



Kathleen E. Toomey, M.D., M.P.H., Commissioner / Brian Kemp, Governor

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**GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
FIFTEENTH AMENDED ADMINISTRATIVE
ORDER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH CONTROL
MEASURES¹**

WHEREAS, on March 14, 2020, Governor Brian P. Kemp issued Executive Order 03.14.20.01, declaring a Public Health State of Emergency in Georgia due to the impact of Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19); and

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2020, the Georgia General Assembly concurred with Executive Order 03.14.20.01 by joint resolution; and

WHEREAS, on January 31, 2020, the Secretary of Health and Human Services determined that a public health emergency exists nationwide due to the impact of Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19);

WHEREAS, the public health emergency has been extended by the Secretary of Health and Human Services; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) recommends that all states and territories implement aggressive measures to slow and contain transmission of COVID-19 in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the number of cases of COVID-19 and the variant cases of COVID-19 in the state of Georgia continues to grow; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 presents a severe threat to public health in Georgia; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a severe respiratory disease that is transmitted primarily through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes; and

WHEREAS, although the vast majority of Georgians are complying with public health

¹This Fifteenth Amended Administrative Order amends and supersedes all prior “Administrative Orders for Public Health Control Measures” in connection with COVID-19.

recommendations and guidance for the isolation of persons with symptoms of COVID-19, I have received reliable reports that a small number of persons may be behaving in a way that contributes to the spread of this disease in the community; and

WHEREAS, I have determined that it is necessary and appropriate to require persons who:

- have received a positive lab-confirmed test for COVID-19, or
- are suspected to have COVID-19 based on symptoms recognized by the CDC, or
- have been in close contact with a person with known or suspected COVID-19

to isolate or quarantine themselves at home, in order to slow the spread of COVID-19, reduce the number of people who will become infected, and avoid unnecessary strain on Georgia's healthcare system.

NOW, THEREFORE, in accordance with O.C.G.A. §§ 31-2A-4(4) and 31-12-4, and Chapter 511-9-1 of the Rules of the Georgia Department of Public Health ("Department"),

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED as follows:

Isolation of Persons with Known or Suspected COVID-19

1. *Persons With Known COVID-19.* Upon notification by a healthcare provider, public health official, or clinical laboratory of a positive laboratory-confirmed test for COVID-19, the person testing positive for COVID-19 shall immediately isolate himself or herself at home or another location approved by the Department.
2. *Persons With Suspected COVID-19.* Upon notification by a healthcare provider or public health official that COVID-19 infection is diagnosed or suspected based on symptoms, the person with suspected COVID-19 infection shall immediately isolate himself or herself at home or another location approved by the Department. As of the date of this Order, the CDC recognizes the following symptoms of COVID-19 infection: fever (a measured temperature over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or a feeling of feverishness), chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea.
3. Each isolated person shall avoid unnecessary physical contact with any and all persons and shall comply fully with the Isolation Protocol attached to this Order, as it may be updated from time to time, to include the November 1, 2020, update which addresses exercise of a person's right to vote.
4. Each isolated person shall remain in isolation until such time as he or she no longer presents a risk of infection to the public, as determined by the Isolation Protocol

then in effect. As of the date of this Administrative Order, the Isolation Protocol requires an isolated person to remain in isolation as follows:

(1) *If the person had a mild or moderate case of COVID-19² and is not severely immunocompromised*, then isolation may be discontinued when at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, and at least 24 hours have passed since the last fever without the use of fever-reducing drugs, and symptoms have improved (e.g., cough, shortness of breath).

(2) *If the person had a severe or critical case of COVID-19³ or is severely immunocompromised*, then isolation may be discontinued when at least 20 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, and at least 24 hours have passed since the last fever without the use of fever-reducing drugs, and symptoms have improved (e.g., cough, shortness of breath).

(3) *If the person was diagnosed with COVID-19 but never developed any symptoms (i.e., asymptomatic)*, then

(i) *If the person is not severely immunocompromised*, isolation may be discontinued when at least ten days have passed since the positive laboratory test and there are still no symptoms.

(ii) *If the person is severely immunocompromised*, isolation may be discontinued when at least twenty days have passed since the positive laboratory test and there are still no symptoms.

5. Isolated persons should monitor their symptoms and seek prompt medical attention if the symptoms get worse, as instructed in the Isolation Protocol.
6. Isolated persons may leave isolation in the event of an emergency, such as a fire or natural disaster, or if the person's health condition worsens and he or she requires treatment in a healthcare facility.
7. Each isolated person shall cooperate with state and local public health personnel by answering questions as necessary to identify and locate those persons with whom the isolated person has been in close contact (within six feet for fifteen minutes or more) beginning two days before symptoms began or, for isolated persons who have experienced no symptoms of COVID-19, beginning two days

² A "mild case of COVID-19" means the person had any of the symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g., fever, cough, sore throat, malaise, headache, muscle pain) without shortness of breath, dyspnea, or abnormal chest imaging. A "moderate case of COVID-19" means the person had evidence of lower respiratory disease, or oxygen saturation was abnormally low.

³ A "severe case of COVID-19" means the person's respiratory frequency and arterial partial pressure of oxygen to fraction of inspired oxygen were abnormally low. A "critical case of COVID-19" means the person was hospitalized for shortness of breath, pneumonia, low oxygen levels, respiratory failure, septic shock, or multiple organ failure.

before the test was completed. If requested by public health personnel, the isolated person shall provide a list of the locations visited by the isolated person during the time frame that he or she may have been able to transmit the disease.

Quarantine of Persons Exposed to COVID-19

1. *Persons With COVID-19 Exposure Likely to Result in Infection.* Upon notification by a healthcare provider, public health official, or isolated person of exposure to COVID-19 based on close contact (within six feet for fifteen minutes or more) with a person who must be isolated as provided herein, the person so exposed shall immediately quarantine himself or herself at home or another location approved by the Department if the person has not been fully vaccinated for COVID-19.
2. Each quarantined person shall avoid unnecessary physical contact with any and all persons and shall comply fully with the Quarantine Protocol attached to this Order, as it may be updated from time to time, to include the November 1, 2020, update which addresses exercise of a person's right to vote.
3. Each quarantined person shall remain at home or in the approved quarantine location. The recommended time for quarantine is fourteen (14) days from last known exposure, but as set forth in the attached Quarantine Protocol, you may be able to leave quarantine prior to the expiration of the fourteen (14) days.
4. Additionally, quarantined persons may leave quarantine in the event of an emergency, such as a fire or natural disaster, or if the person's health condition worsens and he or she requires treatment in a healthcare facility.
5. Health care providers, emergency medical services workers, first responders, and other critical infrastructure workers² may continue to work, in consultation with their workplace occupational health program and if necessary to ensure adequate staffing, so long as they are asymptomatic, don masks while on duty, and comply with all other quarantine requirements for the duration of the fourteen-day period. This exception to the quarantine requirement should be used 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.

² "Critical Infrastructure" shall include all Workers and Organizations included in versions 1.0, 2.0, and 3.0 of Guidance on Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers released by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 19, 2020, March 28, 2020, and April 17, 2020, respectively. The term "Critical Infrastructure" shall also include those suppliers which provide essential goods and services to the Critical Infrastructure workforce as well as entities that provide legal services, home hospice, and non-profit corporations or non-profit organizations that offer food distribution or other health or mental health services.

6. Following guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on quarantine remains the safest way to protect teachers and students from the spread of COVID-19. However, recognizing the importance of in-person learning, schools may elect to adhere to different quarantine requirements as developed by the local school district to facilitate in-person learning. Individuals subject to quarantine may only adhere to such different quarantine requirements as long as the point of exposure occurred in the school setting and as long as they remain asymptomatic.
7. During the period of quarantine, the quarantined person shall take his or her temperature twice per day and monitor any symptoms of respiratory illness. If at any time the quarantined person experiences the following symptoms of COVID-19, including cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever (a measured temperature over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or a feeling of feverishness), chills, muscle pain, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell, the quarantined person shall be considered a person with suspected COVID-19 and shall follow the requirements for isolation set forth above and in the attached Isolation Protocol.
8. Persons who have been fully vaccinated for COVID-19 (i.e., ≥ 2 weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or ≥ 2 weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine) and remain asymptomatic after COVID-19 exposure do not need to quarantine following COVID-19 exposure. If at any time in the 14 days following exposure, the quarantined person experiences the following symptoms of COVID-19, including cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever (a measured temperature over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or a feeling of feverishness), chills, muscle pain, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell, the quarantined person shall be considered a person with suspected COVID-19 and shall follow the requirements for isolation set forth above and in the attached Isolation Protocol.

Staff members of the Department are available at **866-PUB-HLTH (866-782-4584)** to provide assistance and counseling to persons subject to this Administrative Order concerning their illness or exposure and their compliance with this Order.

During the period of isolation or quarantine, the ability of persons subject to this Order to communicate with others outside the isolation or quarantine site, including their ability to exchange confidential communications with legal and medical advisors of their own choosing, will be preserved and facilitated to the extent possible without jeopardizing the integrity of the isolation or quarantine.

Failure to comply with this Order is a misdemeanor offense pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 31-5-8. If the Department has reasonable grounds to believe that a person subject to quarantine or isolation

refuses to comply with the requirements of this Order, the Department may provide information to law enforcement as necessary to ensure compliance and to facilitate criminal prosecution.

Further, any person who refuses to isolate or quarantine himself or herself as required by this Order may be subject to such further action as may be necessary to protect the public's health.

SO ORDERED, this 2nd day of August, 2021.



Kathleen E. Toomey, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner
State Health Officer

Attachment:

[Georgia Department of Public Health Isolation Protocol](#)
[Georgia Department of Public Health Quarantine Protocol](#)