

Caring for yourself and others during COVID-19:
Testing, Isolation and Quarantine



Last updated
February 5, 2021

Table of Contents

Quick guide: How long to stay home.....	2
Introduction.....	6
What is COVID-19?.....	8
Should I get tested?.....	11
If I have COVID-19, have symptoms, or I was exposed, how do I protect myself, my family, my household, and my community?	13
What if I get a positive COVID-19 test?.....	18
What if I get a negative COVID-19 test?.....	20
What should I do if I have been exposed to COVID-19?.....	22
What can I do to prevent the spread of COVID-19 when my isolation or quarantine is over?.....	24
Resources.....	26
Letter to San Francisco Employers from the SF Department of Public Health.....	29

Quick guide: How long to stay home

Did you have Close Contact with someone who had COVID-19?
(See [page 10](#) for a definition of Close Contact.)

NO

Do you have any symptoms?
(See [page 8](#) for a list of symptoms.)

NO

Continue on [page 3](#).

YES

Continue on [this page](#).

YES

Do you have any symptoms?
(See [page 8](#) for a list of symptoms.)

NO

Continue on [page 4](#).

YES

Continue on [page 5](#).

I have symptoms, and I did NOT have Close Contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19.

Stay away from other people. To learn about isolation, see [page 13](#).
Get tested immediately.

My COVID-19 test result was **NEGATIVE**.

See [page 20](#) for more information.

My COVID-19 test result was **POSITIVE**.

See [page 18](#) for more information.

I didn't get tested.

End isolation when:

- Your symptoms are improving, AND
- You have had no fever for 24 hours.

Consider staying isolated for 10 days after you first felt symptoms. Talk with your doctor if possible.

End isolation when:

- Your symptoms are improving, AND
- You have had no fever for 24 hours, AND
- It has been 10 days since your symptoms started.

For a list of COVID-19 symptoms, see page 8.
For a definition of Close Contact, see page 10.

I do NOT have symptoms, and did NOT have Close Contact with anyone with COVID-19, but I got tested.

My COVID-19 test result was **NEGATIVE**.
See **page 20** for more information.

You do not need to isolate or quarantine.

My COVID-19 test result was **POSITIVE**.
See **page 18** for more information.

Isolate yourself from others, especially vulnerable people.
To learn about isolation, see **page 13**.
For a definition of vulnerable people, see **page 10**.

I never had any symptoms.

End isolation 10 days after you were tested.

I developed symptoms after I was tested.

End isolation when:

- Your symptoms are improving, AND
- You have had no fever for 24 hours, AND
- It has been 10 days since your symptoms started.

For a list of COVID-19 symptoms, see page 8.
For a definition of Close Contact, see page 10.

I had Close Contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19, and I do NOT have any symptoms.

Stay away from other people. To learn about quarantine, see [page 13](#) and [page 22](#).

Get tested 6 days or more after your last Close Contact.

My COVID-19 test result was **NEGATIVE**.
See [page 20](#) for more information.

You **must** still quarantine. There is still a chance you could have COVID-19. People can test negative early in their infection.

End quarantine after a minimum of 10 days after your last contact. Some people must quarantine for 14 days. See [page 23](#).
Get tested again if you develop symptoms.

My COVID-19 test result was **POSITIVE**.
See [page 18](#) for more information.

I never had any symptoms.

End isolation 10 days after you were tested.

I didn't get tested.

My symptoms started after I was tested.

End isolation when:

- Your symptoms are improving, AND
- You have had no fever for 24 hours, AND
- It has been 10 days since your symptoms started.

For a list of COVID-19 symptoms, see page 8.
For a definition of Close Contact, see page 10.

I had Close Contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19, and I have symptoms.

Stay away from other people. To learn about quarantine and isolation, see **page 13 and page 22**.

Get tested immediately.
If you had a recent negative test, get tested again.

My COVID-19 test result was **NEGATIVE**.
See **page 20** for more information.

End quarantine when:

- Your symptoms are improving, AND
- You have had no fever for 24 hours, AND
- It has been at least 10 days since your last Close Contact.

My COVID-19 test result was **POSITIVE**.
See **page 18** for more information.

End isolation when:

- Your symptoms are improving, AND
- You have had no fever for 24 hours, AND
- It has been 10 days since your symptoms started.

I didn't get tested.

End quarantine when:

- Your symptoms are improving, AND
- You have had no fever for 24 hours, AND
- It has been 10 days since your symptoms started, AND
- It has been at least 10 days since your last Close Contact.

Introduction

This booklet includes information on self-care and how to protect yourself and your family, household, friends, and community during the COVID-19 pandemic. You may want to read it in full, keep a copy of it, and share it with others, to stay prepared.

This booklet tells you about the COVID-19 virus, when and why to get tested, and what to do while you wait for your test result. It will tell you how to isolate or quarantine and for how long. This booklet will help you answer the following questions:

- What is COVID-19, how is it spread, and am I at risk of being infected? **(page 8)**
- Should I get tested for COVID-19? **(page 11)**
- If I have COVID-19, or have symptoms, or I was exposed, how do I protect myself, my family, my household, and my community? This section includes “**What are the rules of isolation and quarantine?**” **(page 13)**
- What if I get a positive COVID-19 test? **(page 18)**
- What if I get a negative COVID-19 test? **(page 20)**
- What should I do if I have been exposed to COVID-19? **(page 22)**
- What can I do to prevent the spread of COVID-19 after my isolation or quarantine is over? **(page 24)**
- What resources are available to me if I have to stay home and can't work? **(page 26)**

What does it mean to isolate or quarantine?

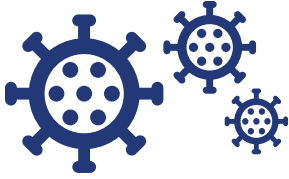
Isolation and quarantine rules are designed to stop the spread of COVID-19, to protect you and your family, and to prevent hospitals from being so overwhelmed that they don't have the resources to provide care to anyone who needs to go to the hospital, whether for COVID-19, a heart attack, or a car accident.

Most COVID-19 infections are caused by people who have no symptoms. It can then spread to people who might die from the virus. Because not everyone who has COVID-19 feels sick, people are asked to stay at home to prevent the spread, even when they do not have symptoms.

Quarantine separates and restricts the movement of people who are exposed to a contagious disease in case they become infected or sick. **Isolation** separates people who have a contagious disease from people who are not yet infected or sick. The rules for both isolating and quarantining are the same and designed to keep the virus from spreading. These rules can be found on **pages 13–17**.

You may want to review **page 2 (“Quick guide: How long to stay home”)**.

What is COVID-19?



COVID-19 is a contagious disease caused by the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS CoV-2). It was first identified in December 2019 and has since spread throughout the world.

How does COVID-19 spread?

COVID-19 is mostly spread through the air in virus-containing droplets from the breath of someone with COVID-19.

- These virus-containing droplets enter the air when a person with COVID-19 breathes, especially when they talk, sing, cough, or sneeze. The virus collects in indoor spaces and can travel more than 6 feet.

What symptoms does COVID-19 cause?

COVID-19 can cause any symptom below that is new or not explained by another reason:

- Fever (100.4°F / 38.0°C or higher), chills or repeated shaking/shivering
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Loss of taste or smell
- Congested or runny nose
- Sore throat
- Headache
- Muscle aches or body aches
- Feeling unusually tired or fatigued
- Diarrhea, nausea or vomiting

If you have symptoms that are not on this list but are concerned you might have COVID-19, contact your healthcare provider.

If you have COVID-19 symptoms AND you have recovered from COVID-19 in the last 3 months, talk to your healthcare provider about what to do next.

■ People get infected when they breathe in virus-containing droplets, or when the virus lands in their eyes, nose or mouth.

People can also get COVID-19 if they get the virus that causes COVID-19 on their hands from touching a contaminated surface (also known as a fomite), and then touch their eyes, nose or mouth. However, this is less common.

What if I do not have any symptoms?

You can have COVID-19 and spread it even if you do not have symptoms.

Most COVID-19 infections are caused by people who have no symptoms.

Each person who is infected can then spread the infection to another group of people and eventually infect someone who may die if they are infected.

For these reasons, if you have been exposed to COVID-19 or you have COVID-19 and you do not have symptoms, **you are still required to isolate and quarantine** to save the lives of those around you and help prevent our hospitals and healthcare systems from becoming overloaded.

Who is most at risk of getting COVID-19?

Anyone can get COVID-19 by spending time with other people who are not part of your household, particularly when indoors or in enclosed spaces (read more at sfcddcp.org/indoorrisk).

This increased risk includes being indoors when eating, getting together socially, using shared or public transportation, or spending time in any indoor building/space with others who are not part of your household.

You are at the **highest risk** of getting COVID-19 by being in **Close Contact** with someone who is infected with the virus. See the definition of Close Contact on [page 10](#).

Those who have received the COVID-19 vaccine are probably less likely to get COVID-19, but it is not guaranteed. The first vaccines that were available are estimated to be about 95% effective in preventing sickness from COVID-19 when someone is infected. However, we do not know how common it is for people who received a vaccine to get COVID-19 and spread it to others.

What does “Close Contact” mean?

You are considered a “Close Contact” if you had any of the following types of contact with someone with COVID-19 (regardless of whether you or the person with COVID-19 were masked) while they were contagious*:

- Lived with or stayed overnight with someone with COVID-19
- Were physically intimate with someone with COVID-19, including only kissing or having sex
- Took care of or received care from someone with COVID-19
- Were within 6 feet of someone with COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more during a 24-hour period, even if that time occurred from sharing only a few minutes at a time
- Had direct contact with the bodily fluids or secretions of someone with COVID-19 (e.g. they coughed or sneezed on you or you shared eating or drinking utensils with them)

* Contagious period: People with COVID-19 are considered contagious starting 48 hours before their symptoms began until **1)** at least 10 days have passed since their symptoms began, **2)** they haven’t had a fever for at least 24 hours and **3)** their symptoms have improved. If the person with COVID-19 never had symptoms, they are considered contagious starting 48 hours before their positive COVID-19 test was collected until 10 days after their test was collected.

Who is most at risk of getting severe disease or dying from COVID-19?

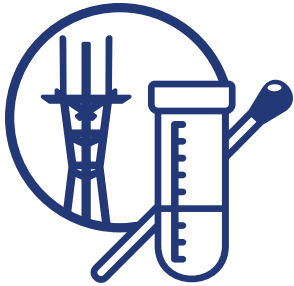
People at higher risk of severe COVID-19 include:

- People who are older, smoke or are very overweight
- Pregnant women
- People with certain medical conditions like diabetes, heart

problems, COPD/emphysema, cancer, weakened immune systems, and sickle cell disease.

See sfcdcp.org/vulnerable for a list of groups who are at higher risk of getting very sick or dying from COVID-19 if they get infected and what these groups (or anyone even if you are not in a high risk group) can do for extra protection.

Should I get tested?



Testing is a very important part of caring for yourself and others and helping to stop the spread of COVID-19.

You **should** get tested if any of the following are true:

(1) You had one or more of the symptoms of COVID-19. See [page 8](#) for a list of symptoms and review [pages 13–17](#) (“**If I have COVID-19, have symptoms, or I was exposed, how do I protect myself, my family, my household, and my community?**”). Your employer is not allowed to let you return to work for at least 10 days unless you get a negative COVID-19 test, your fever is gone for 24 hours without medication to reduce it, and your symptoms have improved — this applies if you do not already have COVID-19 and you are not a “Close Contact” of someone with COVID-19. Some

workers, particularly those who work with vulnerable populations, may have other considerations. Talk to your employer for more information.

(2) You are a “Close Contact” of someone who tested positive for COVID-19. See [page 10](#) for the definition of Close Contact and review [pages 13–17](#) (“**If I have COVID-19, have symptoms, or I was exposed, how do I protect myself, my family, my household, and my community?**”). Ideally, get tested 6 days or more after your last contact with the person with COVID-19 if you don’t have symptoms. If you develop symptoms at any point in the 14 days after you had Close Contact with the person with COVID-19, get tested immediately.

People may also get tested for other reasons (e.g. you are an essential worker with high contact with the public, you have an upcoming dental appointment or medical procedure, you work at a skilled nursing facility or school where periodic testing is required, etc.).

If you have symptoms or are considered a “Close Contact” (#1 or #2 above), **you must isolate or quarantine while you wait for your test results.**

Review the rules for isolation and quarantine on **pages 13–17**. If you have recovered from COVID-19 in the last 3 months, talk to your healthcare provider about what to do next.

If you or your family would like to get tested:

- To get a test, contact your regular healthcare provider or the clinic listed on your health insurance card. Under Health Order C19-15c, health care providers in San Francisco are required to offer you a COVID-19 test if you have symptoms or if you are a “Close Contact” of someone who tested positive.
- If you do not have health insurance or a healthcare provider, or if your

healthcare provider cannot offer you a test within 1–2 days, see [SF.gov/GetTestedSF](https://www.sfgov.gov/GetTestedSF).

- If you live in San Francisco and do not have health insurance, you can call 311 (415-701-2311 from outside SF, 415-701-2323 TTY) for help finding a regular healthcare provider. If you live outside San Francisco, please check with your county health department.

Some categories of workers, like workers in skilled nursing facilities and schools, are tested for COVID-19 on a regular basis, which is called screening. At this time, there is **no recommendation** for people who are not in specially designated worker groups to get regular screening tests. Contact your employer to find out more.

If I have COVID-19, have symptoms, or I was exposed, how do I protect myself, my family, my household, and my community?

This section covers information about self-care and simple, important steps to take as soon as possible to protect your family and those living in your home.

Follow these instructions when you have symptoms of COVID-19 (see [page 8](#) for a list of symptoms), were exposed to COVID-19, or get a positive COVID-19 test result. If you are concerned you may have COVID-19, these are steps to take even before you have a test or test results.

If you have recovered from COVID-19 in the last 3 months, talk to your healthcare provider about what to do next.

What are the rules of isolation and quarantine?

If you have symptoms or are considered a “Close Contact,” you **must** isolate or quarantine while you wait for your test results. How long your isolation or quarantine will last after that depends on your test result and Close Contacts. See [page 18](#) (“**What if I get a positive COVID-19 test?**”) and [page 22](#) (“**What should I do if I have been exposed to COVID-19?**”).

These rules apply if:

- You had one or more symptoms of COVID-19 and you are waiting for your test results, OR
- Someone you had Close Contact with found out that they tested positive for COVID-19, OR
- You tested positive for COVID-19.



Do not leave your home unless you are getting healthcare:

- Do not go to work, school or public areas.
- Do not take public transportation, rideshares or taxis. If you must use shared transit, read more at sfcdcp.org/safertransit.
- Do not allow visitors into your home unless you need their help to take care of yourself.



If you live with other people

It can be scary to think that you might give COVID-19 to your family and other people you live with. You can take some simple and important steps to help keep COVID-19 from spreading in your home, even before you get your test result.

Not everyone can take these steps all the time, especially young children. However, by taking as many steps as you can, as much as you can, you can protect those you love and those living with you.

- **Stay in a separate room** if you can, especially when you are sleeping, eating, and other times when your mask is off.
- **Use a separate bathroom** if you can. If you share a bathroom:
 - Turn on fans that pull air out of the bathroom
 - Open windows
 - Wear a mask that covers your mouth and nose
 - Flush the toilet with the lid closed
 - Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
 - Wipe down anything you touched with a disinfectant
- **Wear a face mask at home. Have other people wear face masks at home too.** The mask should cover the mouth AND nose. For safety, children 0-23 months and anyone else who cannot take off a mask without help should not wear a mask. You do not need to wear a mask when you are in a separate room that no one else enters.
- **Open windows** if it's safe to do so. The virus that causes COVID-19 can build up in the air indoors, so you'll want to bring in as much fresh air as possible. If you live with children, open windows no wider than 4 inches to prevent falls. You can also put a fan in front of an open window to blow indoor air out

of the house. For more information, see sfcdcp.org/COVID-ventilation.

Limit your contact with other people and pets at home, especially older people and others who are more likely to become very ill from COVID-19. For a list of groups who are at higher risk of severe COVID-19, see sfcdcp.org/vulnerable.

Wash or sanitize your hands often.

Avoid preparing food for other people. If you must prepare food for others, wear a mask that covers your mouth and nose while preparing food, and wash your hands with soap beforehand.

Clean and disinfect surfaces that are touched often, such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, light switches, faucets, toilets, phones, TV remotes, keys, keyboards.

Keep your own set of utensils, plates, towels, bedding, or other household items. Do not share them.



Take care of yourself

- Rest and drink plenty of fluids.
- You may take an over-the-counter medicine like acetaminophen

(Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (Motrin® or Advil®) to reduce fever and pain, as long as those medicines are safe for you to take. For children 2 or under, check with your doctor first. Note that medicines do not “cure” COVID-19 and do not stop you from spreading the virus.



You can ask friends or loved ones to help

If people ask how they can help, they can:

- Leave food and drinks at your door.
- Get you medicine to relieve symptoms.
- Help care for children, parents, other dependents, or your pets.

Persons unable to care for themselves don't have to isolate from their caregiver. However, caregivers will need to follow additional quarantine guidelines. See more about caregiver quarantine on [page 23](#). If friends and family come to help, remind them to wear a mask that covers the mouth and nose at all times and wash their hands.

If you cannot meet the requirements for Isolation or Quarantine where you currently live, call 311 to request help with housing, food, or other needs. See more on [page 26](#) (“Resources”).



Answer the phone if you get a call from 916-262-7553

This phone number is from a trained public health worker from the San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) calling because you have COVID-19 or you were exposed to COVID-19. The health worker will ask how you are doing and connect you to food, housing, and other support so you can stay at home safely. Health department staff will also help notify people you were in Close Contact with (within 6 feet for a total of 15 minutes or more) and might have been exposed to COVID-19. DPH health workers do this whenever there is an outbreak of infectious diseases like measles, tuberculosis, and others to protect the community’s health.

Your name will **not** be shared with people you had Close Contact with.

Health workers **will not** ask you for:

- Your immigration status or Social Security number .
- Money.
- Bank account or credit card numbers.

For more information, see covid19.ca.gov/contact-tracing.



When and how to get medical care

Most people with COVID-19 symptoms have mild illness and can recover at home without medical care.

Take care of yourself if you feel ill. Rest and drink plenty of fluids. Over-the-counter medicine like acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (Motrin® or Advil®) can help relieve fever or pain, as long as those medicines are safe for you to take.

How to seek non-emergency medical care:

- Contact your regular health care provider or the clinic listed on your health insurance card.
- If you live in San Francisco and do not have health insurance, you can call 311 (415-701-2311 from outside SF, 415-701-2323 TTY) for help finding a regular health care provider. If you live outside San Francisco, please check with your county health department.
- If possible, call ahead before going to your doctor's office or hospital and tell them whether:
 - You are having symptoms of COVID-19 and waiting for your test results, OR
 - You had Close Contact with someone with COVID-19, OR
 - You tested positive for COVID-19.

Get medical care for worsened or severe symptoms. For example, worrisome signs can include:

- Feeling out of breath, dizzy or light-headed when you're moving around the house, preparing meals, showering or bathing, or doing light housekeeping.
- Dehydration because you are too ill or too tired to eat or drink.

Seek emergency medical care immediately for any of these warning signs:

- Trouble breathing
- Chest pain or pressure that is not going away
- Being more confused than usual
- Trouble waking up or staying awake
- Blue-colored lips or face

Travel and arrival planning:

- Avoid using public transportation, taxis, or rideshares (Lyft, Uber) if you can, so you don't expose other people. If you must use shared transit, see sfcdcp.org/safertransit.
- Do not wait in the waiting room. Wear a mask that covers your mouth and nose at all times if possible.

If you call 911, let them know your situation as well. This allows healthcare personnel to prepare for your arrival and protect others from getting infected.

What if I get a positive COVID-19 test?

First, consult **pages 13–17 (“If I have COVID-19, have symptoms, or I was exposed, how do I protect myself, my family, my household, and my community?”)** and if you have not already done so, take as many of the steps listed in that section as possible. If you have recovered from COVID-19 in the last 3 months, talk to your healthcare provider about what to do next.

It is a San Francisco directive that you stay at home while you are contagious (see Directive of the Health Officer No. 2020-03c at sfdph.org/dph/alerts/files/Directive-2020-03-Isolation.pdf).

You are considered contagious and must isolate at home until **all** of the following are true:



It has been at least 10 days since your symptoms started;
AND



Your fever is gone for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medicines (e.g., acetaminophen/

Tylenol®, ibuprofen/Motrin®, etc.);
AND

Your symptoms have gotten better.*

If you test positive but never had any symptoms, **you are still contagious** and must isolate at home until 10 days have passed since the date your positive test was collected.

Your doctor might ask that you isolate at home longer than 10 days, depending on your health history. Healthcare workers, especially Skilled Nursing Facility workers, may have different rules. Talk to your employer for more information.

Tell your “Close Contacts” that you tested positive

Try to remember who you had Close Contact with during the 48 hours before you first noticed symptoms, or 48 before your test was collected if you never had symptoms, until you

* One of the COVID-19 symptoms that may not improve quickly is loss of taste or smell. You can stop isolating at home even if your sense of taste or smell has not improved as long as all the other requirements above are true.

started isolating from other people (see the definition of Close Contact on [page 10](#)). These individuals must stay home and quarantine for at least **10 days** after they last had Close Contact with you. They can reference [page 22](#) (“**What should I do if I have been exposed to COVID-19?**”).



A public health worker will call you

A trained public health worker from the Department of Public Health (DPH) will reach out to you by phone or text from the number 916-262-7553. They will check to see how you are doing,

make sure you have what you need to isolate at home, and help you identify your “Close Contacts” to prevent the spread of the virus. DPH health workers do this whenever there is an outbreak of infectious diseases like measles, tuberculosis, and others to protect the community’s health.

Your name will **not** be shared with people you had Close Contact with.

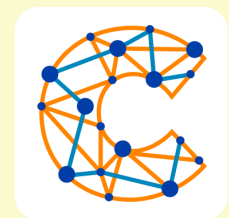
Health workers **will not** ask you for:

- Your immigration status or Social Security number.
- Money.
- Bank account or credit card numbers.

For more information, see covid19.ca.gov/contact-tracing.

What to do if you are already enrolled in CA Notify

CA Notify (canotify.ca.gov) is an app you can add on your smartphone. It uses Bluetooth technology to recognize when you and your phone have been in close proximity to others infected with COVID-19. If you were already enrolled in CA Notify before you get your positive COVID-19 test result, entering your test result helps stop the spread of the virus in our community.



If you are using CA Notify and you test positive, we encourage you to enter the California DPH code texted to you into your app through settings. Your diagnosis will not be shared with others. However, if other people who were in Close Contact with you are also enrolled in the app, they will be told they had an exposure. They will be told the date of the exposure, but not the time, location, or identity.

What if I get a negative COVID-19 test?

A “negative” viral test means you probably do not have COVID-19 infection right now. Unfortunately, the tests are not perfect, and this gets tricky, so read carefully. Call your healthcare provider if you’re not sure what to do.

What you should do depends on whether you had **symptoms** and whether you had **Close Contact** with someone with COVID-19.

■ If you **never had any symptoms** and you are **NOT a “Close Contact”** of someone with COVID-19

- You do not have COVID-19 right now and you do not need to isolate or quarantine.
- This may occur if you were asked to get tested for an upcoming procedure or medical appointment or you are an essential worker who just wanted to see if you have COVID-19.

■ If you **never had symptoms** but you **DID have Close Contact** with someone with COVID-19:

- You **must** self-quarantine at home for a **minimum of**

10 days, or for 14 days if you live or work in a long term care facility (including SNFs or RCFEs), jail, shelter, or dormitory. Quarantining for 14 days is safest.

Read more at sfcdcp.org/quarantineduration and on

page 22 (“What should I do if I have been exposed to COVID-19?”).

- If you develop COVID-19 symptoms during your quarantine, **get a test** for COVID-19. You should get tested even if your symptoms develop early or late in your quarantine. If you have already tested negative and you develop symptoms, **get tested again.**

■ If you **had symptoms** but did **NOT have Close Contact** with someone with COVID-19, you may be able to end isolation once your symptoms are better and you have not had a fever for 24 hours without using any fever-reducing medicine. However, there is still a chance you may actually have COVID-19 and

could spread the virus despite a negative test result because the COVID-19 virus test is not 100% perfect. You may want to:

- Ask your doctor to help you decide when you should stop staying away from others (preferred option), OR
- Stop isolating once your symptoms are better **and** you have not had fever for 24 hours without using any fever-reducing medicine, OR
- Continue to isolate and stay home until it has been at least 10 days since your symptoms started, your symptoms are better, and you have not had a fever for 24 hours without using any fever-reducing medicine—especially if you are concerned about being around people who might get really sick if they got COVID-19. (See **page 10** to learn who is most at risk for severe disease, or visit [sfcddcp.org/vulnerable](https://www.sfcddcp.org/vulnerable).)

What should I do if I have been exposed to COVID-19?

First, consult **pages 13–17** (“**If I have COVID-19, have symptoms, or I was exposed, how do I protect myself, my family, my household, and my community?**”) and if you have not already done so, take as many of the steps listed in that section as possible. If you have recovered from COVID-19 in the last 3 months, talk to your healthcare provider about what to do next.

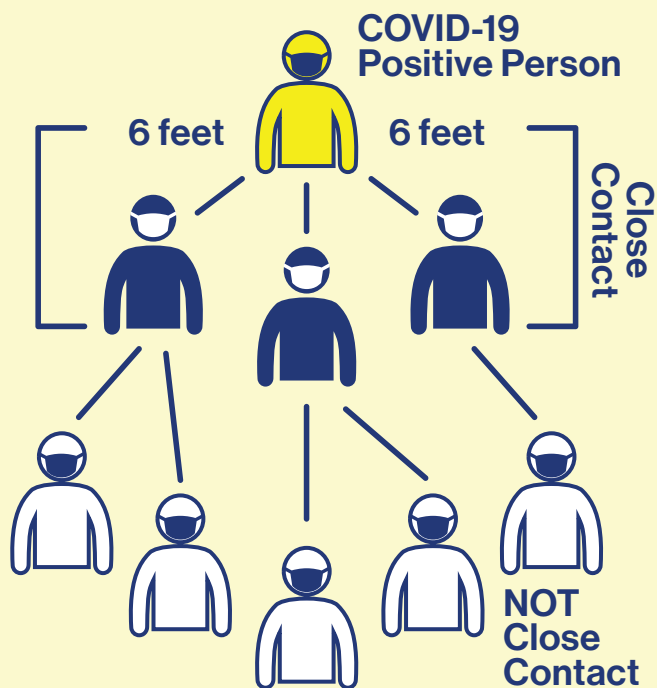
A “Close Contact” exposure to COVID-19 has a specific meaning. See the diagram below and consult **page 10** for a full definition of “Close Contact.”

It is a San Francisco directive that you **must** quarantine at home after Close Contact (see Directive of the Health Officer No. 2020-02c at sfdph.org/dph/alerts/files/Directive-2020-02-Quarantine.pdf). If you are quarantining because you traveled outside the Bay Area and are returning to San Francisco, you should follow these same instructions.

After having Close Contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19:

How do you know if you’re a “Close Contact”?

You’re a “Close Contact” if you’ve been within 6 feet for 15 minutes altogether or more over the course of a day.



- (1)** You **must** self-quarantine at home for a **minimum of 10 days**, or for 14 days if you live or work in a long term care facility (including SNFs or RCFEs), jail, shelter, or dormitory. Quarantining for 14 days is safest. Read more at sfcdcp.org/quarantineduration and on **pages 13–17**.
- (2)** Get a COVID-19 test **on or after day 6 of quarantine**. You should do this even if you do not have any symptoms.
- (3)** If you develop symptoms while in quarantine, **get tested**. If you already tested negative but develop symptoms after the negative test, **get tested again**.
- (4)** If you do not develop any symptoms, you may end quarantine **10–14 days after your last Close Contact** with the confirmed COVID-19 case (see #1 on this list).
 - Even if your test is negative, you must quarantine for the full 10–14 days.
 - If you cannot avoid having Close Contact with the person with COVID-19 while they are sick (for example, you are their caregiver), you must stay in quarantine for 10–14 full days **after** the day that person completed their self-isolation. (This is likely to be at least 20 total days of home quarantine since your “Close Contact” first had symptoms or a positive test).

During times of staffing shortages, which groups do not have to quarantine?

In San Francisco, designated “Essential COVID-19 Response Workers” are healthcare workers, laboratory personnel handling COVID-19 specimens, morgue workers, first responders, law enforcement, sanitation workers, 911 and 311 operators, emergency management personnel, individuals assigned to work as Disaster Service Workers, and individuals who work in long-term care facilities or homeless shelters.

If you are an “Essential COVID-19 Response Worker,” you may be able to quarantine for shorter quarantine periods after Close Contact with a person who tested positive for COVID-19 during times of staffing shortages. This is only if you are not sick and are able to comply with requirements to wear a mask and any other policies specific to your employer. While not at work, try to follow as many of the instructions as feasible on **pages 13–17 (“If I have COVID-19, have symptoms, or I was exposed, how do I protect myself, my family, my household, and my community?”)**.

What can I do to prevent the spread of COVID-19 when my isolation or quarantine is over?

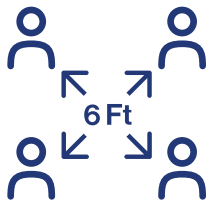
By learning more about COVID-19, isolation and quarantine, and the COVID-19 test, you have taken an important step to care for yourself, your loved ones, and our community. No matter the results of your test, when your quarantine is over, remember that you can do many things to prevent the spread in the days, weeks, and months ahead:



Wear a mask that covers your mouth and nose whenever you are out of the house.



Avoid getting together with people not in your household.



Stay at least 6 feet away from people outside your household.



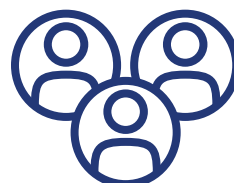
If you must get together with people not in your household, avoid being indoors. Outdoor interactions are much safer. However, you should still stay at least 6 feet away and wear a mask that covers your mouth and nose during outdoor interactions.



Regularly wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.



If you don't have soap or water, you can use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.



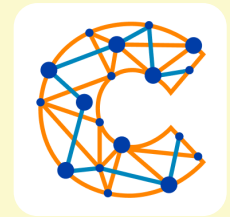
When health orders allow it, keep your social circles small and stable.

Follow the same precautions above even if you or those around you have received a COVID-19 vaccine. Those who have received the COVID-19 vaccine are probably less likely to get COVID-19, but it is not guaranteed. The first vaccines that were available are

estimated to be about 95% effective in preventing sickness from COVID-19 when someone is infected. However, we do not know how common it is for people who received a vaccine to get COVID-19 and spread it to others.

CA Notify – another way for us to stop the spread

You can also consider enrolling in CA Notify. CA Notify (canotify.ca.gov) is an app you can add on your smartphone. It uses Bluetooth technology to recognize when you and your phone have been in close proximity to others infected with COVID-19 to help stop the spread of the virus in our community.



If you are using CA Notify and you test positive, your diagnosis will not be shared with others. However, if other people were in Close Contact with you are also enrolled in the app, they will be told they had an exposure. They will be told the date of the exposure, but not the time, location or identity.

If you are using CA Notify and you were exposed to someone who tested positive and they entered their result into the app, you will be told the date of the exposure, but not the time, location or identity.

CA Notify is available through Apple and Google. See canotify.ca.gov for more information.

Resources



Food help

Call 311 anytime if you're having trouble getting or affording food while isolating or quarantining. Visit [SF.gov/get-food-resources](https://www.sfgov.gov/get-food-resources) for more information.

Sign up for monthly CalFresh benefits at [GetCalFresh.org](https://www.getcalfresh.org) or 415-558-4700.

For older adults and people with disabilities

Call the Department of Disability and Aging Services (DAAS) at 415-355-6700 to get:

- Home-delivered meals
- Emergency food boxes
- Support with online food delivery services
- Grocery drop-off from volunteers



Financial and Work-Related Help

If you have to isolate or quarantine, you can use Paid Sick Leave or State of California unemployment benefits. Apply for unemployment at [edd.ca.gov](https://www.edd.ca.gov). During the pandemic, you do not need to have a letter from your healthcare provider to use Paid Sick Leave.

According to the CDC and SF Department of Public Health recommendations, your employer should NOT request a doctor's letter or a negative test to return to work if you had COVID-19. If they request either of these, you can direct them to www.sfgov.org/health/department-of-public-health/workletter. This letter is also printed at the end of this booklet.

For other local resources for workers impacted by COVID-19, visit [oewd.org/employees-impacted-covid-19](https://www.oewd.org/employees-impacted-covid-19). If you have other concerns related to the impact of isolation and quarantine on your work or finances, visit www.sfgov.org/health/department-of-public-health/workletter.



Housing information

Evictions

If you can't pay your rent during the pandemic, you may be protected from eviction and get more time to pay your rent. However, your rent is not cancelled. You still owe your landlord any missed rent payments.

If you need help paying rent, you can apply for Season of Sharing funds at sf.gov/get-help-pay-housing-or-other-emergencies. This site also provides links to other organizations that can help with housing.

See more information on [SF.gov/eviction-moratorium](https://sf.gov/eviction-moratorium).

Tenant Counseling Organizations

- Bill Sorro Housing Program (BiSHoP) 415-513-5177 or info@bishopsf.org

- Causa Justa :: Just Cause at 415-487-9203
- Chinatown Community Development Center at 415-984-2730
- Housing Rights Committee of San Francisco at 415-703-8634
- South of Market Community Action Network at 760-913-8913 or tenantcounseling@somcan.org (sfadc.org/landingpage/covid-19-counseling/)
- SF Tenants Union at 415-282-6622 or info@sftu.org
- Tenderloin Housing Clinic CEOP at 415-775-7110 ext. 1702 or allyn@thclinic.org

Help for homeowners

Apply for a loan up to \$25,000 for costs like HOA dues and property taxes, at sfmohcd.org/COVID19HELP. You need to make under a certain amount for your household size.



Medical care resources

If you have a medical or psychiatric emergency, call 911. Texting 911 is also available.

If you are uninsured and need medical care, you may call the SF Health Network Call Center at 415-682-1740.

You may also visit [SF.gov/CovidHealthcare](https://www.sf.gov/covidhealthcare) for more information.

Mental health resources

Access to mental health and substance use disorder services

For the 24-hour access line, call 888-246-3333
TDD: 888-484-7200

For general information and appointments, call 415-503-4730

Comprehensive Crisis Services

Offers assistance to people in crisis including assessments and crisis interventions.

415-970-3800
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Urgent care for mental health issues

Westside Crisis
415-355-0311
245 11th Street
Monday to Friday, 8 am to 2 pm

Dore Urgent Care
415-553-3100
52 Dore Street
24 hours, 7 days a week

Mental health services for young adults

415-642-4525
Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5pm

Mental health and substance use services for individuals experiencing homelessness

415-234-3707
Monday to Friday, 10 am to 8 pm

Peer-run mental health talk line

855-845-7415
24 hours a day, 7 days a week



City and County of San
Francisco London N. Breed
Mayor

San Francisco Department of Public Health

Grant Colfax,
MD Director of
Health

Dear San Francisco Employers*:

Thank you for all that you are doing in these unprecedented times to ensure your employees are well and not at risk of spreading COVID-19 to others at the workplace. We truly appreciate all your efforts to modify your businesses and everyday lives to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 and to save lives.

In an effort to support workplace safety and economic recovery we want to remind you that according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), **employees who had COVID-19 are considered no longer contagious and may therefore return to work if:**

- it has been 10 days since their symptoms started AND**
- their symptoms have improved AND**
- it has been at least 24 hours since they have had a fever without the use of fever-reducing medication**

If the employee never had symptoms and tested positive for the COVID-19 virus, they are considered no longer contagious and can return to work 10 days after their positive test.

Both the [CDC](#) and the [San Francisco Department of Public Health \(SFPDH\)](#) confirm that:

Employers should not request a medical note for clearance to return to work or a negative COVID-19 test result from employees who were diagnosed with COVID-19 before allowing employees to return to work.

Requesting employees provide a medical note or proof of negative COVID-19 virus tests after they have been diagnosed creates a backlog on the healthcare system, is unnecessary, delays return to work, and causes strain on testing availability for others who need to be tested. Employees are considered no longer contagious and may return to work when they meet the criteria described above.

Your employee who had COVID-19 may print this letter out to serve the purpose of:

- 1) showing proof that they can return to work as long as they meet the criteria above (detailed further at www.sfdcp.org/rtw), and/ or
- 2) showing proof that employers should not request proof of a negative COVID-19 virus tests to be allowed to return to work. This letter can be found online at www.sfdcp.org/workletter

Please refer to the following resources for more details.

- Ending Isolation or Returning to Work for Those Who Have Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19: www.sfdcp.org/rtw
- What to Do if Someone in the Workplace Has COVID-19: www.sfdcp.org/covid19-positiveworkplace
- General San Francisco-specific information for employers: www.sfdcp.org/businesses
- General CDC guidance for employers: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidancebusiness-response.html

Thank you for all that you do to keep our community healthy,

Tomás J. Aragón, MD, DrPH

Health Officer of the City and County of San Francisco

SFPDH | 101 Grove Street, Room 308, San Francisco, CA 94102

*not applicable to skilled nursing facilities

Returning to Work for Those Who Have Had COVID-19

If your employee had symptoms from COVID-19, they may return to work if they respond “Yes” to all three questions below:

1. Has it been more than 10 days since your symptoms started?
 - Yes, it has been more than 10 days since my symptoms started.
Date symptoms started: _____
 - No, it has not been more than 10 days since my symptoms started

2. Have your symptoms improved?
 - Yes my symptoms have improved
 - No my symptoms have not improved

3. Has it been more than 24 hours since your last fever of 100.4F (38C) or more without the use of fever-reducing medications?
 - Yes, it has been more than 24hrs since I had a fever without fever-reducing medications
 - No, it has not been more than 24hrs since I had a fever

If your employee never had any symptoms at all from COVID-19, they may return to work if they respond “Yes” to the following question:

1. Has it been more than ten days, since you had a COVID-19 positive test result?
 - Yes, it has been more than ten days, since I tested positive for the COVID-19 virus.
Date of positive test: _____
 - No, it has not been more than ten days, since I tested positive for the COVID-19 virus

Employee Name _____

Employee Signature _____