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Quarantine and Isolation

## Guidance for NPS Employees/Volunteers, Commercial Visitor Service Providers, and Partners in Parks

Updated April 6, 2021

### Goals

The terms “quarantine” and “isolation,” as used in this document, refer to voluntary measures by individuals to physically separate themselves from others in order to prevent the spread of disease, as [advised by the CDC](#). The terms “quarantine” and “isolation” used throughout this document are referring to those terms as they are used in CDC COVID-19 guidance, not to State quarantine or isolation orders or State public health emergency orders. Thus, for the purposes of this guidance, which applies to park lands, the terms “quarantine” and “isolation” do not include compulsory measures. The ultimate goal of isolation and quarantine is to prevent transmission of diseases by separating and restricting the movement or activities of persons who are ill, suspected of being ill, or who have been exposed to infection.

### Definitions

**Isolation** refers to the separation of sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick.

**Quarantine** refers to the separation of someone who might have been exposed to the virus away from others.

### Isolation and/or quarantine in parks

Anyone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 should isolate from others, as advised by the CDC. All laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases among NPS employees should be reported to the NPS Office of Public Health (OPH). Work-related, laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases must be entered in the Safety Management Information System (SMIS) as an accident report. A work-related known or suspected COVID-19 exposure must be reported in SMIS as an exposure. Guidance on the action steps for COVID-19 cases can be found in the [NPS Action Steps for COVID-19 Case Management and Reporting](#). Cases among volunteers, employees of commercial visitor service providers (i.e., concessioners, commercial use authorization holders or leaseholders), contractors, or partners (e.g., cooperating associations, friends groups and authorized philanthropic partners, education partners and other) (hereafter all referred to as partners) that represent a risk of transmission within the park or park office, either by the fact that they live in the park or they work in the park, should also be reported using the Actions Steps for Commercial Service Providers, Contractors, and Partners found on the [Public Health Information for the Partner Community web site](#). Suspected (not yet confirmed) COVID-19 cases do not need to be reported; however, the NPS Office of Public Health is available to assist parks in managing these cases.

NPS employees, or partner employees that have close contact with a positive COVID-19 case should [quarantine](#). Close contacts are [defined](#) as being within 6 feet for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. Close contacts can also include those providing care to someone sick with COVID-19, having direct physical contact

with the person, shared eating or drinking utensils, having been sneezed or coughed on, or somehow having exposure to respiratory droplets on them. (For vaccinated persons, see section on “Quarantine and Vaccination” below). Local and state health departments are leads for contact tracing of close contacts. However, a park or partner can assist local/state health departments in their efforts and are often able to act more quickly to recommend quarantine. If the park or partner is aware of employees who were in close contact with the COVID-19 case in the workplace while the person was infectious, they should record (privately and securely) these names to provide to the health department when needed. (Individuals are considered infectious from 48 hours prior to the development of symptoms until they have met the [CDC criteria to end isolation](#), OR, if they remain asymptomatic but have had a positive test, from 48 hours before getting the test until 10 days after getting the test.) Additionally, while waiting for the health department contact tracing to make the definitive recommendations, the park can advise any close, prolonged contacts of the case to begin a [quarantine](#) period and get tested. [Sample language](#) that can be used when contacting close contacts is available from the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials.

Individuals should prepare for the possibility that they, or their family members, may become sick and need to quarantine or isolate. The CDC has provided information on [how to get your household ready for COVID-19](#). Parks and partners should make arrangements for isolation or quarantine (e.g. set aside rooms, establish agreements with other parks/facilities) for NPS employees/partner employees that live on the premises. Parks and partners should be prepared to accommodate the needs of their residents in quarantine and isolation, educate persons regarding reasons for isolation and quarantine, encourage voluntary compliance, and describe to the individual the services that may be provided, if any. However, there is no legal requirement that the park provide services. Partners are responsible for understanding their own legal obligations related to such services for their employees.

### **Willingness of persons to isolate or quarantine**

Most symptomatic and exposed persons willingly accept isolation and quarantine, however, park managers should be prepared to take appropriate actions to protect the life and safety of park visitors, personnel, and the symptomatic and exposed employee if they are unwilling to quarantine or isolate.

If a person is not willing, then the Superintendent and Chief Ranger SHOULD NOT:

- Forcibly confine the unwilling individual.

If a person is not willing, then the Superintendent and Chief Ranger should:

- Consult with the Office of the Solicitor, the NPS Office of Public Health, and law enforcement officials to determine available and appropriate actions. Appropriate responses will depend on the particular facts of each case, but factors that may be useful to explore and consider during consultation include, but are not limited to:
  - Whether the park is under proprietary or concurrent jurisdiction;
  - NPS authorities under 36 C.F.R. § 1.5 or 36 C.F.R. § 2.34.

Partners are responsible for ensuring their employees comply with applicable isolation or quarantine requirements. In the event that the partner employees fail to follow applicable requirements to protect public health in the park, action may be taken in accordance with the partner authorization such as suspension or termination of their agreement as well as appropriate actions as outlined above."

### Isolation of a COVID-19-infected person at home

People with COVID-19 with non-severe symptoms may isolate in their home. For isolation of a person residing in park or partner housing and suspected to be or infected with COVID-19, the residence should be assessed for various conditions that will reduce the risk of person-to-person transmission. Parks and partners should determine which residences are suitable for isolation.

If you become sick, the CDC has provided guidance on what you should do. The full guidance is available [here](#):

- Stay home, except to get medical care.
  - Stay home. Most people with COVID-19 have mild illness and can recover at home without medical care. Do not leave your home, except to get medical care. Do not visit public areas.
  - Take care of yourself. Get rest and stay hydrated. Take over-the-counter medicines, such as acetaminophen, to help you feel better.
  - Stay in touch with your doctor. Call before you get medical care. Seek medical care if you have trouble breathing, or have any other emergency warning signs, or if you think it is an emergency.
  - Avoid public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.
- Separate yourself from other people
  - As much as possible, stay in a specific room and away from other people and pets in your home. If possible, you should use a separate bathroom. If you need to be around other people or animals in or outside of the home, stay 6 feet from others and wear a mask.
  - Tell your close contacts that they may have been exposed to COVID-19. An infected person can spread COVID-19 starting 48 hours (or 2 days) before having symptoms or tests positive. By letting your close contacts know they may have been exposed to COVID-19, you are helping to protect everyone.
  - Additional guidance is available for those living in [close quarters](#) and [shared housing](#).
  - See [COVID-19 and Animals](#) if you have questions about pets.
  - If you are diagnosed with COVID-19, someone from the health department may call you. [Answer the call](#) to slow the spread.
- Monitor your symptoms
  - [Symptoms](#) of COVID-19 may include fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, and a range of other mild to severe symptoms.
  - Follow care instructions from your healthcare provider and local health department. Your local health authorities may give instructions on checking your symptoms and reporting information.

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- Look for emergency warning signs for COVID-19. If someone is showing any of these signs, seek emergency medical care immediately: trouble breathing; persistent pain or pressure in the chest; new confusion; inability to wake or stay awake; bluish lips or face; or any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you. Call 911 or your park's designated emergency response number and notify the operator that you have or think you have COVID-19.
  - Call ahead before visiting your doctor
    - Many medical visits for routine care are being postponed or done by phone or telemedicine.
    - If you have a medical appointment that cannot be postponed, call your doctor's office, and tell them you have or may have COVID-19. This will help the office protect themselves and other patients.
  - If you are sick, wear a mask over your nose and mouth.
    - You should [wear a mask](#) over your nose and mouth if you must be around other people or animals, including pets (even at home).
    - If you can't put on a mask (because of trouble breathing, for example), cover your coughs and sneezes in some other way. Try to stay at least 6 feet away from other people. This will help protect the people around you.
    - Masks should not be placed on young children under age 2 years, anyone who has trouble breathing, or anyone who is not able to remove the mask without help.
  - Cover your coughs and sneezes
    - Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
    - Throw away used tissues in a lined trash can.
    - Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
  - Clean your hands often
    - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. This is especially important after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
    - Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry.
    - Soap and water are the best option, especially if hands are visibly dirty.
    - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
  - Avoid sharing personal household items
    - Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people in your home.
    - Wash these items thoroughly after using them with soap and water or put in the dishwasher.

- Clean all “high-touch” surfaces every day (high-touch surfaces include phones, remote controls, counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables)
  - Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces in your “sick room” and bathroom; wear disposable gloves. Let someone else clean and disinfect surfaces in common areas, but you should clean your bedroom and bathroom, if possible.
  - If a caregiver or other person needs to clean and disinfect a sick person’s bedroom or bathroom, they should do so on an as-needed basis. The caregiver/other person should wear a mask and disposable gloves prior to cleaning. They should wait as long as possible after the person who is sick has used the bathroom before entering to clean and use the bathroom.
  - Clean and disinfect areas that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them.
  - Use household cleaners and disinfectants. Clean the area or item with soap and water or another detergent if it is dirty. Then, use a household disinfectant. Be sure to follow the instructions on the label to ensure safe and effective use of the product. Many products recommend keeping the surface wet for several minutes to ensure germs are killed. Many also recommend precautions such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product. Use a product from [EPA’s List N: Disinfectants for Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)[external icon](#).
  - Follow CDC’s [Complete Disinfection Guidance](#).

### When an individual with COVID-19 can be around others

Most people can be [around others](#) after:

- 10 days since symptoms first appeared AND
  - 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and
  - Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving.
- \* Loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation.
- \*\* Those who had severe illness or who have a severely weakened immune systems may need to isolate for longer and should talk to their healthcare provider for more information.

### Quarantine of a person who may have been exposed to COVID-19

People who have been exposed to COVID-19 but have not yet developed symptoms should immediately begin to quarantine after their exposure to ensure that if they become sick, they do not infect others. For vaccinated persons, see section on “Quarantine and Vaccination” below. The CDC and the NPS Office of Public Health recommend 14 days of quarantine, but there are [acceptable options for a shorter duration](#) that may be used.

Guidance on when quarantine should occur is based on CDC recommendations. Most situations would fall under the CDC guidance for [community-related exposures](#), but there is also guidance for potential COVID-19 exposure among [healthcare personnel](#), [critical infrastructure workers](#), and [associated with travel](#).

Recommendations for actions during quarantine include:

- Do not go to work, school, or any other place outside the home.
- Do not invite guests from outside your household into your home.
- Separate from other people in your home and monitor for COVID-like symptoms, including fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, headache, muscle pain, sore throat, or loss of taste or smell. If symptoms develop, contact a health care provider and get tested for COVID-19.
- Stay away from people who are at high risk for getting very sick from COVID-19, including older adults, those living in long-term care facilities, and people with health conditions like asthma, diabetes, heart disease, liver disease, severe obesity, and weakened immune systems.
- Get tested for COVID-19 five days or later after the exposure, even if you do not have symptoms. If test results are positive, follow the guidance for isolation above. If test results are negative, continue with the prescribed quarantine timeline, as people can become positive anytime during the 2–14 days after exposure.
- When quarantining at home, you must make sure to:
  - Stay in a specific room and separate from others in the home. Use a separate bathroom, if available
  - Wear a facemask if other people are around
  - Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing
  - Wash hands thoroughly and often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol
  - Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands
  - Avoid sharing personal household items such as food, dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding. After using these items, wash thoroughly with soap and water
  - Avoid using public transportation, ridesharing (such as Uber or Lyft), or taxis

## Quarantine and Critical Infrastructure Workers

Exposed critical infrastructure workers who are not experiencing any symptoms and have not tested positive may be reintegrated back into onsite operations, but only as a last resort and only in limited circumstances, such as when cessation of operation of a facility may cause serious harm or danger to public health or safety.

Additionally, the following risk mitigation precautions should be implemented prior to and during the work shift:

- **Pre-Screen:** Employees planning to enter the workplace must self-screen at home prior to coming onsite. Employees should not attempt to enter the workplace if any of the following are present: [symptoms](#) of COVID-19; temperature equal to or higher than 100.4 °F<sup>1</sup>; or are waiting for the results of a viral test because they think they may be sick or may have been exposed.
- **Regularly monitor:** The employee should self-monitor for symptoms throughout the day and, if they occur, immediately isolate and report to their supervisor.
- **Wear a cloth mask:** Ensure all employees wear a cloth [mask](#) in accordance with NPS and DOI guidance.

- Social Distance: Employee should stay at least 6 feet apart from others and practice [social distancing](#) as work duties permit in the workplace.
- [Clean and disinfect](#) workspaces: [Clean and disinfect](#) all areas such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared equipment routinely.

## Quarantine and Vaccination

[According to the CDC](#), vaccinated persons with an FDA-authorized vaccine do not need to get tested before or after travel unless their destination requires it and do not need to self-quarantine if they meet all of the following criteria:

- Are fully vaccinated (i.e.,  $\geq 2$  weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or  $\geq 2$  weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine)
- Have remained asymptomatic since the current COVID-19 exposure

Fully vaccinated persons who do not quarantine should still watch for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days following an exposure. However, no vaccine is 100% effective. If they experience symptoms, they should be clinically evaluated for COVID-19, including SARS-CoV-2 testing, if indicated. Additionally, they should continue to wear a mask, stay 6 feet from others and avoid crowds, and wash their hands often or use hand sanitizer.

## Availability of support services and supplies for quarantine and isolation

Various support services and supplies are required during isolation or quarantine. Acquisition of supplies and services are generally the responsibility of the quarantined or isolated individual. All individuals are encouraged to prepare for the possibility of quarantine/isolation, and guidance for preparation is available through CDC's guidance on [how to prepare](#). Parks and partners with shared housing should make arrangements to provide access to these supplies and services.

Key supplies and services that both quarantined and isolated individuals may find themselves in need of include:

- Food, water, and other supplies, such as animal food, toilet paper, etc.
- A thermometer to monitor temperature
- Medicines and ability to contact the healthcare provider
- Mental health support, which for NPS employees, may be provided the [Employee Assistance Program](#)
- Transportation to medical treatment, if required
- Face masks

## Partner Quarantine and Isolation Plan

Partners must develop a quarantine and isolation plan that outlines the partner policies and procedures to comply with this guidance as a component of their COVID-19 Safety Plan. This Quarantine and Isolation Plan should be appropriate in formality and scope to the size and complexity of the partner operations in the park. This plan is particularly important for partners with in-park housing and/or a significant number of in-park employees (even if they may be housed outside the park). This plan should be subject to review and acceptance by the park superintendent.