

Guidelines for Household Members, Intimate Partners, and Caregivers (in a Non-healthcare Setting) of a Person Confirmed to have Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19)

This guidance is for household members, intimate partners, and caregivers in a non-healthcare setting that may have had close contact with a person who has tested positive for coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19). If you are a household member, intimate partner, or caregiver (non-healthcare setting) of a person with COVID-19, DC Health recommends that you follow the steps below to help prevent the spread of the virus in your home and community.

Actions you should take:

- **Separate yourself from other people (self-quarantine) as much as possible at your home.**
 - Stay in another room or be separated from the person who tested positive as much as possible.
 - Use a separate bedroom and bathroom, if available.
- **Avoid leaving the house:**
 - Avoid public activities and gatherings (e.g. church, parties, etc.)
 - Do not leave home to go to work or school
 - Work at home (telework) or use sick leave
 - If you are a student, make alternative arrangements to obtain class materials
 - Do not take public transportation (e.g. Metro buses or trains) and do not use taxis or rideshare services (e.g. Uber, Lyft)
 - Do not travel (airline, cruise ship etc.)
 - Prohibit visitors who do not have an essential need to be in the home
- **Avoid sharing household items.** You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding, or other items. After you use these items, you should wash them thoroughly.
- **Ensure you and other household members care for any pets in the home.** If you get sick, stop handling pets and other animals.
- **Wear a facemask when in the same room with or providing care to the person who is COVID-19 positive.**
 - If a facemask is not available use a cloth face covering.
- **Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces at least daily.**
 - Make sure you clean visible dirt with soap and water before you disinfect.
 - Visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/cleaning-disinfection.html> for more information.
- **Clean your hands often.**
 - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or clean your hands with a store-bought alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry.
 - Soap and water should be used if hands are visibly dirty.
 - Do not make your own hand sanitizer
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.**

Monitor yourself closely for symptoms of COVID-19:

- Check for fever by taking your temperature twice a day and remain alert for cough or difficulty breathing.
- **If you develop symptoms of COVID-19:**

- Consult with your healthcare provider if you are greater than 60, have chronic healthcare conditions (heart disease, diabetes, lung disease, immunocompromised, etc), or if you think you may be at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19.
- Let your healthcare provider know about your exposure to another person who is COVID-19 positive.
- Most people have mild symptoms and can stay at home until they are feeling better.
- **If you have a medical emergency**, please call 911. Be sure to let them know about your exposure to a confirmed COVID-19 case.
- **Visits to a healthcare facility for any reason must be via medical transport (e.g. ambulance) or private vehicle.** Be sure to call ahead and wear a face mask if available.

If you are taking care of your sick household member:

- **Limit contact as much as possible.**
 - If you have to share space, make sure the room has good air flow by opening a window or turning on a fan. Air circulation and ventilation helps remove respiratory droplets from the air.
- **Wear a facemask** (or a cloth face covering if a facemask is not available).
- **The person positive for COVID-19 should wear a cloth face covering (or facemask, if available) that covers their nose and mouth as much as possible.**
 - If they can't tolerate a cloth face covering (because of trouble breathing, for example), encourage them to cover their coughs and sneezes in some other way (tissue, handkerchief, etc.)
- **Encourage the person to wash their hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer as much as possible.**
- **Clean and disinfect often around the house but limit your time in the area around the person who is sick.**
 - Use soap and water to clean high touch surfaces and other areas and then follow that up with a household disinfectant.
 - Place all used disposable gloves, soiled facemasks, and other contaminated items in a lined container before disposing of them with other household waste.
 - **If they feel up to it, the person who is sick can clean their own space.** Give the person who is sick personal cleaning supplies such as tissues, paper towels, cleaners, and disinfectant.
- **If they are getting sicker, call their healthcare provider.** If they have a medical emergency and you need to call 911, notify the dispatch personnel that the patient has COVID-19.
- For additional tips in caring for a sick household members visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/care-for-someone.html>

Stay Informed

- Visit <https://coronavirus.dc.gov/> to get the most up-to-date information.
- Sign up for AlertDC: <https://hsema.dc.gov/>