



January 26, 2022

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Nicole Maher, PIO
Humboldt County Health Board
Phone: (775) 761-2624
Email: nicole.maher@humboldtcountynv.gov

HUMBOLDT COUNTY FOLLOWING CDC'S UPDATED 5-DAY QUARANTINE, ISOLATION GUIDELINES

WINNEMUCCA, Nev.— Humboldt County residents who are infected with the coronavirus may now isolate for a minimum of five days, rather than 10; the shortened timeframe also applies to those who have been exposed to the virus.

Humboldt County Health Officer Charles Stringham emphasized the updated guidance is primarily geared toward asymptomatic people or those who are exposed to the virus and do not develop symptoms.

“We want to emphasize that for those who do test positive for the virus, or those who are symptomatic and should test for the virus, the five-day rule is the lowest minimum guidance,” he said. “We continue to press for the greatest personal responsibility in isolating more than five days from the date of testing if symptoms persist, and always encourage residents to follow up with their medical provider.”

Officials from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said the updated guidance is in keeping with growing evidence that people with the coronavirus are most infectious in the two days before and the three days after symptoms develop.

The decision also was driven by a recent surge in COVID-19 cases, propelled by the omicron variant.

Early research suggests omicron may cause milder illnesses than earlier versions of the coronavirus. But the sheer number of people becoming infected—and therefore having to isolate or quarantine—threatens to drive up hospital numbers, increase death tallies and cause disruptions to businesses and schools.

Humboldt County is currently experiencing its largest surge yet. January 2022 has already upended September 2021, the previously highest month, which had 531 cases. Currently, as of January 25, Humboldt County has identified just under 600 new cases.

ISOLATION

The isolation rules are for people who are infected. They are the same for people who are unvaccinated, partially vaccinated, fully vaccinated or boosted. They say:

- The clock starts at zero the day someone tests positive.
- Positive people should Isolate for five days beginning the day after they test positive.
- On day six, if they have no symptoms, they can return to normal activities but must wear a mask everywhere—even at home around others—for at least five more days.
- If they still have symptoms after isolating for five days, they should stay home until they feel better and then start their five days of wearing a mask at all times.

QUARANTINE

The quarantine rules are for people who were in close contact with an infected person.

Close contact means someone was less than 6 feet away from an infected person (laboratory confirmed or clinical diagnosis) for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. For example, three individual 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes.

For quarantine, the clock starts at zero the day a person is alerted they may have been exposed to the virus. Exposed persons should quarantine for five days starting the day following exposure and then get tested at day five. Those who develop symptoms earlier should test immediately.

Those who test positive should follow isolation protocols. If negative, they may discontinue quarantine at day six, but must wear a mask everywhere—even at home around others—for at least five more days.

People who are fully vaccinated—which the CDC has defined as having two doses of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or one dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine—do not need to quarantine following an exposure, if they do not have symptoms.

If they do develop symptoms, they should get tested immediately and, if positive, follow isolation protocols. If they are negative, they should stay home while they have symptoms.

Dr. Stringham says suspending both isolation and quarantine after five days is not without risk.

“Many people get tested when they first feel symptoms, but others get tested for alternative reasons, such as travel or work,” he said. “That means a positive test result may not reveal exactly when a person was infected or give a clear picture of when they are most contagious.”

The doctor said the risk of spreading the virus does drop after five days, but it does not disappear for everyone, which is why wearing an appropriate facial covering such as an N95 or KN95 for five or more days is critical to the CDC guidance.

“With the decrease to five days, we are still going to have a moderate number of people who are contagious, which is why we continue to emphasize personal responsibility. Those who are still symptomatic after five days need to continue to stay home, and everyone needs to mask up for at least five more days upon discontinuing isolation or quarantine.”

Humboldt County has updated its COVID-19 [screening flyer](#) per the CDC’s updated guidance. In addition to testing information for both unvaccinated and vaccination individuals, the flyer also includes a list of frequently asked questions.

Drive-through COVID-19 testing is available from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday at Humboldt General Hospital's screening clinic, located at 51 E. Haskell Street. The clinic is closed from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. for lunch. There is no cost for testing.

Humboldt General Hospital has a COVID-19 medical provider on staff who is available to meet with those seeking to prevent COVID, those who have tested positive for the virus, and those who continue to experience the lingering effects of COVID illness. To make an appointment, please call (775) 623-5222, ext. 1379. The clinic is located at 51 E. Haskell Street in the building adjacent to the drive-through COVID-19 screening clinic.

For any questions regarding COVID-19 testing, vaccination or more, please email vaccine@humboldtcountynv.gov. Se habla español.

For the most up-to-date vaccine information, please call the COVID-19 Recorded Information Line at (775) 375-3200. The line is updated with new information every Friday (not including holidays), or as needed.

###