



JOINT INFORMATION RELEASE Joint Information Center (JIC)

MEDIA RELEASE

DATE: Dec. 12, 2020
EVENT: Kenosha County Emergency Management COVID-19 Virus
LOCATION: County of Kenosha

In response to community questions about COVID-19 quarantine protocols and testing processes, the Kenosha County Division of Health is providing the following Q&A reference for the community.

Kenosha County Health Officer Dr. Jen Freiheit reminds the community of the importance of following guidelines and best practices, as a means to help to eradicate the virus as quickly as possible.

Freiheit said people should continue wearing masks when indoors around others from outside their household, and when outdoors where social distancing may be difficult.

For the upcoming holidays, she said that — like Thanksgiving — people are advised to avoid in-person gatherings with people with whom they do not live, and to instead look for safer ways to celebrate, such as virtual gatherings.

“Many people have gotten COVID fatigue — I get that,” Freiheit said. “But the more we adhere to best practices, the sooner we’ll have that return to normalcy that we’ve all been waiting for.”

Following are answers to the community’s frequently asked questions, provided by Division of Health staff:

Q: How long should I quarantine if I have been in contact with someone who has COVID-19?

A: Ideally, until 14 days after your most recent contact with the COVID-19-positive individual. The Kenosha County Division of Health this week also endorsed a shortened, 10-day quarantine time for close contacts who remain symptom-free. Those who do not receive a negative test result by Day 10 should continue to self-monitor for symptoms through Day 14.

Q: If I find out I’ve been a close contact with a COVID-19 case, when should I get tested?

A: Asymptomatic people are advised to wait five to 10 days after the contact. Testing too soon after exposure can lead to false negatives. Those with any symptoms, even if mild, can test immediately.



JOINT INFORMATION RELEASE Joint Information Center (JIC)

Q: How should housemates handle quarantine when a member of a household tests positive?

A: The rest of the household should remain in quarantine for 14 days (or, if they choose, the shortened 10-day timeframe) since last contact with the COVID-19-positive individual.

Those who are unable to have complete separation (no sharing of same rooms/bathroom) from the positive case should remain in quarantine for 10-14 days after the positive individual is released from isolation.

Q: If an Illinois resident tests positive for COVID-19 at a testing site in Kenosha County, does this count toward the total number of cases here, or in Illinois?

A: Positive cases are tied to the person's address of residence, not the testing location. So, if an Illinois resident tests positive in Kenosha County, that information is sent there and it is counted as an Illinois case.

If a Kenosha County resident is tested in Illinois, there will be a delay in obtaining records given that the two states' reporting systems are not the same. If you choose to seek testing in Illinois, it is our highest recommendation to request a copy of your lab result.

Q: What about people who have tested positive and are getting retested, multiple times, because they need a negative result in order to return to work? Are these counted as new cases, even though it's the same person with one original case?

A: The statewide system that tracks communicable disease reporting creates a case for each individual who is tested. These people can then test multiple times, but the results get added to the same case. There are no duplicate counts.

As of July 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is no longer recommending a test-based strategy for discontinuation of home isolation. Once a positive case completes the recommended isolation period of 10 days and has been well for 24 hours, defined as free of fever and improvement in other symptoms, they are able to return to normal activities.

Q: How long does someone have immunity from carrying or spreading the virus after they have recovered from it?



JOINT INFORMATION RELEASE Joint Information Center (JIC)

A: Although there's not a clear, evidence-based answer, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention does recommend that people who test positive should not retest for 90 days. This presumes an immunity of at least 90 days.

If during the 90-day period, a previous positive case becomes symptomatic again and an evaluation fails to identify a diagnosis other than COVID-19, the person may warrant evaluation for reinfection in consultation with their primary care provider or infectious disease expert. Repeat isolation may be necessary, specifically if symptoms began to develop after close contact with a positive COVID-19 case.

More information about COVID-19, including local data and links to tips and resources, is available on the Kenosha County COVID-19 Response Hub website, at <https://www.kenoshacounty.org/covid-19>.

Together, we can and will slow the spread of the Covid-19 virus.

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