COUNTY OF YOLO

Office of the County Administrator

Chad Rinde
Interim County Administrator

625 Court Street, Room 202 ▪ Woodland, CA 95695
www.yolocounty.org

John Fout, Public Information Officer
John.Fout@yolocounty.org

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Contact: John Fout
Email: John.Fout@yolocounty.org

Yolo County Revises COVID-19 Guidance to Align with State of California's Reduced Isolation and Quarantine Period

(Woodland, CA) – Following recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), Yolo County has revised its local health orders to align with shortened COVID-19 isolation (PDF) and quarantine (PDF) periods, reducing the duration of isolation and quarantine to 5 days instead of the earlier 10 for most individuals. The shortened isolation and quarantine periods are based on scientific studies that show most transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19 occurs early in the course of illness, generally in the 1-2 days before the onset of symptoms and the 2-3 days after.

Isolation for individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 can now end after 5 days, but only if the person has no symptoms or symptoms are improving, tests negative on day 5 or later, and wears a mask that fits and filters well over their mouth and nose when around others indoors until day 10. Because PCR tests can result in a positive test for a month or longer after infection, tests to end isolation need to be antigen tests. Yolo County has started planning to make free home antigen tests available to those testing positive.

Quarantine for individuals who have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 can now end after five days with a negative test on day 5 or later if the individual wears a mask that fits and filters well over their mouth and nose when around others indoors until day 10. The test to end quarantine can be either an antigen test or a PCR test. Individuals who have tested positive in the previous 90 days are no longer exempt from quarantine after close contact with someone with COVID-19, nor are individuals who are eligible for a booster dose but have not yet received their booster.

"Yolo County is aligning our isolation and quarantine requirements with those of the State and the CDC," said Yolo County Health Officer Dr. Aimee Sisson. "The shorter time to isolate or quarantine allows children to return to school and adults to return to work. However, in order for the new guidance to keep us safe from the highly contagious Omicron variant, we need to respect the requirements to test negative before ending isolation or quarantine after 5 days and to wear a mask indoors on days 6-10."

As part of the new guidance, home antigen test results will now be accepted as proof of either a negative or positive test, although some workplaces or schools can and may have stricter requirements. At minimum, an individual should document their home test result with a photo of the test result, the individual's name, and date and time of collection. Individuals testing positive with a home test should report their test result to their healthcare provider or call Yolo County Public Health at 1-833-YOLOCOV (965-6268). An online reporting platform is under development as home tests become more common.

Isolation and quarantine periods for health care workers are different from those of the general public. Depending on vaccination status and whether critical staffing shortages are occurring, health care worker isolation and quarantine range from 0 to 10 days.

Dr. Sisson strongly urges Yolo County residents to take steps to protect themselves and others against COVID-19. Vaccination, and a booster dose if eligible, remains the best protection against COVID-19. With the Omicron variant, cloth masks alone do not offer enough protection. Upgrade your mask to an N95, KN95, KF94, or similar respirator, double mask with a cloth mask over a surgical mask, or place a PM2.5 filter between the layers of your fabric masks. Make sure your mask covers your mouth and nose without gaps between the edges of the mask and your face. Get tested if you have any symptoms, after close contact with someone with COVID-19, before leaving isolation or quarantine, or before and after a gathering or travel. In addition, stay home if you feel sick and pursue testing.

For information on the new guidelines and COVID-19, visit www.yolocounty.org/covid. The CDC and the California Department of Public Health also offer additional resources on COVID-19.

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