



Arkansas Department of Health

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Governor Asa Hutchinson
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May 22, 2020

ADH requires a person exposed to COVID-19 to complete a 14-day quarantine period, even though they may have a negative test result during the quarantine period.

Quarantine of persons known to be exposed to someone with COVID-19 is a key strategy to stopping the spread of the illness. A person who is a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 must self-quarantine (remain home) for 14 days after the date of their last exposure to the positive case. Arkansas Department of Health staff will work closely with a contact to provide them with guidance and monitor their health.

It is important to understand that a negative COVID-19 test for a person who is a contact does **not** change the requirement for them to complete the 14-day quarantine. The 14-day period allows for adequate time to monitor for the development of symptoms during the full incubation period of the virus. A negative test in an exposed person during this period may be a false negative, as the virus may have been present but not yet at detectable levels. Asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic persons have been shown to contribute to the transmission of COVID-19, so ending the 14-day quarantine early puts others at risk.

Therefore, a negative COVID-19 test during a person's 14-day quarantine does not provide an early or total release from quarantine. All persons must complete a full 14-day self-quarantine when they have been exposed to a known case. Please share widely with your staff, especially those who provide COVID-19 results to patients.

Note on Exposed Critical Infrastructure Workers: Critical infrastructure workers may be permitted to continue work following potential exposure to coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), provided they remain asymptomatic, have not had a positive test result for COVID-19, and additional precautions are implemented to protect them and the community, including wearing a face covering, physical distancing, and daily screening for fever or symptoms. See CDC's full recommendations [here](#). **Please note** that the exceptions made for critical infrastructure workers only apply to their work. **They must remain in strict home quarantine for all time NOT spent at work.** For a list of Critical Infrastructure Workers, click [here](#).

For more information about self-quarantine visit <https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programs-services/topics/covid-19-guidance-for-self-home-quarantine>.

To sign up for the Health Alert Network (HAN) and receive urgent updates from ADH regarding health crises or emerging issues, click [here](#).