Updated Alabama COVID-19 Quarantine and Isolation Timeframes

The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) today issued updated COVID-19 quarantine and isolation timeframes. Please see the info below from ADPH.

The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH)
Health Alert Network (HAN) Alert
December 11, 2020

Updated Alabama COVID-19 Quarantine and Isolation Timeframes

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently added two options for states to consider concerning the quarantine time frames of close contacts to COVID-19 cases, even though the recommended quarantine period of 14 days remains. Only the State Health Officer can establish quarantine and isolation requirements. This is not an individual or organization decision. The CDC's website states that *"Local public health authorities determine and establish the quarantine options for their jurisdictions. CDC currently recommends a quarantine period of 14 days. However, based on local circumstances and resources, the following options to shorten quarantine are acceptable alternatives."*

The ADPH has determined that in Alabama quarantine can end after Day 10 for some people *without testing* and if no symptoms have occurred during the daily required monitoring period. This option is not without risk and with this strategy, the residual transmission risk is estimated to be between approximately 1% and 10%. Where the 10-day option is utilized, persons must understand that there continues to be a risk of infection and transmission and must be willing to follow the additional requirements below:
- No clinical evidence of COVID-19 has been elicited by daily symptom monitoring during the entirety of quarantine up to the time at which quarantine is discontinued; and,
- Daily symptom monitoring continues through quarantine Day 14; and,
- Persons are counseled regarding the need to adhere strictly through quarantine Day 14 to all recommended non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs, a.k.a. mitigation strategies), especially. They should be advised that if any symptoms develop, they should immediately self-isolate and contact the local public health authority or their healthcare provider to report this change in clinical status.

If any of the following symptoms are exhibited by persons identified as close contacts to a known COVID-19 case at any time during the 14 days after their last known exposure to the case, they should isolate immediately, and testing should be considered:

- fever or chills
- cough
- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- fatigue
- muscle or body aches
- headache
- new loss of taste or smell
- sore throat
- congestion or runny nose
- nausea or vomiting
- diarrhea

The ADPH has determined that the second option of ending quarantine after 7 days *with testing* is not feasible at this time due to a number of factors including but not limited to the significant community spread that is not adequately mitigated, high case numbers, the increasing COVID-19 positivity rate in Alabama, and disparities and shortages in testing availability in areas of the state. The CDC indicates in the full guidance that the option for ending Quarantine after 7 days, should only be considered "when diagnostic testing resources are sufficient and available." CDC further indicates that "*Testing for the purpose of earlier discontinuation of quarantine should be considered **only if it will have no impact on community diagnostic testing**. Testing of persons seeking evaluation for infection must be prioritized.*"

Persons in long-term care facilities and other congregate living settings will continue to be quarantined for 14 days without testing per existing recommendations to focus on maximally reducing the risk of transmission. The 14-day quarantine period remains the preferred option by the CDC and ADPH.

Healthcare Personnel (HCP), the guidance has not changed, so please continue to refer to this guidance: https://alabamapublichealth.gov/covid19/assets/cov-timeframes-isolation-quarantine-hcp.pdf.

The updated ADPH COVID-19 Quarantine and Isolation Timeframes can be reviewed at https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/covid19/assets/cov-timeframes-isolation-quarantine.pdf.

Updated Isolation and Quarantine Timeframes for COVID-19 for Non-Healthcare Personnel (10*/10)
http://www.anha.org/uploads/IsolationQuarantineUpdate12112020.pdf.