



2390 W Station St, Kankakee, Illinois 60901
Phone: (815) 802-9400 | Fax: (815) 802-9391
www.kankakeehealth.org

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Contact: Lindsay Wilson 815-802-9442

For Immediate Release

Subject: COVID-19 Important Guidance

SHARP INCREASES IN THE COVID-19 CASES IN KANKAKEE COUNTY IS A REMINDER TO FOLLOW GUIDELINES DURING THE PANDEMIC.

The Kankakee County Health Department (KCHD) reminds the public that the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact the county and safety guidelines are still necessary and should be taken seriously. The relaxing of social distancing, mask wearing, and attendance at large gatherings has contributed to the sharp increase in cases not only in Kankakee County, but also statewide. KCHD wants to remind the public of a few key points:

- **Isolation** is required when an individual is sick and/or tested positive for COVID-19. This means separating individuals who are ill/test positive for COVID-19 from others to keep the disease from spreading, including other members of the same household. A person must isolate for a **MINIMUM** of 10 days after symptom onset, or from the date your test was performed if you have no symptoms and can be released when criteria is met and are cleared by KCHD.
- **Quarantine** is required when an individual had close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19. This keeps the individual away from others so if they develop symptoms of the disease, they have not been unknowingly spreading it. *Close contact is defined as within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes which includes one encounter or an accumulation of encounters throughout the day.*
- **If you have been instructed to quarantine by KCHD or your provider, you must complete the entire duration of the quarantine even if you are asymptomatic and/or have a negative COVID test. You cannot test your way out of quarantine.** The COVID-19 incubation period, or the time from exposure to the development of symptoms, is 2-14 days. When an individual is exposed to COVID-19, but tests negative, they may not have had enough of the virus in their system for the test to pick it up. An individual can spread the virus 2 days prior to symptom onset. This means the individual can unknowingly be spreading the virus before symptoms occur. Completing the entire duration of quarantine ensures the individual is not exposing others, including their loved ones, to the virus without knowing.
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>
- **Cooperation with the KCHD Contact Tracing Team is a critical tool to slow the spread of COVID-19. Information shared with KCHD Contact Tracers is protected.** You will not get in trouble by sharing information with contact tracers. Information is kept confidential, but we need to know who you were in contact with so we can provide them with instructions to quarantine. This protects other people who they may have encountered.

- **Failure to follow quarantine and isolation instruction can lead to legal action taken against you which can include a Class A misdemeanor per Title 77 Part 690: Control of Communicable Diseases Code.**
 - <https://www.ilga.gov/commission/jcar/admincode/077/07700690sections.html>
- **Avoid large gatherings whether they are indoor or outdoor including sporting events, fundraisers, group meetings, birthday parties, weddings, etc.** As restrictions on group events have relaxed, we are beginning to see a sharp increase in outbreaks related to events such as sporting events and practices, social events, and fundraising events. These gatherings greatly increase the risk of exposure to and spreading of COVID-19. Per phase 4 guidelines, any event should be limited to 50 guests or 50% of overall room capacity, and social distancing must be able to be maintained. This can fluctuate if the state or region move to different phases.
 - <https://dceocovid19resources.com/restore-illinois/restore-illinois-phase-4/meetings-and-social-events/>

The following are safety guidelines everyone in the community can follow:

- Wear a mask when in public, around individuals outside of your household, and when social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Follow social distancing guidelines by maintaining 6 feet of distance between yourself and others.
- Do not attend or participate in large gatherings.
- Wash your hands often and practice proper hand hygiene.
- Disinfect commonly touched surfaces often.
- [Get tested if you are sick.](#)

KCHD wants to protect the people you love because we care about the community. Taking safety guidelines seriously and cooperating with KCHD contact tracers are necessary steps to protect Kankakee County and reduce the spread of COVID-19.

For more information on COVID-19, visit the KCHD website at kankakeehealth.org or on social media:

- Facebook: Kankakee County Health Department or @kankakeehealth
- Twitter: @kankakeehealth
- Instagram: @kankakeehealthdept

The COVID-19 pandemic is a public health issue, not a political one. Do your part to keep yourself, your loved ones, and your community safe.

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RELEASING COVID-19 CASES AND CONTACTS FROM ISOLATION AND QUARANTINE

7/20/2020



CASES

Must be isolated for a **minimum** of 10 days* after symptom onset (or specimen collection date if asymptomatic) and can be released when the following criteria are met:

- Case is afebrile (without fever-reducing medication) for at least 24 hours **and** with improvement of COVID-19 symptoms

Time-based Strategy for Release from Isolation



OR

- Case has 2 negative COVID-19 PCR tests in a row, with testing done at least 24 hours apart

A test-based strategy is no longer recommended in the majority of cases. Consult with infectious disease physician.

*A limited number of persons with **severe illness** or who are **severely immunosuppressed** may produce replication-competent virus beyond 10 days; this may warrant extending duration of isolation and precautions for **up to 20 days after symptom onset or first positive test (if no symptoms)**. Consult with the infectious disease physician.

For hospitalized cases and discontinuing transmission-based precautions, see:

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

CLOSE CONTACTS¹

- **Must** be quarantined for 14 days after the last/most recent contact with the case when the case was infectious.
- If a close contact develops symptoms, they should follow isolation rules for cases.

Contact Scenario	Quarantine Period
• Has close contact with someone who has COVID-19 and will not have further close contact	• 14 days from the date of last close contact
• Has close contact with someone who has COVID-19 and lives with the case but can avoid further close contact	• 14 days from when the person with COVID-19 began home isolation away from other members of the household
• Is under quarantine and had additional close contact with someone else who has COVID-19	• Restart quarantine from the last day close contact occurred with anyone who has COVID-19. Any time a new household member gets sick with COVID-19 and close contact occurs, quarantine will need to be restarted.
• Lives with someone who has COVID-19 and cannot avoid continued close contact (e.g., shared kitchen/bathroom)	• Quarantine for 14 days after the person who has COVID-19 meets the <u>criteria to end home isolation</u> (see Cases information).

¹ For COVID-19, a **close contact** is defined as any individual who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to positive specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.

Guidance for Healthcare Worker Contacts:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/return-to-work.html>

Guidance for Critical Workers in Essential Infrastructure:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/critical-workers/implementing-safety-practices.html>

References

- Isolation: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/duration-isolation.html>
- Quarantine: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

Who should I call about COVID-19?

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I want to know more about COVID-19, who should I call?

- For general questions about COVID_19, you can call the IDPH COVID-19 Hotline at 1-800-889-3931 or email DPH.SICK@illinois.gov. Please note that the Hotline does not make decisions about who should be tested for COVID-19



I am not feeling well and have respiratory symptoms, what should I do?

- Please stay home for at least 7 days after you first became ill , or 72 hours after your fever has resolved and symptoms are improving, **whichever is longer.**

You should consult with your doctor if you have:

- Fever, cough, trouble breathing, or other flu-like symptoms that are not better or are worsening after 24-48 hours.
- Mild symptoms and are pregnant or immunosuppressed or are an older adult have chronic health conditions

Please don't call the health department about getting testing

- Your health care provider will determine if you should be tested , and call the health department if needed
- Health departments do not collect specimens for COVID-19



I think I need immediate medical attention, who should I call?

- If you need immediate medical attention, and you think you may have COVID-19, please call ahead to your health care provider before going in for care. This will allow them to take the right steps to protect themselves and other patients
- If you think you are having a medical emergency, call 911; if you have been exposed to COVID-19, notify dispatch personnel so emergency medical services personnel

Keeping the workplace safe

Encourage your employees to...

Practice good hygiene



- Stop handshaking – use other noncontact methods of greeting
- Clean hands at the door and schedule regular hand washing reminders by email
- Create habits and reminders to avoid touching their faces and cover coughs and sneezes
- Disinfect surfaces like doorknobs, tables, desks, and handrails regularly
- Increase ventilation by opening windows or adjusting air conditioning

Be careful with meetings and travel



- Use videoconferencing for meetings when possible
- When not possible, hold meetings in open, well-ventilated spaces
- Consider adjusting or postponing large meetings or gatherings
- Assess the risks of business travel

Handle food carefully



- Limit food sharing
- Strengthen health screening for cafeteria staff and their close contacts
- Ensure cafeteria staff and their close contacts practice strict hygiene

Stay home if...



- They are feeling sick
- They have a sick family member in their home

What every American and community can do now to decrease the spread of the coronavirus