



# GEAUGA PUBLIC HEALTH

Promoting and Protecting Community Health

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February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022

To: Geauga County Residents

Re: Quarantine & Isolation Outside of School Setting

We are continuing to monitor the COVID-19 Pandemic and the various strains that are emerging and the evolving recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) as we better understand these viruses.

While no single action (including masking) will eliminate the risk of transmission of the virus within a community, implementation of several other coordinated interventions will significantly reduce that risk.

In the event of an outbreak or large increase in cases, Geauga Public Health will work to determine the most appropriate action at that time. It will be based in part on the number of cases and the degree of potential spread given other prevention measures in place, including but not limited to vaccination coverage within the potentially exposed cohort.

## EXHIBIT 1

The following guidelines have been created in regards to COVID-19 exposures and infections due to the virus's following characteristics that we have learned thus far:

1. This is an infection that is primarily spread by respiratory droplets.
2. Not everyone infected with the virus will have symptoms.
3. A person infected with COVID-19 is spreading the virus 2 -3 days before symptoms start.
4. Most people start with symptoms approximately 3 - 5 days after exposure, but it can be up to 14 days.
5. Having a COVID-19 infection depends on the amount of COVID-19 viral particles a person inhales. ***One of the reasons the omicron variant is so contagious is because there are more viral particles in a person's respiratory droplets than in previous variants.***
6. Masking reduces the number of respiratory droplets, and thus viral particles, in the air between two people helping to reduce the spread of the virus.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>
7. A person with a COVID-19 infection is spreading viral particles for an average of 10 days from the start of symptoms. However, if they continue to have symptoms at the 10-day mark, they are considered contagious until they have not had a fever for at least 24 hours without fever reducing medication, and their condition is improving.
8. If a person has been vaccinated, they are less likely to become severely ill and need to be hospitalized.

9. Current data shows vaccinated and unvaccinated people are spreading the virus if infected with the omicron variant. Future variants could pose similar and/or additional problems.

**DEFINITIONS:**

***Symptomatic:***

Typical COVID-19 symptoms include, but are not limited to - New onset cough with or without shortness of breath, nasal congestion or runny nose, sore throat, body aches and chills, fever over 100.4 F, vomiting/diarrhea.

***Close contact:*** Having been closer than 6 feet, for at least 15 minutes within a 24-hour period.

<b>Test Types</b>	<b>Purpose of Test</b>	<b>Who performs this test?</b>	<b>What is shown?</b>	<b>Who recognizes the results?</b>
<b>PCR</b>	Tests for active COVID-19 infection	Healthcare providers, including pharmacies	If you are currently infected with COVID-19	Ohio Department of Health Geauga Public Health
<b>Antigen</b>	Tests for active COVID-19 infection	Performed by healthcare providers or the individuals at-home.	If you are currently infected with COVID-19	
Proctored		These are testing that are performed under the supervision of a healthcare provider		Ohio Department of Health Geauga Public Health
Non-Proctored		These are testing that are performed without the supervision of a healthcare provider		These tests are not recognized by Ohio Department of Health or Geauga Public Health. If using these tests, individuals should follow-up with their healthcare provider to report any results
<b>Antibody</b>	Tests for presence of antibodies	Healthcare providers, including pharmacies	If you have previously been infected with	Ohio Department of Health

			COVID-19. Tests do not show that individuals do not have an active COVID-19 infection	
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## **Recommendations**

### **Vaccination:**

Geauga Public Health recommends that all eligible individuals get vaccinated against COVID-19 to lower the risk of more severe outcomes and help slow the transmission of disease. Currently, there are approved vaccines for ages 5 and older.

Geauga Public Health recommends all eligible individuals obtain a COVID-19 booster vaccination as well. Current eligibility:

- Anyone over the age of 5 years old

For those unsure if they should get the vaccine or the booster, we encourage them to speak with their primary care provider to have that discussion based on their individual medical history.

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## **Recommendations to Quarantine/Isolate**

### **Isolation Protocol (Symptomatic or a positive test)**

If a resident is experiencing symptoms that could be due to a COVID-19 infection, they should stay home from work and other activities and seek medical attention for possible COVID-19 testing and directions for care.

If a resident has tested positive for COVID-19 and **is** having symptoms, they should stay isolated from others for 5 days following **onset of symptoms**. After the 5th day, if the resident is symptom free and/or improving, the resident could return to work and normal activities as long as they continue to wear a mask around others for an additional 5 days.

If a resident has **no** symptoms but has tested positive for COVID-19, they should isolate themselves from others for 5 days from the **date of the positive test**. After the 5th day, the resident could return to work and normal activities as long as they continue to wear a mask around others for an additional 5 days.

If a resident, who is asymptomatic AND has not been a close contact, tests positive with an at home rapid test that does not come with a tele-health visit, we recommend reaching out to your doctor or other test providers to get an additional test prior to returning to work and other activities.

### **Quarantine Protocol (Exposure)**

If a resident is aware or are notified that they have been in close contact with a person who:

- Tested positive for COVID-19
- Was told they are a presumed positive for COVID-19

They should follow the following quarantine protocols:

If a resident is notified that they have been in close contact with a person who tested positive for COVID-19 virus, and they have:

- Received their COVID-19 booster dose **OR** have completed the original 2 doses of Pfizer or Moderna within the last 6 months **OR** have completed the 1 dose J&J vaccine within the last 2 months
- Completed the original 2 doses of Pfizer or Moderna and are not boosted **OR** have completed the 1 dose J&J vaccine within the last 2 months **OR** are unvaccinated

Residents could return to their daily activities, but it would be recommended for these residents to wear a mask around others for 10 days, and test on day 5 or later after their exposure if they are able to. In the case that residents develop symptoms, it is recommended to get a COVID-19 test and stay home.

**Previous COVID-19 within 90 days of the current exposure** does not have to quarantine. If it has been over 90 days, follow the quarantine protocol.

***If the resident feels the mask wearing cannot be done reliably, then they should remain at home.***

Geauga Public Health relies on residents' personal responsibility for disclosing illness, quarantining/isolation as necessary, and notifying appropriate persons regarding symptoms that might arise.

***We encourage interested parties to reach out to us for professional public health guidance that is based on the best evidence at the time.***

These are recommendations and employers can choose to follow different quarantine guidelines. Businesses and organizations should consult with their legal counsel

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### **Mask Recommendations**

The CDC has provided the COVID-19 Community Levels tool ([HERE](#)) for community members to provide assistance for their decisions they make regarding prevention steps based on the latest data.

Geauga Public Health recommends the following, when the county COVID-19 community level:

#### **LOW:**

- People may choose to mask at any time; however, people with symptoms, a positive test, or exposure to someone with COVID-19 should wear a mask.

#### **MEDIUM:**

- If you are at high risk for severe illness, talk to your healthcare provider about whether you need to wear a mask and take other precautions
- People may choose to mask at any time; however, people with symptoms, a positive test, or exposure to someone with COVID-19 should wear a mask.

**HIGH:**

- Wear a mask indoors in public
- Additional precautions may be needed for people at high risk for severe illness
- People may choose to mask at any time; however, people with symptoms, a positive test, or exposure to someone with COVID-19 should wear a mask.