



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**This is an official  
MS Health Alert Network (HAN) Alert**

**MESSAGE ID:** MSHAN-20201208-00480-ALT (Health Alert)

**RECIPIENTS:** All Physicians, Hospitals, ERs, ICPs, NPs, and  
Healthcare Providers – Statewide

**Tuesday, December 8, 2020**

**SUBJECT:** Options for Reduced Quarantine Period for Contacts to  
SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) Infected Persons

Dear Colleagues,

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has provided options to shorten the 14-day quarantine period after exposure to a COVID-19 infected individual based on symptom and/or testing strategies. In both alternatives the post quarantine transmission risk is 12% or less. See [Options to Reduce Quarantine for Contacts of Persons with SARS-CoV-2 Infection Using Symptom Monitoring and Diagnostic Testing | CDC](#) for full guidance.

**The Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) continues to strongly encourage a 14-day quarantine period for individuals who are exposed to a person infected with SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19), especially household contacts and those in congregate settings.** With an understanding of the need to provide alternatives to shorten the quarantine period under certain circumstances, MSDH is modifying the current quarantine recommendations to include the following alternatives to a 14-day quarantine period.

**Acceptable options for reduced quarantine period:**

- Quarantine can end after Day 10 without testing and if no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring, **OR**,
- *If testing is available*, then quarantine can end after Day 7 if an **RT-PCR** diagnostic specimen is negative and if no symptoms were reported during daily monitoring. The specimen may be collected and tested within 48 hours before the time of planned quarantine discontinuation, but quarantine cannot be discontinued earlier than after Day 7.

**Persons can discontinue quarantine at these time points only if the following criteria are also met:**

- No symptoms of COVID-19 have been identified during the entirety of quarantine up to the time at which quarantine is discontinued.
- Daily symptom monitoring continues through quarantine Day 14.



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- Individuals continue to adhere strictly to mask use and physical distancing through quarantine Day 14.
- They should be advised that if any symptoms develop, they should immediately self-isolate and receive testing for COVID-19.
- **A negative test collected prior to 5-7 days should not be used to determine modification of quarantine.**

Essential employees may be allowed to work while under quarantine as previously outlined, but should adhere to the following for a **full 14-day quarantine period**:

- Remain asymptomatic.
- Daily monitoring of temperature and symptoms.
- Always wear a mask while at work.
- Essential employees who continue to work should self-quarantine at home at all other times during their quarantine period based on the above options.

MSDH is in the process of updating all guidance to conform with the modifications to the quarantine period. However, in all MSDH guidance where the 14-day quarantine is outlined, the above 7- and 10-day quarantine options can be substituted if all requirements are met (e.g., Schools, Colleges and Universities, Long-term care facilities, Correctional facilities, etc.)

Regards,

Paul Byers, MD  
State Epidemiologist



***Alerting Message Specification Settings***

**Originating Agency:** Mississippi State Department of Health  
**Alerting Program:** MS Health Alert Network (MS HAN)  
**Message Identifier:** MSHAN-20201208-00480-ALT  
**Program (HAN) Type:** Health Alert  
**Status (Type):** Actual ()  
**Message Type:** Alert  
**Reference:** MSHAN-00480  
**Severity:** Unknown  
**Acknowledgement:** No  
**Sensitive:** Not Sensitive  
**Message Expiration:** Undetermined  
**Urgency:** Undetermined  
**Delivery Time:** 600 minutes

**Definition of Alerting Vocabulary and Message Specification Settings**

**Originating Agency:** A unique identifier for the agency originating the alert.

**Alerting Program:** The program sending the alert or engaging in alerts and communications using PHIN Communication and Alerting (PCA) as a vehicle for their delivery.

**Message Identifier:** A unique alert identifier that is generated upon alert activation (MSHAN-yyymmdd-hhmm-TTT (**ALT=Health Alert**, **ADV=Health Advisory**, **UPD=Health Update**, **MSG/INFO=Message/Info Service**)).

**Program (HAN) Type:** Categories of Health Alert Messages.

**Health Alert:** Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

**Health Advisory:** Provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

**Health Update:** Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

**Health Info Service:** Provides Message / Notification of general public health information; unlikely to require immediate action.

**Status (Type):**

Actual: Communication or alert refers to a live event  
Exercise: Designated recipients must respond to the communication or alert  
Test: Communication or alert is related to a technical, system test and should be disregarded



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**Message Type:**

Alert: Indicates an original Alert  
Update: Indicates prior alert has been Updated and/or superseded  
Cancel: Indicates prior alert has been cancelled  
Error: Indicates prior alert has been retracted

**Reference:** For a communication or alert with a Message Type of “Update” or “Cancel”, this attribute contains the unique Message Identifier of the original communication or alert being updated or cancelled. “n/a” = Not Applicable.

**Severity:**

Extreme: Extraordinary threat to life or property  
Severe: Significant threat to life or property  
Moderate: Possible threat to life or property  
Minor: Minimal threat to life or property  
Unknown: Unknown threat to life or property

**Acknowledgement:** Indicates whether an acknowledgement on the part of the recipient is required to confirm that the alert was received, and the timeframe in which a response is required (Yes or No).

**Sensitive:**

Sensitive: Indicates the alert contains sensitive content  
Not Sensitive: Indicates non-sensitive content

**Message Expiration:** Undetermined.

**Urgency:** Undetermined. Responsive action should be taken immediately.

**Delivery Time:** Indicates the timeframe for delivery of the alert (15, 60, 1440, 4320 minutes (.25, 1, 24, 72 hours)).