



Department of Public Health

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District 3
Cassandra Hernandez

District 4
Joe Molinar

District 5
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Claudia L. Rodriguez

District 7
Henry Rivera

District 8
Cissy Lizarraga

CITY MANAGER
Tommy Gonzalez

ISOLATION AND QUARANTINE GUIDELINES FOR INDIVIDUALS

El Paso, Texas

(UPDATED 01/18/2021)

The City of El Paso Department of Public Health (DPH) in alignment with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) isolation and quarantine recommendations, is updating the Isolation and Quarantine guidelines for the City and County of El Paso, Texas. The DPH has adopted and is recommending the symptom-based method for those symptomatic individuals during their infection or the time-based method for those individuals who tested positive without symptoms. **The test-based method is no longer recommended.**

ISOLATION

Symptom-based method (no severe illness or severe immunocompromise)

Maintain isolation until:

- At least 10 days have passed *since symptoms first appeared* ; **AND**
- At least 1 day (24 hours) have passed **WITHOUT** fever and without the use of fever-reducing medications; **AND**
- Improvement in symptoms

Symptom-based method (severe illness or severe immunocompromise)

Maintain isolation until:

- At least 20 days have passed *since symptoms first appeared*. **AND**
- At least 1 day (24 hours) have passed **WITHOUT** fever and without the use of fever-reducing medications; **AND**
- Improvement in symptoms

Time-based method (tested positive without symptoms)

Maintain isolation until:

- At least 10 days have passed since the date of their most recent positive COVID-19 diagnostic test **AND**
- Continue without having any symptoms (assuming they have not subsequently developed symptoms since their positive test.)

Angela Mora – Health Director

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- If a case has a **severe immunocompromising condition** without symptoms, at least **20 days** should have passed *since the date of first positive specimen collected*.

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NOTE: If they develop symptoms, then the symptom-based strategy should be used based on the date of symptom onset.

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QUARANTINE

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The purpose of quarantine is to physically separate an individual exposed to COVID-19 from others that are currently healthy, therefore avoiding further spread of the virus among susceptible individuals.

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DPH is updating its current recommendations for quarantine time in the city and county of El Paso, Texas and is adopting the following alternative option to a 14-day quarantine:

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Quarantine can end **AFTER Day 10** of initial exposure without testing only if the following criteria are also met:

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- **NO** symptoms consistent with COVID-19 infection, have been reported during daily monitoring for the duration of the quarantine period up to the time at which quarantine is discontinued (10 days).
- Daily symptom monitoring continues through quarantine Day 14; and,
- Persons are counseled regarding the need to strictly adhere to all recommended preventative measures.

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If a quarantined individual develops symptoms and is diagnosed with COVID-19, other individuals in the same household will require evaluation as contacts and will follow the established symptom-based or time-based strategy to release from isolation.

Testing for the purpose of evaluation for infection on exposed or symptomatic individuals must be prioritized. Persons can opt to continue quarantine for 14 days without testing per previous recommendations. This option maximally reduces risk of transmission of the virus.

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The risk of secondary transmission is elevated when housing is shared, such is the case of congregate settings (i.e. family households, prisons, students, or military recruits), and every effort should be made to physically separate the quarantined individual from others. If possible, quarantined individuals should reside alone in a separate closed room or closed area and have exclusive use of their own bathroom.

In the event that separation of quarantined individuals is not feasible, those individuals who are quarantined together should take steps to prevent spread of infection within the household. Mitigating strategies to prevent the spread of infection include correct and consistent use of masks or face coverings, appropriate distancing, hand and cough hygiene, environmental cleaning and disinfection, ensuring adequate ventilation, and self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19 illness.

EXCEPTIONS TO QUARANTINE after High-risk Exposure:

- Individuals who previously have been infected with COVID-19 within the last 90 days are not required to quarantine and should monitor for symptoms after high-risk exposure.

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