

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

As we begin a new year for O.E.S. in Ohio, Brother Scott and I want to remind everyone that we are still living within a global pandemic. We have taken measures to help to protect ourselves and our loved ones, but we believe that COVID is here to stay. We all need to continue to take precautions and act responsibly for not only ourselves, but our friends, family and those we come in contact with daily.

As we enter into our Installation and fall EOP season and travel throughout our Districts, Regions, SWARMS and across the State, let us remember those three “W’s!” “Wear your mask, Wash your hands and Watch your distance.” All of these precautions have proven to be helpful in the spread of not only the virus, but the flu as well! If you aren’t feeling well, it’s okay to stay home or to be installed at the next stated meeting. BEE proactive, BEE responsible and BEE safe!

Cindy Chadwell, Worthy Grand Matron

J. Scott Riddle, Worthy Grand Patron

Listed below are the current guidelines that are recommended by the State of Ohio at the current time. Please read these closely and make your own personal decisions as to the correct way for you to handle this situation.

Quarantine

Quarantine if you have been in [close contact](#) (within 6 feet of someone for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period) with someone who has COVID-19, unless you have been [fully vaccinated](#). People who are fully vaccinated do NOT need to quarantine after contact with someone who had COVID-19 unless they have [symptoms](#). However, fully vaccinated people should get tested 3-5 days after their exposure, even if they don’t have symptoms and wear a mask indoors in public for 14 days following exposure or until their test result is negative.

What to do

- Stay home for 14 days after your last contact with a person who has COVID-19.
- Watch for fever (100.4°F), cough, shortness of breath, or [other symptoms](#) of COVID-19.
- If possible, stay away from people you live with, especially people who are at [higher risk](#) for getting very sick from COVID-19.

After quarantine

- Watch for symptoms until 14 days after exposure.
- If you have symptoms, immediately self-isolate and contact your local public health authority or healthcare provider.

You may be able to shorten your quarantine

Your local public health authorities make the final decisions about how long quarantine should last, based on local conditions and needs. Follow the recommendations of your local public health department if you need to quarantine. Options they will consider include stopping quarantine

- After day 10 without testing
- After day 7 after receiving a negative test result (test must occur on day 5 or later)

Isolation

Isolation is used to separate people infected with COVID-19 from those who are not infected.

People who are in isolation should stay home until it's safe for them to be around others. At home, anyone sick or infected should separate from others, stay in a specific "sick room" or area, and use a separate bathroom (if available).

What to do

- Monitor your symptoms. If you have an [emergency warning sign](#) (including trouble breathing), seek emergency medical care immediately.
- Stay in a separate room from other household members, if possible.
- Use a separate bathroom, if possible.
- Avoid contact with other members of the household and pets.
- Don't share personal household items, like cups, towels, and utensils.
- [Wear a mask](#) when around other people if able.

When You Can be Around Others After You Had or Likely Had COVID-19

Most people do not require testing to decide when they can be around others; however, if your healthcare provider recommends testing, they will let you know when you can resume being around others based on your test results.

For Anyone Who Has Been Around a Person with COVID-19

Anyone who has had [close contact](#) with someone with COVID-19 should quarantine for 14 days **after their last exposure** to that person, except if they meet the following conditions:

Someone who has been [fully vaccinated](#) and shows no symptoms of COVID-19 does **not** need to [quarantine](#). However, fully vaccinated close contacts should:

- [Wear a mask](#) indoors in public for 14 days following exposure or until a negative test result.
- Get tested 3-5 days after [close contact](#) with someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.
- Get tested and [isolate](#) immediately if experiencing [COVID-19 symptoms](#).

Someone who tested positive for COVID-19 with a [viral test](#) within the previous 90 days **and** has subsequently recovered **and** remains without COVID-19 symptoms does not need to [quarantine](#). However, close contacts with prior COVID-19 infection in the previous 90 days should:

- [Wear a mask](#) indoors in public for 14 days after exposure.
- Monitor for [COVID-19 symptoms](#) and [isolate](#) immediately if symptoms develop.
- Consult with a healthcare professional for testing recommendations if new symptoms develop.

I think or know I had COVID-19, and I had symptoms

You can be around others after:

- 10 days since symptoms first appeared **and**
- 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
- Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving*

**Loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation*

Note that these recommendations **do not** apply to people with severe COVID-19 or with weakened immune systems (immunocompromised).

I tested positive for COVID-19 but had no symptoms

If you continue to have no symptoms, you can be with others after 10 days have passed since you had a positive viral test for COVID-19.

If you develop symptoms after testing positive, follow the guidance above for “I think or know I had COVID-19, and I had symptoms.”

I was severely ill with COVID-19 or have a weakened immune system (immunocompromised) caused by a health condition or medication.

People who are severely ill with COVID-19 might need to stay home longer than 10 days and up to 20 days after symptoms first appeared. [People with weakened immune systems](#) may require testing to determine when they can be around others. Talk to your

healthcare provider for more information. Your healthcare provider will let you know if you can resume being around other people based on the results of your testing.

People who are immunocompromised should be counseled about the potential for reduced immune responses to COVID-19 vaccines and the need to continue to follow [current prevention measures](#) (including wearing [a mask](#), [staying 6 feet apart from others](#) they don't live with, and avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated indoor spaces) to protect themselves against COVID-19 until advised otherwise by their healthcare provider. Close contacts of immunocompromised people should also be encouraged to be vaccinated against COVID-19 to help protect these people.