

December 4, 2020

CATEGORY: News Release
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REGARDING: New Quarantine Guidelines

The Washington State Department of Health announced adoption of the new [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) guidelines to reduce quarantine](#) for people who have been exposed to COVID-19. Northeast Tri County Health District (NETCHD) will likewise follow these new quarantine guidelines effective immediately.

The previous guidance required a quarantine period of 14 days. The new guidelines allow for a shortened quarantine period as noted below:

- **If a person who is in quarantine has no symptoms**, quarantine can end after day 10.
- **If a person who is in quarantine receives a negative COVID-19 test and has no symptoms**, quarantine can end after day 7. Get tested within 48 hours before ending quarantine.

There is a small chance that people who choose to shorten their quarantine period may transmit the infection to others post-quarantine. Therefore, it is critical that the person who has been in quarantine continues to monitor their symptoms and wear a mask through day 14. If they develop symptoms, they should isolate themselves to avoid infecting others and get tested. In higher risk settings, businesses and organizations may find it prudent to continue to use the full 14-day quarantine period as a precautionary practice.

Quarantine is used to reduce the risk that infected people might unknowingly transmit infection to others. It also ensures that people who become symptomatic during quarantine can be rapidly be tested.

Both Washington state officials and the CDC recognize that a 14-day quarantine can impose personal burdens that may affect physical and mental health as well as cause economic hardship. This change in guidelines is meant to help reduce that burden, while continuing to keep our community safe.

These recommendations are based on the best information available in November 2020 and reflect the realities of an evolving pandemic. The Washington State Department of Health and CDC will continue to closely monitor the evolving science for information that would warrant reconsideration of these recommendations.

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