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Department of Public Health
Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences
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**Information and Guidance for Persons
in Quarantine due to COVID-19**

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You are required to quarantine (separate yourself) from other people because you have been exposed to the 2019 Novel (New) Coronavirus (COVID-19). If you have COVID-19, you could spread it to people around you and make them sick. **The Massachusetts Department of Public Health recommends persons exposed to COVID-19, regardless of whether they have any symptoms, should be tested as soon as possible after they are notified of their exposure.**

Testing should be done by a swab to detect the presence of the virus by polymerase chain reaction (PCR). Neither serologic (antibody) testing via a blood draw nor antigen testing via a swab are appropriate for testing contacts. If you develop symptoms at any point during your quarantine, you should be tested by PCR (even if you were already tested and were negative).

COVID-19 is caused by a virus. It is spread through respiratory secretions (mucous and droplets from coughs and sneezes) from an infected person and can cause serious illness such as pneumonia (lung infection), and in some rare cases, death.

This information sheet provides you with information about what *to do* and *not to do* while you are in quarantine. If you have questions after reading this, you can call your local Board of Health, or the Massachusetts Department of Public Health which is available 24/7 at 617-983-6800.

During your quarantine period, you should not have visitors in your home. The other people who live in your home can continue to do their normal activities as long as they are not in contact with you, as described further below, and not also under quarantine. If you test positive for COVID-19 and someone comes into contact with you that person might also then need to be quarantined.

While you are in quarantine you should follow these instructions:

1. Do not leave your home except to be tested or for urgent medical care. If you must leave your home for urgent medical care, wear a mask, such as a cloth or surgical mask. Call the healthcare provider before you go and tell them that you are quarantined due to COVID-19 exposure. For the protection of others, you should use a personal car or call an ambulance to travel to your healthcare provider. **Do not take public transportation, ride shares (e.g. Uber or Lyft), or taxis under any circumstance.**
2. Wear a mask, such as a cloth or surgical mask, if you must be in contact with other people. If not available try to maintain a distance of six feet from others; when this is not possible, limit your time being closer to people to five minutes or less.

3. Do not have visitors in your home.
4. To the extent possible, stay six feet away from other people in your home. If absolutely necessary, have one person help you and do not have contact with other people in your home. Wear a mask, such as a cloth or surgical mask, when in the same room as that person. If not available try to maintain a distance of six feet from others; when this is not possible, limit your time being closer to people to five minutes or less.
5. If possible, use a separate bedroom and bathroom. Do not share towels or bed sheets/blankets with other people in your home. Wash your laundry separately from the laundry of other people in your home.
6. Do not share eating or drinking utensils. Wash utensils normally in a dishwasher or by hand with warm water and soap.
7. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and throw tissues away in a lined waste container. Then wash your hands.
8. Wash your hands frequently using soap and water for at least 20 seconds each time you wash. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Anyone you have to come in contact with (including anyone in your home) should:

1. Wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds often. If soap and water are not available they should use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
2. Wear a mask when they are in close contact with you. They should be careful to only touch the parts of the mask that go around the ears or behind the head. Do not touch the front of the mask. They should wash their hands immediately after taking the mask off. If not available try to maintain a distance of six feet from others; when this is not possible, limit your time being closer to people to five minutes or less.
3. Wear disposable gloves if they have to have direct contact with your body fluids (saliva/spit, mucous, urine, feces, vomit) or handle your dirty laundry. Remove the gloves carefully without touching the outside of the gloves, throw the gloves away, and wash their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub.

Anyone you have to come in contact with (including anyone in your home) should remain aware of their health and watch themselves for:

- a fever (temperature over 100.3 degrees). They should take their temperature in the morning and at night.
- other symptoms such as a cough, difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, chills, stiff or sore muscles, headache, or diarrhea.

If anyone you come in contact with has any of these symptoms, contact the local health department or the Massachusetts Department of Public Health at the phone numbers below.

If they need to seek medical care, they should call their healthcare provider before they go and tell them that they may have been exposed to COVID-19.

If they do **not** have any of the symptoms described above, they do not have to stay home and instead may continue with their normal activities.

Other advice to keep your germs from spreading:

1. Your gloves, tissues, masks and other trash should be put in a bag, tied closed, and put with other household trash.
2. Your laundry may be done in a standard washing machine using warm water and detergent. Bleach may be used but is not needed. Do not shake out the dirty laundry and avoid having the dirty laundry touch anyone’s skin or clothing.
3. Surfaces in the home that you touch or that become dirty with your body fluids (saliva/spit, mucous, urine, feces, vomit) should be cleaned and disinfected with a household disinfectant according to the label directions. Wear gloves while cleaning.
4. Your bathroom should be cleaned every day using a household disinfectant according to the directions on the label. Wear gloves while cleaning.

How long must you follow these instructions?

You will need to remain quarantined for at least 14 days from the date of last exposure. A public health authority (MDPH or your local board of health) will be in contact with you and can also provide a referral for testing. If you have any questions or experience a change in your health status during your 14-day quarantine period, please let them know. You will need to complete the full 14-day quarantine, even if you test negative for COVID-19 during that time.

Questions?

Please call your healthcare provider, your local board of health or the Massachusetts Department of Public Health with any questions.

1. **Your Healthcare Provider Name:** _____
Phone Number: _____
2. **Your local board of health (Town/City):** _____
Contact Person & Phone Number: _____
3. **Massachusetts Department of Public Health: On Call Epidemiologist**
Phone: (617) 983-6800 (7 days per week/24 hours per day)

Thank you for your active cooperation in keeping yourself, your family, and your community healthy and safe.

Date provided to quarantined individual: _____

Provided by (name): _____

Additional instructions or fact sheets may be attached as applicable.