



## Alameda County Health Advisory

### Discontinuation of COVID-19 Transmission-Based Precautions Guidance for Alameda County - May 21, 2020

#### **Situation**

Patients and residents at Acute Care Hospitals (ACH) and Long Term Care Facilities (LTCF)<sup>1</sup> in Alameda County with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection must be isolated or in an appropriate cohort using Transmission-Based Precautions<sup>2</sup> for the duration of their infectious period. Federal guidance for removal of Transmission-Based Precautions offers several different strategies to determine the end of the infectious period. This Advisory is intended to clarify the standards for removal of Transmission-Based Precautions.

#### **Actions**

Clinicians should select a strategy from the table outlined on the next page and apply the relevant criteria to remove a patient or resident from Transmission-Based Precautions for COVID-19.

- All criteria for the selected strategy must be met.
- Due to epidemiologic and virologic data indicating risk of transmission much more likely within 10 days of symptom onset and uncertainty regarding the significance of prolonged detection of COVID-19 RNA, **the symptom-based strategy is preferred for most symptomatic patients and residents with COVID-19.**
- A time-based strategy is preferred for asymptomatic patients and residents with COVID-19.

Please note that Transmission-Based Precautions should not be removed if a patient has another diagnosis that requires their use, such as an infection with a multidrug resistant organism.

#### **Immunocompromised and Critically Ill Patients**

A test-based strategy is preferred for patients or residents who meet the following criteria:

- Severely immunocompromised (e.g., cancer treatment, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS,)
- Receiving immunocompromising medications (e.g., prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune weakening medications)
- Recently critically ill with COVID-19 (e.g., intubated and/or in intensive care unit).

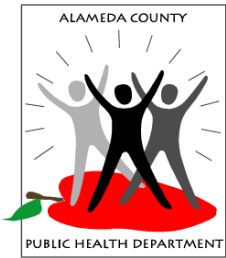
If a time-based strategy is used for immunocompromised or critically ill patients, clinicians are recommended to wait 30 days after symptom onset before removing Transmission-Based Precautions.

#### **Discharges and Transfers**

- Transmission-Based Precautions for COVID-19 should continue after transfer if criteria for removal of precautions have not been met, and appropriate cohorting or isolation measures should continue at receiving facility. Patients discharged home must remain in isolation until no longer infectious. Refer to the Alameda County [Criteria for Release from Home Isolation and/or Quarantine and Return to Work](#) guidance for more information.

<sup>1</sup> LTCFs include Skilled Nursing Facilities, Nursing Homes, and Assisted Living Facilities

<sup>2</sup> Transmission-Based Precautions for COVID-19 in acute and long-term care facilities typically include respirator or facemask if a respirator is not available, gown, gloves, and eye protection.



Patient Type	Strategy Type	Criteria for Removal from Transmission-Based Precautions
Symptomatic patients or residents with COVID-19 with suspect or confirmed COVID-19	Symptom-based strategy	<input type="checkbox"/> At least 72 hours have passed <i>since recovery</i> , defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms (such as cough, shortness of breath); <b>and</b> <input type="checkbox"/> At least 10 days have passed <i>since symptoms first appeared</i>
	Test-based strategy	<input type="checkbox"/> Resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications <b>and</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Improvement in respiratory symptoms (such as cough, shortness of breath), <b>and</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Negative results of an FDA Emergency Use Authorized COVID-19 molecular assay for detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA from at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected $\geq 24$ hours apart (total of two negative specimens).
Asymptomatic patients or residents with laboratory confirmed COVID-19	Time-based strategy	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test assuming they have not subsequently developed symptoms since their positive test.
	Test-based strategy	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative results of an FDA Emergency Use Authorized COVID-19 molecular assay for detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA from at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected $\geq 24$ hours apart (total of two negative specimens).

**Local Health Department Reporting and Contact Information**

- **Alameda County Acute Communicable Disease Control:**
  - Weekdays 8:30am–5pm Phone: (510) 267-3250
  - After hours Phone: (925) 422-7595 and ask for the public health duty officer on call
  - For **non-immediate concerns**, email [nCoV@acgov.org](mailto:nCoV@acgov.org)
- **Berkeley Public Health Division:**
  - Weekdays 8am-5pm Phone: (510) 981-5292
  - After hours: Phone: (510) 981-5911 and ask for the Health Officer on call
- [Contact Information for all other Local Health Jurisdictions](#) is available online from CDPH

**Resources**

- [ACPHD Health Alert Page](#) & [ACPHD COVID-19 Page](#)
- [CDPH COVID-19 Page](#)
- [CDC COVID-19 Page](#)