



CITY-COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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**NEWS RELEASE**

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**New Quarantine Guidelines and Four Additional COVID-19 Deaths in Cascade County**

Great Falls, MT – Cascade County is grieved to announce four more COVID-19 deaths in Cascade County since November 30<sup>th</sup>. This brings us to 82 total deaths in our community.

These individuals were:

- (3) males in their 70s
- (1) male in his 80s

We are deeply sorry for the families and friends of these individuals, and hope that Cascade County residents can join together to lend them compassion and support, particularly during this holiday season.

It is to the benefit of every community member that businesses and individuals continue to take prevention seriously and do everything they can to curb the spread of this virus.

One of the simplest measures community members can implement is to follow instructions for quarantine. Yesterday, the CDC revised their recommendations for quarantine. Please see the following page for details.

Other known prevention measures include:

- Staying home when you are sick and getting tested if symptoms are consistent with COVID-19
- Limiting interactions with others and thinking critically about the necessity of engaging in certain events/outings/gatherings
- Social distancing wherever possible
- Universal masking and proper mask wearing
- Good sanitation practices and hand washing
- Isolating if you are positive, and notifying everyone you were in contact with for 48 hours prior to the onset of symptoms or 48 hours prior to test date

Together we can make an impact.

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## Updated Quarantine Guidelines

The full text of the updated guidelines can be found here: [Options to Reduce Quarantine for Contacts of Persons with SARS-CoV-2 Infection Using Symptom Monitoring and Diagnostic Testing | CDC](#)

Local public health authorities determine and establish the quarantine options for their jurisdictions. CDC still recommends a quarantine period of 14 days. However, these guidelines have been offered to shorten quarantine based on local circumstances & resources.

CCHD will be implementing these new guidelines locally, particularly the new option to end quarantine after Day 10 without testing if no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring.

- Quarantine can end after Day 10 without testing if no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring.
  - With this strategy, residual post-quarantine transmission risk is estimated to be about 1% with an upper limit of about 10%.
- When diagnostic testing resources are sufficient and available (see next bullet point), then quarantine can end as early as Day 7.
  - The patient can be released from quarantine on Day 7 if:
    - a diagnostic specimen tests negative, and
    - if no symptoms were reported during daily monitoring.
  - This diagnostic specimen may be collected—that is, the patient may be tested—within 48 hours of the time of planned quarantine discontinuation (in anticipation of testing delays).
    - In short, in order for a patient to be released by Day 7, they can be tested as early as Day 5 of their quarantine.
    - Quarantine cannot be discontinued earlier than Day 7.
  - With this strategy, residual post-quarantine transmission risk is estimated to be about 5% with an upper limit of 12%.

In both cases, additional criteria (e.g., continued symptom monitoring and masking through Day 14) are outlined in the full text and must be met. See CDC link above.