



Public Health
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CD CONNECT

COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) Quarantine Guidance

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The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) have released updated guidance for quarantine of close contacts to a positive COVID-19 case.:

Fully vaccinated: No requirement to quarantine if at least two weeks after one-dose vaccine or after second dose in a 2-dose series and having no symptoms of COVID-19.

Tested positive for COVID-19 in past three months and currently having no symptoms: No quarantine or testing is recommended

Unvaccinated: no change– the recommendation is to quarantine until 14 days after exposure if no symptoms develop during quarantine. There are some alternative options for unvaccinated individuals that workplace management can consider:

- ◇ Option 1: 10-day quarantine if no symptoms develop during that time
- ◇ Option 2: 7-day quarantine if not symptoms develop during that time **AND** the contact has a negative PCR or antigen-based test collected at least 5 days after the exposure date

If one of the shorter quarantine options are adopted, the close contact should continue to watch for development of symptoms until 14 days after the exposure.

Congregate living facilities: The 14-day quarantine continued to be recommended for facilities with populations at higher risk for outbreaks or severe illness.

All individuals should continue to socially distance, wear face coverings, and perform hand hygiene often, regardless of vaccination status or history of a positive COVID-19 test.

Long-Term Care Facilities and COVID-19

Early in the pandemic, health department staff proactively visited all long-term care facilities in Iredell County to evaluate infection control practices and appropriate use of personal protective equipment, offer guidance, and give resources. Staff made follow-up visits to facilities as indicated.

The health department continues to be a resource for the facilities and follows up on reported cases. Outbreaks are entered into the state reporting system for tracking. Facilities are considered to be in “outbreak” status until 28 days after their last positive test in a resident or staff member.



The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released updated guidance for nursing home visitation in March 2021, available at <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-39-nh-revised.pdf>. If there are any positive cases in a facility, residents and staff are tested at least once weekly until no new positives for 14 days. Routine testing of staff is based on the county testing positivity rate:

County positivity rate	Minimum testing
<5%	Once a month
5%-10%	Once a week
>10%	Twice a week

This positivity rate by county is available on the federal webpage, CMS COVID-19 Nursing Home Data, under the COVID19 Testing section. Note that although the guidance is targeted at nursing homes, all long-term care facilities in Iredell County have been following the same guidance.

Iredell County does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, gender, number of pregnancies, lesbian, gay, transgender, questioning (LGBTQ), marital status, or disability in employment or the provision of services.

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Iredell County Health Department COVID-19 Response

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Our Mission:
**To promote and
protect community,
personal, and
environmental health.**

As with other providers, our work has been challenging since the beginning of 2020. Reflecting on the start, on January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization declared a public health emergency of international concern and on March 20, 2020, Governor Cooper declared a state of emergency for North Carolina. Fortunately, we have retained all of our staff and even added several new employees. Initially, we were planning as best we could for what was likely coming to Iredell County. On April 28, 2020, Iredell County had 106 reported positive cases and 6 fatalities, which increased to 9,097 cases and 104 fatalities by December 29, 2020. As of April 13, 2021, our case count is 17,792 with 212 fatalities. Our epidemiology Team has met weekly throughout the pandemic. Keeping up with continually changing guidance has been a challenge. There were days that the nurses were responding to over 50 calls a day from the public. The calls decreased and then picked up again when the vaccine became available. Iredell County Administration opened a call center on January 11, 2021, which has allowed the nurses more time to take care of other response activities. Some of our activities are detailed below.

Case Investigations and Contact Tracing:

From the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, health department personnel, along with multiple hired temporary workers, performed case investigation and contact tracing for all reported cases. Positive PCR cases fed in from the state electronic reporting system from some labs. When antigen testing began, those results had to be manually entered into the reporting system by health department staff. Case interviews were entered into the reporting system and assigned to the state disease registrar. In November of 2020, the health department transferred case investigation, contact tracing, and data entry to Community Care of North Carolina (CCNC), a NCDHHS partner agency.

COVID-19 Testing:

From June 2020 until September 2020, the health department provided drive-thru testing on-site for identified close contacts to COVID-19 cases. We have also performed testing services and supplies for some long-term care facilities.

Effective September 2020, all community COVID-19 testing was taken over by StarMed with clinics held at various community sites. Testing demand has decreased since the beginning:

September 2020– 760 tested
March 2021– 580 tested

As of 4/13/21:

Iredell County citizens fully vaccinated– 29, 697 (16.3%)
Iredell County citizens partially vaccinated– 37,985

COVID-19 Vaccination:

We have been having large community clinics at various sites since December 2020. We are transitioning to having all of our clinics at the health department. The vaccine supply we receive is decided at the state level. We were initially sent Moderna vaccine and then were sent Pfizer vaccine, which required some adjustments to be made. We received Janssen vaccine for one of our large weekend clinics. As of April 13, 2021 we have administered 16,154 total vaccine doses.

Attachment: Iredell County Communicable Disease Activity 2020. This report can be viewed throughout the year on the Iredell County Health Department website at <https://www.co.iredell.nc.us/872/Communicable-Disease-Information-for-Pro>. Note– COVID positive number vary depending on the source. Numbers for this report are obtained from the North Carolina Electronic Disease Surveillance System (NC EDSS).

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Promote and protect community, personal, and environmental health.**

The information in the newsletter is not intended to be a complete guide for communicable disease investigation and response; visit the CDC website at www.cdc.gov for detailed disease information.

Resources:

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. (2021, March 10). Nursing home visitation. Retrieved from <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-39-nh-revised.pdf>

North Carolina Communicable disease surveillance system (NC EDSS)

North Carolina COVID-19 reporting system (NC COVID)

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. (2020, September 21). Secretarial order No. 4– Mandatory testing for staff in nursing homes. Retrieved from <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/media/593/open>