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Whiteside County Health Department
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Whiteside County to Implement Modified Quarantine Options

December 10, 2020 – On Friday, December 11, the Whiteside County Health Department will begin implementing modified quarantine options for individuals who have been exposed to COVID-19 and have not developed symptoms. These options will incorporate [CDC's Options to Reduce Quarantine](#) and [IDPH's Quarantine Guidance](#) released on December 7th [[PDF](#)].

Under modified quarantine, an individual's quarantine will begin immediately after they have been exposed to COVID-19 and continue for 7, 10, or 14 days after their last exposure. The CDC currently recommends a quarantine period of 14 days. However, the CDC has provided local health authorities with options to reduce quarantine duration. These options are intended to help reduce the burden on individuals, businesses, and communities caused by the 14-day timeframe while maintaining a low risk of transmission to protect the public. Whiteside County will begin implementing the following options for discontinuing quarantine:

- Quarantine can end **after** Day 10 without testing if no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring. With this strategy, residual post-quarantine transmission risk is estimated to be about 1% with an upper limit of about 10%.
- Quarantine can end **after** Day 7 if a diagnostic **RT-PCR** tests negative and if no symptoms were reported during daily monitoring. The specimen may be collected and tested within 48 hours before the time of planned quarantine discontinuation (e.g., in anticipation of testing delays), but quarantine cannot be discontinued earlier than Day 8. In other words, the earliest they could test would be on Day 6. With this strategy, the residual post-quarantine transmission risk is estimated to be about 5% with an upper limit of about 12%.

Individuals will only be allowed to discontinue quarantine before day 14 if the following criteria can be met through day 14 at work, home, and school:

- correct and consistent mask use (including within homes),
- social distancing at all times (minimum of 6ft),
- hand and cough hygiene,
- environmental cleaning and disinfection,
- avoiding crowds,
- ensuring adequate indoor ventilation,
- monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19 illness, and
- minimizing contact with persons at increased risk for severe illness, including vulnerable and congregate populations.

At this time, these modified quarantine options will not be available to individuals who work or live in congregate residential settings such as long term care facilities or group homes.

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The Whiteside County Health Department's goal with this new process is to continue to protect our community while reducing the burden. Eligibility for modified quarantine will be determined on a case by case basis as we work to evaluate an individual's risk factors, potential impacts, and ability to meet the specified criteria. We will only be allowing a shorter quarantine duration for individuals if the above criteria can be met and Whiteside County's situation remains stable or improves. The Whiteside County Health Department will immediately discontinue this process and revert all contacts to a full 14-day quarantine if there are concerning increases in our metrics such as: county positivity rate, deaths, or number of new cases.

If you have questions please contact the IDPH COVID-19 hotline at 1-800-889-3931 or reach out to us. Additional information is also available on the [Illinois's COVID-19](#) and [CDC COVID-19](#) websites.