

CLAY COUNTY COVID-19 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Updated 11-16-2020

What is Quarantine and what do I do if I was told to quarantine? Quarantine means you do not have the disease but you have possibly been exposed and are considered a “close contact” of a positive case. If you have been told by a public health or other authority that you are a close contact of a laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19, you must quarantine yourself for 14 days after your last contact with the case. Those who are under a 14-day home quarantine should not attend school, work or any other setting. Persons under quarantine should stay home and not go to public places. Any other quarantine allowance for leaving home must be made by the county local health officer and is determined on a case by case basis.

How do I know if I need to quarantine? If you have recently travelled outside the state of Kansas, see the KDHE Website for the list of travel related quarantine locations.

<https://www.coronavirus.kdheks.gov/DocumentCenter/View/134/Isolation--Quarantine-Guidance-and-FAQs-PDF---11-4-20>

If you are told you need to quarantine because of a possible exposure to the disease, follow the instructions you are given by public health officials.

If someone I know has COVID-19 have I been exposed? If you have been identified as a close contact of a known case you will be contacted by a public health official and given instructions. All positive test results are required to be reported to Public Health Officials for case investigation and contact identification. Most casual encounters with others will not result in disease transmission. Persons most at risk are those that meet the definition of Close Contact as outlined below. If you are wearing your mask in public, washing your hands, limiting your interaction with those that do not live in your household and following other guidance issued by public health officials, you are at minimal risk of becoming ill.

What is a “Close Contact” and how do I know if I am at risk? You are a "close contact" if any of the following situations happened while you spent time with a person with COVID-19, even if they didn't have symptoms:

- Were within 6 feet of the person for 10 consecutive minutes or more
- Had contact with the person's respiratory secretions (for example, coughed or sneezed on; kissed; contact with a dirty tissue; shared a drinking glass, food, towels, or other personal items).
- Live with the person or stayed overnight for at least one night in a house with the person.

The chance of spreading the virus is greater the longer an infected person or persons are close to someone. It also matters if the infected person is coughing, sneezing, singing, shouting, or doing anything else that produces more respiratory droplets that contain virus or if there are exposures to more than one infected person.

The final decision on what constitutes close contact is made at the discretion of public health officials.

What do I do if I know someone that has tested positive? If a person in your household tests positive, you will be given any needed quarantine guidance by public health officials. If a co-worker or close friend identifies you as a potential close contact you will be contacted by public health Contact Tracers and interviewed to determine your level of risk. That Contact Tracer will give you instructions.

What is Isolation and what do I do if the doctor tells me I have to be in isolation? Isolation means you have tested positive for the disease or your doctor considers you to be Presumptive Positive - Do not leave your home unless it is in an emergency. Avoid one-on-one interaction within 6-feet of another person. If possible, separate yourself from other people in your home. Stay in a different room from others and use a separate bathroom, if available. Monitor your symptoms. Watch for fever, cough or trouble breathing. If you become ill and need non-emergency medical attention for any reason, call your healthcare provider before you seek care and tell your healthcare provider that you have COVID-19. Use a facemask when you go the healthcare facility. If you are in a medical emergency and need to call 911, notify the dispatch personnel that you have COVID-19. If possible, put on a facemask before EMS helpers arrive. Make sure you have the supplies and support you need. Do not share household supplies. Follow any other instructions you are given by your doctor or public health officials.

What can I do if I am in Quarantine? Stay home. Follow the instructions you are given by public health officials. Do not go to public places, limit your contact with household members, avoid contact with non-household members. Maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet from other persons, wear your mask when other people are in your area. Monitor yourself daily and report developing symptoms or fever to your public health contact tracer.

I am in Quarantine but I must pick up my medication and groceries! What can I do? Contact your pharmacy or grocery store and see if they have delivery services? If they do, use that arrangement. If they do not, ask a friend or family member that is not in quarantine to pick up the items for you and bring them to your porch. Avoid inviting them into your home when they bring the delivery.

I don't have family or friends that can help me during quarantine! Who can I call? The Chamber of Commerce in Clay Center has been helping us out by putting together a volunteer registry that can match volunteers to people needing some help. You can apply for assistance on their website at <https://www.claycenterchamber.com/covid-19>

I want to be helpful and be a good citizen, but I want to stay safe, what can I do to help? The Chamber of Commerce in Clay Center has been helping us out by putting together a volunteer registry that can match volunteers to people needing some help. You can apply to volunteer on their website at <https://www.claycenterchamber.com/covid-19> . One of the best things you can do is to take the disease seriously and follow all the guidelines issued by public health officials. Wear your mask, avoid mass gatherings, maintain at least 6 feet of distance between you and non-household persons and follow the personal hygiene recommendations aggressively.

My spouse received a call from the Health Department that she/he is a "Close Contact" of a positive case at his workplace. Do I need to quarantine too? NO, you do not. Unless there are special circumstances in your particular case, you do not need to quarantine. Follow the instructions your spouse received from the Health Department's Contact Tracer. The contacts of a Close Contact are not considered at risk unless the Close Contact develops symptoms during quarantine.

Why don't all of the Clay County COVID-19 Updates include the "Negative" and "Pending" case numbers? We do not have those numbers internally, those numbers come from outside sources and we often do not receive those updates. When we do receive those updated numbers and can verify,

they are correct, we include them with the Update that is issued every Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoon after KDHE updates the state numbers.

If I test positive, how soon will I be notified? You will be notified as soon as your test returns from the lab by the provider that did your test. Depending on which lab is involved the test may take 48-72 hours or longer to return.

How soon will someone from the Health Department call me after I am diagnosed as positive? A “Contact Investigator” from either the Clay County Health Department or the Kansas Department of Health and Environment will call you as soon as they have received notification of your test results. Due to current workloads our Disease Investigators are experiencing, that contact may take two or three days. If you know you have had close contact with someone outside of your household, you are free to call your “close contacts” and inform them that they may have been exposed and should quarantine. You can also call the Clay County Health Department at 785-632-3193 and leave a voicemail message or send your inquiry to covid19@claycountykansas.org and someone will contact you as soon as they are able to do so, typically by the end of the next business day.

If I am identified as a Close Contact by a positive case, how soon will I be notified? Our Contact Tracers have an overwhelming work load right now. If you suspect you meet the criteria above to be considered a Close Contact, self-quarantine until you are contacted. You can also call the Clay County Health Department at 785-632-3193 and leave a voicemail message or send your inquiry to covid19@claycountykansas.org and someone will contact you as soon as they are able to do so, typically by the end of the next business day.

When will the COVID-19 Vaccine be available? Current reports are indicating that the vaccine may be available for wide spread distribution during the spring of 2021.

What do the number categories on the Clay County Update Mean?

- **Positive** – Total number of positive cases of COVID-19 in Clay County residents since the outbreak began in early 2020
- **Active** – The number of active cases that are currently diagnosed with Covid and are currently under a 10 day isolation order.
- **Following** – The number of Close Contacts being followed by local public health officials
- **Recovered** – The number of positive cases that have met the criteria (see KDHE website) for recovery
- **Hospitalized** – The total number of positive cases in Clay County residents that have been hospitalized because of the disease
- **Deaths** – The total number of Clay County residents that have died due to COVID-19 infection
- **Negative** – The total number of negative tests reported in Clay County residents
- **Pending** – The number of tests awaiting return

What happens to my personal information when a Contact Tracer calls me? Your name and other personal information is considered protected and will not be shared outside of the Public Health scope of managing your case. Information will not be shared with your Close Contacts or others outside of the medical chain of information that may ask for the information.