



IPHA Statement on Updated COVID-19 Quarantine Guidance

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For Immediate Release:
September 29, 2020

Universal Mask Wearing and Quarantine Critical to Limiting Community Spread of COVID-19

Today Governor Reynolds stated that persons in close contact with a person infected with coronavirus do not need to quarantine if both individuals were wearing masks. Face shields alone are not sufficient to meet the Governor's new quarantine guidance.

Masks, contact tracing, and quarantine are all established best practices in the control of infectious disease outbreaks. They work in concert to protect communities. None supersedes nor negates the need for the others.

In the spirit of transparency and to aid in compliance, we ask the Governor to provide the public health evidence that supports her new guidance that diminishes the role of quarantine in the effort to stop the spread of the pandemic in Iowa. In the meantime, Iowa Public Health Association (IPHA) strongly encourages all persons over the age of two and are medically able to do so, to wear face coverings whenever in public places and social distancing is not possible. All people should stay home if ill and quarantine if you know you've been exposed to someone who has tested positive for coronavirus.

Until a safe & effective vaccine is approved and widely available, universal mask wearing and social distancing, combined with contact tracing and quarantine, are our best defenses against the pandemic. This is how we protect our students, teachers, and other essential workers, and ensure that our small businesses and overall economy recover to their full potential. IPHA commends our state's public health professionals, including school nurses, for the exhaustive contact tracing and follow-up work they are doing to protect the health of Iowans.

As the Governor has said many times over, we are trusting Iowans to do the right thing. The right thing is wearing a mask correctly (covering both mouth and nose) every time, everywhere, and staying home when ill or exposed to COVID-19.

IPHA emphasizes that the correct way to wear a mask is to cover your mouth and nose at all times. Face shields alone do not meet the Governor's new guidelines but can provide added protection. Social distancing means maintaining at least six feet of distance indoors or outdoors when in the presence of people outside of your immediate household.

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IPHA is a statewide nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with a collective voice of more than 400 members that advances public health issues and health equity for all Iowans through evidence-based resources, education, and advocacy. Our mission is to unite and strengthen the voice for public health in Iowa.

Leader[s] in Health Equity

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