



**DIRECTIVE OF THE HEALTH OFFICER No. 2020-03c**

**DIRECTIVE OF THE HEALTH OFFICER  
OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO DIRECTING ALL  
INDIVIDUALS DIAGNOSED WITH OR LIKELY TO HAVE COVID-19  
TO SELF-ISOLATE**

**(PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY ISOLATION DIRECTIVE)**

DATE OF DIRECTIVE: August 5, 2020

Summary: It is now well established that the virus that causes Coronavirus 2019 Disease (“COVID-19”) is easily transmitted, especially in group settings, and that the disease can be extremely serious. It can require long hospital stays, and in some instances cause long-term health consequences or death. It can impact not only those known to be at high risk but also other people, regardless of age or risk factors. This is a global pandemic causing untold societal, social, and economic harm. The spread of COVID-19 is a substantial danger to the health of the public within the City and County of San Francisco (the “City”). To help slow COVID-19’s spread, protect vulnerable individuals, and prevent the healthcare system in the City from becoming overwhelmed, it is necessary for the City’s Health Officer to require individuals who have been diagnosed with, or are likely to have, the COVID-19 virus to self-isolate. This self-isolation requirement protects everyone in the City, including people who are high risk for serious illness, such as older adults and people with weakened immune systems. This Directive was updated on August 5, 2020, to incorporate changes to the self-isolation criteria and protocol based on new guidance from the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

**UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF CALIFORNIA HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE  
SECTIONS 101040, 101085, 120175, 120215, 120220, AND 120225 THE HEALTH  
OFFICER OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO (“HEALTH  
OFFICER”) DIRECTS AS FOLLOWS:**

- 1. Any person who meets any of the following criteria is required by this Directive to self-isolate and take the other actions listed in Section 2:**
  - a. The person has a positive lab test for the COVID-19 virus; OR**
  - b. The person has signs and symptoms that are consistent with COVID-19 that are not explained by another condition or diagnosis within 14 days of knowingly being in Close Contact with another person who had or was believed to have had COVID-19; OR**
  - c. The person has been informed by a healthcare provider that they are likely to have COVID-19; OR**
  - d. The person has signs and symptoms that are consistent with COVID-19 and is awaiting results of testing for COVID-19.**
  
- 2. Any person who meets any of the criteria set forth in Section 1 must do all of the following:**



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- a. **The person must immediately self-isolate in that person’s residence or another residence, such as a hotel or motel, until both of the following criteria are met:**
  - i. **At least one (1) day (24 hours) has passed since recovery, defined as the resolution of fever without use of fever-reducing medications and improvement of other symptoms, AND**
  - ii. **At least ten (10) days have passed since symptoms first appeared, or if the person never had symptoms, then at least ten (10) days have passed since the date they had their first positive COVID-19 test.**
- b. **The person must carefully review and closely follow all home isolation guidelines listed in the “Home Isolation and Quarantine Guidelines for People with Coronavirus-2019 (COVID-19) Infection and their Household or Close Contacts” issued by the City’s Department of Public Health, a copy of which is attached to this Directive and which is available online here: <https://www.sfcdep.org/Home-Isolation-Quarantine-Guidelines>. For purposes of this Directive, any future changes provided online to the guidance listed in this subparagraph are automatically incorporated into this Directive by this reference without any need to amend or revise this Directive.**

**Minors and adults with special needs who are unable to care for themselves do not have to isolate from caregivers in their home. However, they should stay at home and stay away from people outside their household except to receive medical care.**

- c. **The person must notify any Close Contact that they need to self-quarantine for fourteen (14) days pursuant to Health Officer Directive No. 2020-02b. The person should refer their Close Contacts to Health Officer Directive No. 2020-02b and to the “Home Isolation and Quarantine Guidelines for People with Coronavirus-2019 (COVID-19) Infection and their Household or Close Contacts” issued by the City’s Department of Public Health, a copy of which is attached to this Directive and which is available online here: <https://www.sfcdep.org/Home-Isolation-Quarantine-Guidelines>. This is necessary because Close Contacts of a person who has been diagnosed with or is likely to have the COVID-19 virus have likely themselves been exposed to COVID-19 and, if infected, can easily spread it to others, even if they have only mild symptoms or no symptoms at all.**
3. **The intent of this Directive is to ensure that any person who has been diagnosed with or is likely to have COVID-19 avoids contact with others to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus and mitigate the impact of the virus on members of the public and on the delivery of critical healthcare services to those in need. All provisions of this Directive must be interpreted to effectuate this intent.**



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- 4. This Directive is issued based on evidence of increasing occurrence of COVID-19 within the City, the Bay Area, and the United States of America, scientific evidence and best practices regarding the most effective approaches to slow the transmission of communicable diseases generally and COVID-19 specifically, and evidence that the age, condition, and health of a significant portion of the population of the City places it at risk for serious health complications, including death, from COVID-19. The virus can also have a serious impact on other people, regardless of age or other risk factors. Due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus in the general public, which is now a pandemic according to the World Health Organization, there is a public health emergency throughout the City. Making the problem worse, some individuals who contract the virus causing COVID-19 have no symptoms or have mild symptoms, which means they may not be aware they carry the virus and can inadvertently transmit it to others. Because even people without symptoms can transmit the infection, and because evidence shows the infection is easily spread, gatherings and other interpersonal interactions can result in preventable transmission of the virus.**
- 5. This Directive is also issued in light of the existence, as of August 2, 2020, of 7,081 cases of infection by the COVID-19 virus in the City, including a significant number of cases of community transmission and likely further significant increases in transmission. This Directive is necessary to slow the rate of spread, and the Health Officer will continue to assess the quickly evolving situation and may modify or extend this Directive, or issue additional directives, related to COVID-19, as changing circumstances dictate.**
- 6. This Directive is also issued in accordance with, and incorporates by reference, the March 4, 2020 Proclamation of a State of Emergency issued by Governor Gavin Newsom, the March 12, 2020 Executive Order (Executive Order N-25-20) issued by Governor Gavin Newsom, the February 25, 2020 Proclamation by Mayor London Breed Declaring the Existence of a Local Emergency (as supplemented several times after its issuance), the March 6, 2020 Declaration of Local Health Emergency Regarding Novel Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) issued by the Health Officer, and guidance issued by the California Department of Public Health and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as each of them have been and may be supplemented.**
- 7. If an individual who is subject to this Directive fails to comply with it in willful disregard of public safety, the Health Officer may take additional action(s), which may include issuing an individualized isolation order and seeking civil detention at a health facility or other location, as necessary to protect the public's health.**
- 8. Definitions.**

  - a. For the purposes of this Directive, a "Close Contact" means a person who:**



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- i. Lived in or stayed at the same residence as the person with COVID-19; OR**
- ii. Was an intimate sexual partner of the person with COVID-19; OR**
- iii. Stayed within 6 feet of the person with COVID-19 for 15 minutes or more; OR**
- iv. Had direct contact for any amount of time with the body fluids and/or secretions of the person with COVID-19 (e.g., was coughed or sneezed on, shared utensils with, or was provided care by or provided care for them without wearing a mask, gown, and gloves)**

**at any time during the period starting 48 hours before the person with COVID-19's symptoms began (or starting 48 hours before the date of their positive test if the person with COVID-19 had no symptoms).**

- 9. This Directive shall become effective at 12:00 p.m. on August 5, 2020 and will continue to be in effect until it is extended, rescinded, superseded, or amended in writing by the Health Officer. Also effective as of 12:00 p.m. on August 5, 2020, this Directive revises and replaces Directive Number 2020-03b, issued May 4, 2020.**

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Tomás J. Aragón, MD, DrPH,  
Health Officer of the  
City and County of San Francisco

August 5, 2020



<b>What you Need to Know</b>	<b>If You're Getting a COVID-19 Test – page 1</b>
	<b>Home Isolation Steps – page 2</b>
	<b>Home Quarantine Steps – page 2</b>
	<b>Steps for <u>Both</u> Isolation &amp; Quarantine– page 3</b>

**If You're Getting a COVID-19 Test**

- A swab (like a Q-Tip) goes into your mouth or nose
- The test checks for COVID-19 virus in your body right now
- Results are reported to the Department of Public Health, so that health staff can help identify infections and keep them from spreading. Health staff are trained to keep your personal information private

**WHILE WAITING FOR TEST RESULTS**

- *If you have COVID-19 symptoms* → follow **Home Isolation Steps** (page 2)
- *If you do not have COVID-19 symptoms, but you have recently had close contact with a person who has COVID-19* → follow **Home Quarantine Steps** (page 2)
- *If no COVID-19 symptoms or close contacts* → stay safe, wait for test results.

**WHEN YOU RECEIVE YOUR TEST RESULTS**

**Positive Results (virus detected).** A “positive” viral test means you had COVID-19 infection on the day you were tested. Follow **Home Isolation Steps** (page 2)

**Negative Results (virus not detected).** A “negative” viral test means you probably do not have COVID-19 infection right now. This is a little tricky, so read carefully:

- If you have had no COVID-19 symptoms or close contacts, then you do not have COVID-19. Done!
- If you have had no COVID-19 symptoms but you did have recent close contact with a person who has COVID-19, then continue to follow **Home Quarantine Steps** (page 2).
- If you had COVID-19 symptoms, the negative test result could be wrong -- you still might have COVID-19. This is because the test is excellent but not perfect.
  - At a minimum, follow **Home Isolation Steps** until you feel better, with at least 1 day with no fever
  - Or, ask your doctor when you should stop following the **Home Isolation Steps**
  - Or, if you are in close contact with a “vulnerable” person, you might want to keep following **Home Isolation Steps** until at least 10 days have passed since your symptoms first started

**COVID-19 symptoms:** fever at least 100.4°F, chills, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, sore throat, muscle aches, headache, feeling unusually weak or tired, diarrhea, congested or runny nose, or losing the sense of smell or taste.

**Close Contact** means people in your home, your sex partners, and people who take care of you or who you take care of. Also considered close contacts are people who stayed within 6 feet of you for more than 15 minutes, or who had direct contact with your body fluids or secretions while they were not wearing a facemask, gown, and gloves.

**Vulnerable** means age 50 years or more, or has medical conditions such as heart, lung, or kidney disease, diabetes, obesity, cancer, sickle cell, or a weakened immune system. See more at [www.sfgdcp.org/vulnerable](http://www.sfgdcp.org/vulnerable)



## Home Isolation and Quarantine Guidelines for People with COVID-19 Infection and their Household or Close Contacts

Follow **Home Isolation Steps** if you have:

- Positive test for COVID-19 viral infection, or
- Healthcare provider diagnosis of COVID-19, or
- COVID-19 symptoms and you had close contact with someone who has COVID-19, or
- COVID-19 symptoms and you are waiting for test results

Reference: [Health Officer Isolation Directive](#)

Follow **Home Quarantine Steps** if:

- You live in a household with, or had close contact with, someone who has COVID-19

→ see definition of Close Contact, page 1

Reference: [Health Officer Quarantine Directive](#)

### Home Isolation Steps

Most people with COVID-19 have mild illness. Persons of any age can become seriously ill, but the risk is higher for those age 50 years or older or who have medical conditions such as heart, lung, or kidney disease, diabetes, obesity, cancer, sickle cell, or a weakened immune system.

Follow steps on page 3, plus:

#### **Stay home for at least 10 days**

- You can end your isolation after at least **10 days** since your symptoms began, **and** your fever is gone for the past 24 hours without taking fever-reducing medicine like acetaminophen (Tylenol®) **and** your other symptoms have improved. If you had a positive COVID-19 test but never had symptoms, stay home for at least **10 days** after the day you were tested.
- If you have severe immune system weakness you may need to stay in isolation longer. Please discuss with your doctor.
- You do not need, and should not get, a second COVID-19 test in order to end your Isolation. Just follow the instructions in the bullets above.

#### **Close Contacts**

- See definition of Close Contact, page 1
- If you had a positive COVID-19 viral test or a doctor's diagnosis of COVID-19, then everyone who you had close contact with from 48 hours before your symptoms began (if you never had symptoms, then from 48 hours before your test) until you self-isolated, should follow the Home Quarantine Steps. Please share this document with them. To request help in notifying your Close Contacts without revealing your identity to them, please call 415-554-2830.

#### **What if you can't separate yourself from others?**

- Anyone who continues to be in close contact with you will need to begin a new quarantine cycle of 14 full days after the last day that person had close contact with you, or from the date that your isolation ends.
- Persons unable to care for themselves must stay home but don't have to isolate from their caregiver.

### Home Quarantine Steps

It can take up to 14 days to develop symptoms if you become infected with COVID-19.

Follow steps on page 3, plus:

#### **Stay home to see if you develop symptoms**

- You must stay in home quarantine for at least 14 full days after you were last in close contact with the person with COVID-19.
- If you cannot avoid having close contact with the person with COVID-19 while they are sick (for example, you are their caregiver), you must stay in quarantine for 14 full days **after** the day that person completed their self-isolation. (This is likely to be at least 24 total days of home quarantine.)

#### **What if you develop symptoms?**

- COVID-19 symptoms include fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose, or muscle pain, headache, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or losing the sense of smell or taste.
- If you develop any of the above symptoms, and they are new symptoms that you don't usually have in daily life, then you may have COVID-19 and you must follow the Home Isolation Steps.
- Monitor your symptoms closely and seek medical advice or medical care if symptoms worsen, especially if you are at a higher risk of serious illness.
- Get COVID-19 diagnostic testing to confirm that you have it. Call your doctor or contact 3-1-1 about testing locations.

#### **Which groups do not have to quarantine?**

- Essential COVID-19 Response Workers\* (check employer's policy; try to follow Home Quarantine Steps while not at work)

\***Essential COVID-19 Response Workers** are healthcare workers, laboratory personnel handling COVID-19 specimens, morgue workers, first responders, law enforcement, sanitation workers, 911 and 311 operators, emergency management personnel, individuals assigned to work as Disaster Service Workers, and individuals who work in long-term care facilities or homeless shelters.



## Steps for BOTH Home Isolation and Home Quarantine

- Stay home except to seek medical care. Do not go to work, school, or public areas. Do not use public transportation, ride shares or taxis
- Separate yourself from others in your home, especially people with higher risk of serious illness. Stay in a specific room and away from other people as much as possible. Use a separate bathroom, if available
- Do not allow visitors into your home, and do not prepare or serve food to others
- Limit your contact with pets
- If you cannot meet the requirements for Isolation or Quarantine where you currently live, contact 3-1-1 to request help with housing, food, or other needs
- If your employer requests a letter or a negative test to return to work, you can direct them to <https://www.sfc-dcp.org/workletter>
- If you have other concerns related to the impact of isolation and quarantine on your work, visit <https://www.sfc-dcp.org/workerFAQ>

### Prevent the spread:

- Wear a face covering or mask if you are in the same room with others. Others should wear a face covering or mask if they share or enter the room with you.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or sneeze into your sleeve -- not into your hands -- then throw away the tissue into a lined trashcan and immediately wash hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water - especially after coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose, or after going to the bathroom. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer with a minimum content of 60% alcohol can be used instead of soap and water if the hands are not visibly dirty.
- Do not share household items such as dishes, cups, utensils, towels, bedding with other people. After using these items, wash them thoroughly with soap and water. Laundry may be washed in a standard washing machine with warm water and detergent; bleach may be added but is not necessary.
- Clean and disinfect all "high-touch" surfaces every day (including counters, tabletops, doorknobs, faucets, toilets, phones, tv remotes, keys, keyboards), and especially any surfaces that may have body fluids on them. Use household cleaning and disinfectant sprays or wipes, according to the product label instructions. More info: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cleaning-disinfection.html>

### Practice home care:

- Rest and drink plenty of fluids. You may take acetaminophen (Tylenol®) to reduce fever and pain.
  - Do not give children younger than age 2 years any medications without first checking with a doctor.
  - Note that medicines do not "cure" COVID-19 and do not stop you from spreading the virus.
- Seek medical care if your symptoms get worse, especially if you are at a higher risk of serious illness.
- **Symptoms that indicate you should seek medical care include:**



- If possible, call ahead before going to your doctor's office or hospital and tell them you are in Isolation for COVID-19 to prepare health care personnel for your arrival and protect others from getting infected.
  - Do not wait in any waiting rooms; wear a face covering or mask at all times if possible.
  - Do not use public transportation.
  - If you call 911, first notify the dispatch and paramedics that you are under isolation for COVID-19.

For more information, or to get these guidelines in another language, visit <http://www.sfc-dcp.org/I&Q> or call 3-1-1.

**Thank you for your cooperation in this important public health matter**