

Karen Homiek
Superintendent
KHomiek@mail.ocvts.org

**NEW Quarantine Protocols Will Shorten Length of Quarantine and Provide
Early "Test-Out" Option for Those Without Symptoms**

December 20, 2021

On December 16, 2021, the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) updated quarantine recommendations for school settings and for the general public that are aligned with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). **These new protocols - for which the district has been anticipating - will be applied in the Ocean County Vocational Technical School District beginning immediately.** They will apply to students and staff who are currently in quarantine, and to cases that arise moving forward. **We will be working to update our information, but until that update is complete, please use this letter as your guide.**

If you or your child are currently quarantined - nurses and/or school staff will be reaching out to you to discuss options as quickly as possible. Every effort will be made to return your children to school as quickly as possible.

The following new quarantine timelines apply to those who are considered close contacts of a positive case AND who **DO NOT HAVE ANY SYMPTOMS** during the quarantine period. The timelines are in effect regardless of what level of transmission our region is in (prior to this, length of quarantine varied depending on whether we were in low (green), medium (yellow) or high (orange) status). These quarantine rules are dictated by the NJDOH.

QUARANTINE OPTIONS FOR UNVACCINATED PERSONS DETERMINED TO BE A CLOSE CONTACT OF A POSITIVE CASE:

7-Day Quarantine With Testing:

- End quarantine after Day 7 after receiving a negative COVID-19 test result collected between Day 5 and Day 7
- Quarantine cannot be discontinued earlier than after Day 7. (Test on Day 5, 6, or 7 AND return on Day 8.)
- Continue to monitor symptoms for 14 days after exposure
- According to the NJDOH, at-home tests should NOT be used to shorten quarantine unless performed with direct healthcare oversight or performed in a testing laboratory.

10-Day Quarantine Without Testing

- End quarantine after Day 10 if they haven't been tested for COVID-19.
- Continue to monitor symptoms for 14 days after exposure.
- Consider getting tested 5-7 days after the last exposure.

EXCEPTIONS TO QUARANTINE:

1. **FULLY VACCINATED individuals** do NOT need to quarantine after contact with someone who had COVID-19 unless they have symptoms.
 - However, it is suggested that they get tested 5-7 days after their exposure, wear a mask indoors in public for 14 days following exposure or until their test result is negative, and get tested and isolate immediately if experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.
2. **Individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 with a viral test within the previous 90 days** and have subsequently recovered and remain asymptomatic do NOT need to quarantine.
 - However, they should wear a mask indoors in public for 14 days after exposure, self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms, isolate immediately if symptoms develop, and consult with a healthcare professional for testing recommendations.