



COVID-19 Related Guidelines for Non-hospital Isolation

This guidance is to be used for situations in which symptomatic individuals will be assigned medical isolation quarters after being identified by their treating physicians and/or the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) as needing mandatory or voluntary/presumed contact isolation. All symptomatic individuals will now be assumed to be COVID-19+, unless proven otherwise with a negative test.

In general, it is best to limit contact with the isolated individual (SI) and their personal belongings. Movement in and out of the isolation quarters must be limited only to what is necessary (e.g., use of toilet and bathroom facilities). SIs should wear masks at all times when entering or passing through common areas. SI chaperones should use masks and gloves at all times when accompanying SIs.

All general infection control precautions apply:

1. Frequent handwashing or use of alcohol based hand sanitizers. DO NOT use hand sanitizers while wearing gloves.
2. Avoid unnecessary contact with the SI as much as possible. No visitors are allowed inside isolation quarters.
3. Whenever possible, maintain a distance of 6 feet or more from the SI.
4. Avoid touching facial areas, especially in the presence of the SI.
5. Coughing and sneezing etiquette: into a tissue (with appropriate hand hygiene immediately afterwards), a sleeve, or an elbow. This especially applies to the SI. Facilities should post proper cough etiquette in all isolation areas.
6. Any symptomatic staff should not have contact with the SI (or with other staff, since they should not be working).

Use of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment):

1. All PPE users must wash their hands appropriately before and after using PPE. Since the isolation quarters referenced in this guidance are not sterile, there is no proscribed sequence for putting on PPE. However, it is recommended that:
 - a. When applying PPEs, masks should be applied first after handwashing followed by gloves and gowns.
 - b. When removing PPEs, gloves should be removed first, then handwashing, followed by masks and gowns.
2. PPE disposal
 - a. PPE is "personal" and may not be shared.



- b. Disposable PPE should be collected in sealable containers after use. Biohazard containers are not necessary.
- c. If garbage receptacles are being used for disposed PPE, the receptacles should be lined with sealable containers.
- d. Protective gloves should be used when handling disposal containers.
- e. Disposal containers do not need special biohazard-specific procedures for collection.

3. Masks

- a. Health care workers should be equipped with properly fitted N-95 masks. All masks are immediately disposable, but in shortage situations, N-95 masks may be used by the same health worker for up to three weeks, if kept in a personal sealed container (Ziploc bag) in between use.
 - a. Strict handwashing should be observed before and after use.
 - b. N-95 masks are only recommended for health care workers.
 - c. Avoid touching the facial area, including the mask after it has been applied.
- b. In the absence of N-95 masks, the CDC has recommended the use of surgical masks for both health care and non-healthcare workers caring for the SI.
 - a. Strict handwashing should be observed before and after use.
 - b. Surgical masks are strictly for one-time use only for all staff entering isolation quarters.
 - c. Avoid touching the facial area, including the mask after it has been applied.
 - d. SIs should be provided with surgical masks while in the isolation quarters and should be used for the duration of stay unless it causes breathing difficulties.

4. Gloves

- a. All personnel entering the isolation quarters should wear disposable gloves.
 - a. Hands should be washed or sanitized and dried before applying gloves.
 - b. Hand sanitizers should NOT be used on the surface of the gloves.
 - c. Hands should be washed or sanitized and dried after removing gloves.
- b. Health care workers using gowns should make sure that gloves are pulled over gown sleeves.
- c. Note that some staff may be allergic to the powder or the glove material. Please make sure to screen for latex allergies.
- d. Gloves are for one-time use only and should be disposed after every use in the isolation quarters.

5. Gowns

- a. Gowns are only recommended for health care personnel and those in very close, direct AND constant contact with the SI.



- b. All other personnel must launder their work clothes immediately after work separately from other clothing.
6. Medical Safety goggles (eye protection)
- a. Strictly, eye protection PPE is only recommended for health care personnel and those in very close, direct AND constant contact with the SI.
 - b. It is also recommended for non-health care personnel in very close and direct contact with **symptomatic** SIs

Physical attributes of isolation quarters:

1. Ventilation
 - a. Negative pressure spaces are not required.
 - b. Exit and entry areas should be closed at all times.
 - c. Intake and output vent filters should be replaced per manufacturer's instructions. HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Air) filters should be used whenever possible.
 - d. Ventilation should be maximized
 - i. Open windows if possible
 - ii. Maintain a small open window space to create negative pressure
 - iii. Air conditioners must be turned whenever possible. Filters should be replaced per manufacturer's instructions.
2. Traffic control
 - a. Limit exit and entry of SI as necessary (e.g., bathing, toilet use)
 - b. COVID-19 positive SIs may be housed together in groups if space is limited.
 - c. Symptomatic COVID-19 negative or pending status (test results pending) SIs should be isolated separate from COVID-19 positive SIs
3. Cleaning and disinfecting
 - a. Please follow previously released guidelines. Doorknobs and surfaces require very frequent cleanings.
 - b. If bathroom facilities are shared, they should be cleaned after every use.
 - c. For bathroom facilities that are shared by COVID-19 positive SIs, cleaning is not necessary after every use.
 - i. These facilities should not be shared with COVID-19 pending or negative status SIs.
 - ii. If (i) is not possible frequent and thorough cleaning is necessary after every use.



Special considerations:

1. Bathing

- a. Generally speaking, frequent bathing is only necessary with soiling of clothes and/or beddings.
- b. Effective standard duration with running water and soap is at least 3 minutes
- c. For children up to age 11, minimum frequency is 1 to 2 times a week.
- d. For older youth, minimum frequency may be determined based on activity, and frequency/availability of clean clothing. Daily bathing is not necessary.

2. Meals

- a. No shared-space eating, except for COVID-19 positive SIs. Meals should be served in the isolation quarters.
- b. Disposable utensils should be used as much as possible. Otherwise, should be washed with soap and water after every use.
- c. Utensils should be handled by caregivers with gloved hands.

3. Laundry

- a. Beddings should be laundered after each occupant, so that each new SI occupying an isolation space does not use blankets, bedsheets, and pillowcases used by the exiting SI.
- b. Beddings used by the same SI may be changed only as necessary or when soiled with body fluids.
- c. Beddings and clothes should be collected and washed separately from non-SI laundry and handled only with gloves.