

What Happens When Someone is Diagnosed with COVID-19?

WHEN PUBLIC HEALTH IS NOTIFIED OF A POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST RESULT, SEVERAL TEAMS MOVE INTO IMMEDIATE ACTION. HERE IS HOW THAT PROCESS WORKS TO KEEP YOU, AND OUR COMMUNITY, HEALTHY AND SAFE:

1. When someone is tested for COVID-19 they are told to stay home and self-isolate while test results come in. This can take up to 5 days.
2. As soon as the lab notifies Public Health of a positive result, the Health Group Supervisor immediately notifies other Public Health staff. This triggers a set of responses, as you will see below.
3. The Communicable Disease Nurse calls and interviews the patient.
4. Communicable Disease investigators determine where the individual has been (locations) and who the individual has been in contact with starting two days prior to becoming sick.

At the same time, Public Health staff issue isolation orders (these are legal orders) for the patient and quarantine orders for close contacts (usually members of the household). Orders are enforceable by law for the individual who tested positive and members of the household.
5. Public Health Nurses proceed with their investigation and contact businesses and individuals to let them know they could have been exposed. People who had close contact will be asked to stay home and monitor their symptoms for 14 days. They may be required to check in daily with Public Health.
6. Once isolation and quarantine orders are in place and the investigation process has begun, public notification of a new case takes place.
7. The individual is monitored daily by Public Health staff, who track symptoms and ensure healthcare guidance is followed.

Public Health also works with the individual and family/caregivers to ensure that daily needs such as access to food and medication are being met.

ISOLATION = separates sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick.

QUARANTINE = separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick.

HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN IT'S SAFE TO END ISOLATION ORDERS?

The decision to terminate isolation orders is made between the individual's medical provider and local public health authorities. Generally, the individual would have to be symptom free for 72 hours. Household members will remain under quarantine for an additional 14 days to see if symptoms appear.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

Some people with COVID-19 experience minimal symptoms, so it is not possible for us to be aware of everyone who may have been in contact with the virus. This means that **YOUR ACTIONS CAN SAVE LIVES!** Social distancing practices are the best tool we have to reduce the spread of the virus and flatten the curve. Please adhere to the shelter at home order and social distancing guidelines.