

7 Day Test Out of Quarantine - Pilot in the PreK-12 School Setting

This pilot is limited to K-12 students and staff who do not have a household contact with COVID-19

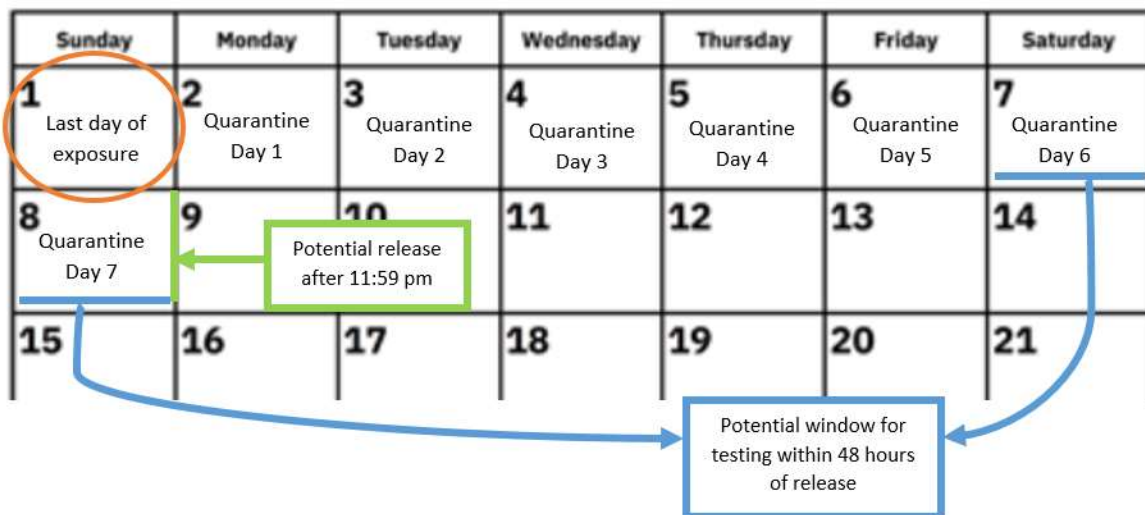
Quarantine is an effective tool for separating an exposed individual from others to prevent spread before the person knows they have the virus, but quarantine can be burdensome to individuals, families, schools, businesses, and communities. The incubation period of COVID-19 is 2-14 days after exposure, but the risk of becoming ill is not the same every day. Any quarantine shorter than 14 days carries a risk of continuing the spread of disease. CDC evaluated the risk of continued spread versus the benefits of reducing quarantine burden and provided options for reducing the length quarantine. ⁱ

When local circumstances and resources permit and when diagnostic testing resources are sufficient and available, CDC has indicated that a reduced quarantine period of 7 full days is an acceptable alternative if certain criteria are met. ACDOH requires the following to be considered for early release from quarantine:

1. Appropriately Timed Negative Viral Test

A negative COVID-19 viral test result from a diagnostic specimen is required. Viral tests include both antigen tests and nucleic acid amplification tests (NAAT), which include but are not limited to PCR tests. These tests can be administered in pharmacies, healthcare provider offices, and schools. In schools that have contracted with ACDOH for Quadrant testing, this test can be utilized. Abbott BinaxNOW antigen tests are also acceptable when administered by the school. At-home tests are not eligible for this protocol.

- The specimen must be collected no sooner than the morning of Day 6 of quarantine to stay within 48 hours of the time of planned quarantine discontinuation (after 11:59pm on Day 7).
- The laboratory report must include the name of the laboratory, name of the individual tested and their date of birth, the date the specimen was collected, and the result of the viral test.
- Quarantine cannot be discontinued earlier than after Day 7. Day 6 of quarantine is defined as the sixth day after an individual’s last documented close contact exposure to an individual infectious with COVID-19 (“last exposure”). In the example below, if an individual’s last exposure took place on the 1st of the month, the sixth day of quarantine would be on the 7th. If a specimen collected that day tested negative for COVID-19, the individual could potentially be released from quarantine after 11:59 PM on the 8th of the month.



2. The individual under quarantine has not developed any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 since their last exposure, including the entirety of quarantine up to the time at which quarantine is discontinued.

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. Anyone can have mild to severe symptoms. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- 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

3. The individual agrees to maintain continued vigilance against COVID-19 by adhering to the following conditions upon early release from quarantine and through Day 14 following their last exposure.

Symptom Monitoring: The individual must remain alert for COVID-19 symptoms described above. In a true medical emergency, the individual should first call 911. If any symptoms develop, the individual must immediately self-isolate and seek testing. If the result is positive, the individual will remain isolated for 10 days after symptom onset as a case. If the result is negative, the individual should remain in quarantine for 14 days after the last exposure.

Other Risk Mitigation Measures: Outside the home, the individual must correctly and consistently wear a mask whenever possible, maintain at least 6 feet of distance from others (3ft as appropriate in a preK-12 school setting), and practice scrupulous hand hygiene and environmental cleaning.

Process for Early Release

Currently, ACDOH supports piloting 7-day test out of quarantine in the PreK-12 school setting. School staff is responsible for approving return to school in accordance with this guidance document. ACDOH will not update and resend quarantine orders. At time of release and while still asymptomatic, the individual is not only cleared for attendance at school but is no longer under quarantine.

ⁱ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/scientific-brief-options-to-reduce-quarantine.html> updated 12/02/2020 and last accessed 11/18/2021