indicators are considered the best way to know when a person is no longer infectious.
- Retesting is often not reliable as some people will continue to test positive for weeks after they are able to transmit the virus to others. If someone develops new symptoms 4-6 weeks after a positive diagnosis, the decision to retest can be made on a case by case basis.
- Retesting everyone is not an optimal use of our limited testing supplies and does not accurately indicate if a person is still shedding the virus. The Kent County Health Department chooses to follow the CDC guidelines regarding when a person can discontinue isolation. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-homepatients.html>