In the Loop

CDC Recommends Shorter COVID-19 Isolation and Quarantine

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently reduced its recommended periods for COVID-19 isolation (confirmed COVID-19 infection) and quarantine (potential COVID-19 exposure).

Asymptomatic individuals infected with COVID-19 have been told to isolate for five days from the day they test positive—down from the original 10. After, they should wear a mask when around others for an additional five days.

The CDC's new quarantine guidance was similarly updated. People who are unvaccinated or are more than six months out from their second vaccine dose (or more than two months after getting the Johnson & Johnson vaccine) and not yet boosted should avoid others for five days after COVID-19 exposure. Then, they should diligently wear a mask for an additional five days afterward.

> **"Prevention is our best option: get vaccinated, get boosted, wear a mask in public indoor settings in areas of substantial and high community transmission, and take a test before you gather."**
>
> **-CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky, in a statement**

Notably, the CDC said those who have received COVID-19 booster shots don't need to quarantine, but they should wear a mask around others for at least 10 days after potential exposure.

In all cases of isolation and exposure, the CDC said it's best to take a COVID-19 test as well.

What's Next?

The CDC has shortened its quarantine and isolation timetables as health experts learn more about COVID-19 and its strains, such as the coronavirus Omicron variant. The agency's decision was "motivated by science demonstrating that the majority of COVID-19 transmission occurs early in the course of illness, generally in the 1-2 days prior to onset of symptoms and the 2-3 days after."

However, shortened isolation and quarantine times don't mean the risk of COVID-19 is going away or prevention measures should be relaxed. In fact, COVID-19 cases have been increasing in recent weeks, although deaths are still trending downward.

In its release, the CDC urged all eligible Americans to get vaccinated and boosted if they haven't been already. Individuals interested in learning more about official COVID-19 guidance should visit the CDC website.

How to Stand Out as a Remote Employee

When working from home, it might feel like you're working alone. That's because remote employees often operate in "silos," focusing solely on their own duties. This can make it difficult to feel seen by managers and recognized for your hard work.

That's why it can sometimes be necessary to take action and make yourself stand out as a remote employee. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, remote work won't be going away anytime soon—meaning now is the time to overcome its challenges. Try some of the following tips to help set yourself apart:

Be Available

Employees who are seen the most tend to stand out more in a group. Think of people who come into the office early and stay late—their presence alone makes them appear to be working hard. It may seem unusual, but this rings true even as a remote worker. Instead of being present in an office, be present in your team's communication platform. And, if a co-worker reaches out about a problem or question, be quick to respond. Demonstrating this availability and responsiveness will show other team members that you're reliable.

Be Trustworthy

Trustworthiness is a critical component of remote work, especially since your manager cannot physically stop by and check in on your work. By virtue of being remote, you already demonstrated to your workplace that you could be trusted. However, trust is hard to build and easy to destroy. When working from home, you must continually demonstrate your trustworthiness by following through on your words. This means being online when you say you'll be, meeting deadlines and being transparent about workloads.

Be Proactive

To stand out as a remote employee, you cannot always wait for things to happen; sometimes, you must make them happen. In other words, you may see better results of a problem when you are proactive about finding a solution. This is the case for checking in with your manager about how you're doing. If you don't communicate your goals, workload or potential stressors to your manager, they won't be able to help. And, while managers conduct periodic check-ins, other issues may arise in the time between them. That's why it's important for you to be proactive about your workplace performance. If you need to address a workplace issue, schedule a meeting with your manager instead of waiting for a periodic check-in. Your manager will appreciate you taking charge and not letting the problem fester, regardless of what you need to discuss.