

Currently evaluating potential timeline for implementation

SANTA FE - The New Mexico Department of Health announced Dec. 29 that it plans to adopt new federal guidance surrounding isolation and quarantine for COVID-19. The state is currently updating its contact tracing protocols and other key processes and will announce a more specific implementation timeline in the near future.

On Dec. 27, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reduced its recommended COVID guidelines for isolation (following a positive COVID test) and guarantine (following exposure)

State plans to adopt revised CDC COVID-19 isolation and quarantine guidelines

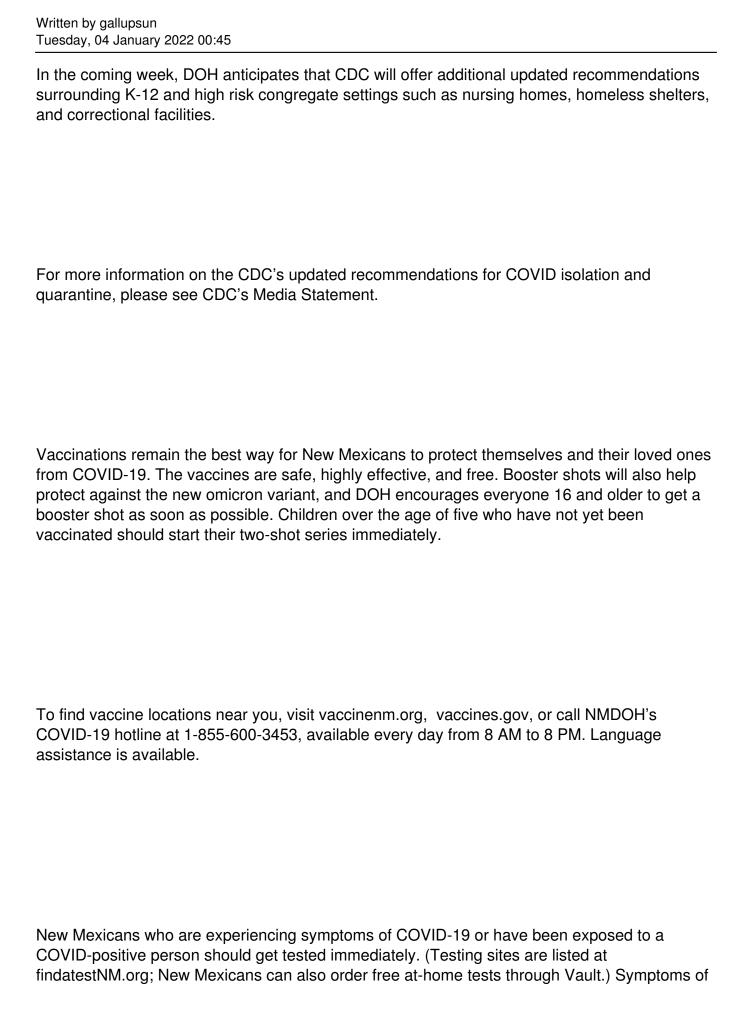
Written by gallupsun Tuesday, 04 January 2022 00:45

from ten days to five days. Isolation and quarantine are critical tools for preventing the spread of COVID, especially by asymptomatic people who may spread the disease unknowingly. The CDC's updated guidelines read, in part:

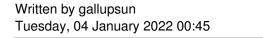
Given what we currently know about COVID-19 and the Omicron variant, CDC is shortening the recommended time for isolation from 10 days for people with COVID-19 to 5 days, if asymptomatic, followed by 5 days of wearing a mask when around others. The change is motivated by science demonstrating that the majority of SARS-CoV-2 transmission occurs early in the course of illness, generally in the 1-2 days prior to onset of symptoms and the 2-3 days after. Therefore, people who test positive should isolate for 5 days and, if asymptomatic at that time, they may leave isolation if they can continue to mask for 5 days to minimize the risk of infecting others.

Additionally, CDC is updating the recommended quarantine period for those exposed to COVID-19. For people who are unvaccinated or are more than six months out from their second mRNA dose (or more than 2 months after the J&J vaccine) and not yet boosted, CDC now recommends quarantine for 5 days followed by strict mask use for an additional 5 days. Alternatively, if a 5-day quarantine is not feasible, it is imperative that an exposed person wear a well-fitting mask at all times when around others for 10 days after exposure. Individuals who have received their booster shot do not need to quarantine following an exposure, but should wear a mask for 10 days after the exposure. For all those exposed, best practice would also include a test for SARS-CoV-2 at day 5 after exposure. If symptoms occur, individuals should immediately quarantine until a negative test confirms symptoms are not attributable to COVID-19.

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COVID-19 include fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, chills, repeated shaking with chills, gastrointestinal illness and new loss of taste or smell.

DOH continues to recommend limited travel and exposure to large crowds. Additionally, masking is required for all individuals when indoors.