



LEE HARRIS
MAYOR

SHELBY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

ALISA R. HAUSHALTER, DNP, RN, PHNA-BC
DIRECTOR

BRUCE RANDOLPH, MD, MPH
HEALTH OFFICER



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Shelby County Health Department

Shelby County Health Department Issues New Quarantine Guidelines

December 4, 2020

Quarantine is a public health strategy used to separate someone who may have been exposed to an illness and who is still in a period of time when they can develop illness. Quarantine is used to prevent transmission in the event the exposed person develops the illness.

Quarantine is an important measure to control the spread of COVID-19 because it has been demonstrated that persons may spread the virus before they develop symptoms, and others may spread the virus without experiencing any symptoms.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) originally set a 14-day quarantine period for COVID-19 based on estimates of the upper bounds of the virus' incubation period. Since that time, research indicates that more than 90% of exposed persons who go on to develop COVID-19 illness develop symptoms within 10 days of exposure. For that reason the CDC has revised its guidance to allow for a shorter quarantine period under the following conditions:

- Quarantine can end after Day 10 of exposure without testing and if no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring.
- In some cases, quarantine can end after Day 7 of exposure, if a diagnostic specimen tests negative for the SARS-CoV-2 virus and if no symptoms were reported during daily monitoring, but quarantine cannot be discontinued earlier than after Day 7.

In both cases, the quarantined subject must continue to 1. Monitor for signs and symptoms of illness, 2. Wear a mask when around others, and 3. Observe social distancing through Day 14 of exposure.

Those organizations and institutions that partner with the Health Department in workplace and schoolbased contact tracing should incorporate this new guidance into their current policies. Healthcare providers who partner with the Health Department to place patients in quarantine should also adhere to these policies and incorporate them into patient education materials.