

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

What Happens When Someone Tests Positive for COVID-19

When KCHD is notified of a positive case of COVID-19, KCHD staff contact them to identify individuals with whom they have been in contact 48 hours before symptom onset going forward to determine which of those individuals are considered high-risk contacts.

The person who tested positive for COVID-19 is also instructed to isolate themselves in their home until the following three criteria are met:

- The patient is fever free for 72 hours (3 days) without the use of fever-reducing medications
- The patient's other symptoms (e.g. cough) have improved without the use of symptom-reducing medication
- It has been at least 10 days from the first onset of the patient's symptoms.

Once a positive case (confirmed or probable) meets this criteria, KCHD staff will release the individual from isolation and send a release from isolation letter to the individual via email or regular mail.

High-risk contacts require a 14-day quarantine from the last date of their exposure to the positive case. In order for a person to be considered a high-risk contact to a person with COVID-19 they must meet one of the following criteria:

- Live in the same household as a person with COVID-19
- Have direct physical contact with a COVID-19 case (e.g. shaking hands)
- Have unprotected direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (e.g. infected person coughed or sneezed on them)
- Spend at least 15 minutes within six feet of a person with COVID-19

KCHD staff collect contact information (telephone number) from the positive case for those individuals that meet high-risk contact criteria. KCHD will call these individuals to notify them of their contact to a confirmed case of COVID-19 and provide instructions for the recommended 14-day quarantine period. High-risk contacts **should stay at home** and distance themselves from others. They should monitor themselves for symptoms of COVID-19 (cough, fever, shortness of breath) and take their temperature twice each day if a thermometer is available. After this initial notification, KCHD staff will touch base with the high-risk contact on day 7 and 14 of their quarantine period to ensure that the individual is free of symptoms. Once the high-risk contact has completed the 14-day period and they are free of symptoms, they will receive verbal notification of their release from quarantine and KCHD staff will send a quarantine release letter to the individual via e-mail or regular mail.

If a high-risk contact develops symptoms of COVID-19, and they do not get tested, they will be considered a probable positive case, which is treated the same as a positive case and requires isolation (see above). Their identified high-risk close contacts will be treated in the same manner as described above.

KCHD staff **may** work with the positive case to identify high-risk contacts at the individual's place of employment, however it is the individual's responsibility to inform their employer that they tested positive for COVID-19. Their employer should then conduct contact tracing in the workplace to identify high-risk contacts that should be quarantined. If an employer has questions on this process, they may call KCHD for further guidance. At this time, KCHD is not contacting employers directly with each newly identified positive case.

If you have an employee or resident who you believe has symptoms concerning for COVID-19, encourage them to contact their primary care provider (PCP) to discuss testing. Local testing hotlines are set-up for those that do not have a PCP (Spectrum Health, Mercy Health St Mary's & Cherry Health). The PCP or COVID-19 testing hotline can help determine the need for testing and will provide further instructions.

Learn more about COVID-19

COVID-19 is a new virus. It spreads by respiratory droplets of an infected person to others with whom they have close contact, such as people who live in the same household or provide care. You can access up to date information on COVID-19 on the Centers for Disease Control's webpage at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Information current as of May 7, 2020.