

ACHD Expanding Time Necessary To Reach Close Contacts

A recent increase in the number of positive COVID-19 cases in Audrain County has made it necessary for the Audrain County Health Department (ACHD) to extend the expected wait time for identified close contacts of cases to be notified. Currently, close contacts, once identified, have been contacted mostly in a 24 to 48-hour time period. With the increase, though, ACHD health officials now say those residents identified as a close contact, and those that are a positive case, will be contacted up to 72 hours from the time a COVID positive person has been notified. If our contact tracers do not contact you, this means you were not identified as a close contact.

Close contacts are only traced back two days prior to the patient's onset of COVID-19 symptoms, or two days prior to the patient's test date, if asymptomatic. When one of our contact tracers makes contact with an identified close contact, those contacted can expect our tracers to assess the contact for symptoms over the phone and then provide education and information for testing options and proper quarantine procedures for the identified close contact. Testing is only recommended if someone is a confirmed close contact or they are experiencing symptoms.

Please begin the 14-day quarantine process if you know you have been exposed to a positive person and a member of the ACHD contact tracing team has not contacted you yet. The 14-day quarantine period starts on the day after you were within close contact with the COVID positive person. Also:

- During quarantine, please refrain from going to work, school, church, the gym, grocery store, friend's or family's homes, etc.
- Quarantine is still necessary even if you had close contact with the infectious person while wearing a face mask
- Please remain quarantined for the entire 14 days, even if you test negative. The reasoning behind this request is even if you are negative, you can become infectious at any time during the 14 days
- As always, please contact your healthcare provider immediately if you develop symptoms anytime during quarantine

If you have further questions, please contact the ACHD at 573-581-1332 or the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services Hotline from 7:00 a.m. to 9 p.m. at 877-435-8411. Also, please consult our web site at www.audraincountyhealth.org or the CDC web site at www.cdc.gov for more information.