

**TO:** Vermont Health Care Providers and Health Care Facilities  
**FROM:** Patsy Kelso, PhD; State Epidemiologist

**Updated Novel Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19)-Related Recommendations on Quarantine**

**Note:** This Health Update supersedes the updates sent on [May 8, 2020](#).

**Background**

One goal of RESTART VT is to minimize restrictions on Vermonters when reasonable, while remaining focused on identification of all cases and containment of the spread of SARS-CoV-2, the etiologic agent for COVID-19. Quarantine is indicated for asymptomatic people who are exposed to a COVID-19 case (e.g., identified through contact tracing) and for people entering Vermont after being outside of the state for 24 hours or longer.

**The quarantine period, which had been 12 days, is now 14 days.** This is to reduce confusion and be consistent with the special case of new admissions to nursing homes, assisted living residences, and residential care homes.

The median incubation period for COVID-19 is 4-5 days, and the vast majority of cases develop symptoms by day 7. People who are in quarantine for any reason, with the exception of new admissions to nursing homes, assisted living residences, and residential care homes, and who are asymptomatic throughout the quarantine period can be tested by PCR on or after day 7. People must remain in quarantine while awaiting test results. If the results are negative and they remain asymptomatic they may end quarantine. Those who receive a negative test result on or after day 7 must continue to self-monitor for symptoms for the remainder of the 14-day incubation period. If symptoms develop, they should stay home and contact the Health Department and their healthcare provider. As we RESTART Vermont, we are taking measured risks, and there is a low but reasonable risk to this approach.

Anyone in quarantine is encouraged to enroll in [Sara Alert](#), a free, automated and secure reminder system to check for common COVID-19 symptoms. If symptoms are reported, someone from the Health Department will reach out and provide guidance and next steps. Sara Alert is not a contact tracing system and does not monitor people's movements or track their location.

**Requested Action:**

- Test or refer for testing asymptomatic patients on day 7 or later of quarantine if they would like to end their quarantine period early based on a negative test result. If testing is not conducted in the provider's office, patients can get tested at a testing event in their area. Patients register for an upcoming testing events by calling 2-1-1 or visiting [humanresources.vermont.gov/popups](https://humanresources.vermont.gov/popups).

- Encourage patients to enroll in [Sara Alert](#) to get fast, easy and free reminders to do symptom checks and easy access to the Health Department for guidance.

If you have any questions, please contact the HAN Coordinator at 802-859-5900 or [vthan@vermont.gov](mailto:vthan@vermont.gov).

#### **HAN Message Type Definitions**

*Health Alert:* Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

*Health Advisory:* Provides important information for a specific incident or situation may not require immediate action.

*Health Update:* Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

*Info Service Message:* Provides general correspondence from VDH, which is not necessarily considered to be of an emergent nature.