

# ND SMART GUIDANCE FOR EMPLOYERS COVID-19 WORKPLACE CONTACT TRACING

## (NON-HEALTHCARE SETTINGS)

### ISOLATION OF COVID-19 CASES

**Isolation keeps someone who is infected with the virus away from others.** All individuals who test positive for COVID-19 (i.e., COVID-19 cases) must isolate for a minimum of 10 days until they meet the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) release from isolation criteria per [North Dakota State Health Officer Order #2020-05.2](#).

**ALL CASES must be EXCLUDED from the workplace during isolation.**

- **Symptomatic cases** are released from isolation when at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared **and** they are fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications **and** other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving.
- **Asymptomatic cases** are released from isolation when 10 days have passed since their specimen collection date, as long as they remain asymptomatic for the duration of their isolation period.

### QUARANTINE OF CLOSE CONTACTS

**Quarantine keeps close contacts who might have been exposed to the virus away from others.** A **close contact** is anyone who was within 6 feet of an infectious person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. The infectious period begins **2 DAYS BEFORE** illness onset (or, for asymptomatic cases, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) and continues until the case is released from isolation. Close contacts should quarantine for 14 days after their date of last exposure to a case, with the following exceptions:

- **Masked close contacts** are [exempt from quarantine](#) if both the case and the close contact consistently and correctly wore a mask at all times during the exposure.\*
  - *The quarantine exemption for masked close contacts only applies to masks and face coverings that comply with [recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#).*
- Optional early release from quarantine **AFTER DAY 10** if the close contact remains **symptom-free**, with continued symptom monitoring and masking through day 14.
- Optional early release from quarantine **AFTER DAY 7** if the close contact remains **symptom-free** AND has a **negative result** from a COVID-19 PCR or antigen test administered within the 48 hours prior to release, with continued symptom monitoring and masking through day 14.
- **Household contacts** must quarantine during the case's isolation period (10 days) plus the recommended quarantine period for close contacts (14, 10, or 7 days).
- **Previous COVID-19 cases** do not need to quarantine or be retested for up to 3 months as long as they do not develop symptoms again.

## HOW TO IDENTIFY WORKPLACE CLOSE CONTACTS

Determine when the employee with COVID-19 worked while infectious based on the **symptom onset date for symptomatic cases** or **date of test/specimen collection date for asymptomatic cases** (this date is listed on each case's NDDoH Isolation Notification Letter). The **infectious period begins TWO DAYS PRIOR** to a symptomatic case's onset date or to an asymptomatic case's test date. A case is infectious until released from isolation.

Anyone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period in the workplace would be considered a **workplace close contact**.

## COVID-19 CALCULATOR

Use the [COVID-19 Calculator](#) to calculate a close contact's quarantine period.

## HOW TO NOTIFY WORKPLACE CLOSE CONTACTS

- Inform the close contact that he/she may have been exposed to COVID-19. *If the case gave permission to use his/her name when notifying close contacts, you may disclose this information.*
- Specify the **date of last exposure** and tell the close contact to **quarantine at home** for 14, 10, or 7 days after the date of last exposure. For further guidance on the **quarantine options**, provide the [NDDoH Close Contact factsheet](#) and [NDDoH Quarantine Recommendations for Close Contacts Visual Timeline](#).
  - Masked close contacts are [exempt from quarantine](#), but should monitor their health for 14 days after the date of last exposure.
  - Employers may consider allowing close contacts who are [essential workers](#) to continue to work when it is necessary to preserve the function of [critical infrastructure workplaces](#). These select instances require specific [safety practices](#) to be implemented. Having close contacts continue to work during the quarantine period increases the possibility of workplace transmission of COVID-19. This option should be used as a **last resort** and **only in limited circumstances**, such as when cessation of operation of a facility may cause serious harm or danger to public health or safety.
- Encourage close contacts to get tested 7-10 days after last exposure to a COVID-19 case. [Free public testing events](#) are available throughout North Dakota.

## ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

[ND Smart Guidance for Employers](#)

[NDDoH Coronavirus](#)

**The NDDoH Workplace Subject Matter Expert team is available to provide guidance at [dohbusinesscovid@nd.gov](mailto:dohbusinesscovid@nd.gov) or by calling 701-328-2378.**

# CALCULATING THE INFECTIOUS PERIOD FOR COVID-19 CASES

Enter the date the employee first had symptoms or, if the employee did not have symptoms, the date the employee was tested.

This is the **Onset Date/Test Date**: \_\_\_\_\_

**Two days prior** to the **Onset Date/Test Date** is the **Infectious Period Start Date**: \_\_\_\_\_

Add **10 DAYS** to the **Onset Date/Test Date** to find the **Release from Isolation Date**: \_\_\_\_\_

**EXAMPLE INFECTIOUS PERIOD CALCULATION**

A symptomatic employee who tests positive for COVID-19 is infectious **TWO DAYS PRIOR** to his/her onset date. An asymptomatic employee who tests positive for COVID-19 is infectious **TWO DAYS PRIOR** to his/her test date. The employee (i.e., case) is infectious until released from isolation. Anyone who was within 6 feet of the COVID-19 case for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period during the shaded time period is recommended to quarantine for 14, 10, or 7 **DAYS AFTER** the last date they were in contact with the COVID-19 case.\*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 Day 0	11	12	13	14
<b>Infectious Period Start Date</b>		<b>Onset Date/Test Date</b>				
15	16	17	18	19	20 Day 10	21
					<b>Release from Isolation @ 11:59 PM</b>	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

\* Masked close contacts are [exempt from quarantine](#) if both the case and the close contact consistently and correctly wore a mask at all times during the exposure. See [NDDoH Close Contact Quarantine Change FAQs](#) and [NDDoH Quarantine Recommendations for Close Contacts Visual Timeline](#) for additional information regarding quarantine options.

# CALCULATING THE QUARANTINE PERIOD FOR CLOSE CONTACTS

## 14-DAY QUARANTINE PERIOD

Enter the close contact's **Date of Last Exposure** to the COVID-19 case: \_\_\_\_\_

Add **14 DAYS** to the close contact's **Date of Last Exposure** to find the **Release from Quarantine Date**: \_\_\_\_\_

## OPTIONAL REDUCED QUARANTINE PERIODS

- 10-DAY QUARANTINE:** If the close contact remains **symptom-free**, the quarantine period may be reduced to **10 days**, with continued symptom monitoring and masking through day 14.
  - Add **10 DAYS** to the close contact's **Date of Last Exposure** to find the **Release from Quarantine Date**: \_\_\_\_\_
- 7-DAY QUARANTINE:** If the close contact receives a **negative result from a PCR or antigen test administered within 48 hours prior to release** and **remains symptom-free**, the quarantine period may be reduced to **7 days**, with continued symptom monitoring and masking through day 14. The close contact **must** continue to quarantine while awaiting test results.
  - Add **7 DAYS** to the close contact's **Date of Last Exposure** to find the **Release from Quarantine Date**: \_\_\_\_\_

## EXAMPLE QUARANTINE PERIOD CALCULATIONS

Close contacts are recommended to quarantine for 14, 10, or 7 DAYS AFTER the last date they were in contact with the COVID-19 case.\*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

\* Masked close contacts are exempt from quarantine if both the case and the close contact consistently and correctly wore a mask at all times during the exposure. See [NDDoH Close Contact Quarantine Change FAQs](#) and [NDDoH Quarantine Recommendations for Close Contacts Visual Timeline](#) for additional information regarding quarantine options.