

CDC Loosens COVID-19 Guidance, Emphasizes Individual Responsibility

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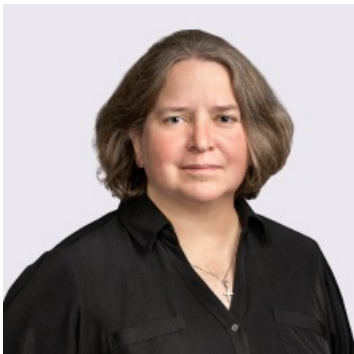
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Meet the Authors



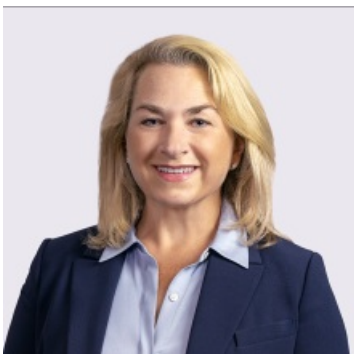
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In an effort to streamline its guidance and reflect the current state of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued updated guidance that focuses on individual responsibility and is designed to help the public better understand how to protect themselves and others if they are sick or have been exposed.

In addition, the CDC stated that it intends to issue more specific guidance for settings such as healthcare, congregate living, and travel.

The latest guidance, released on August 11, 2022, includes the following:

- **Vaccination.** The CDC continues to promote the importance of being up to date with vaccination to protect people against serious illness, hospitalization, and death. However, while the CDC continues to recommend vaccination, its guidance no longer differentiates between vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals.
- **Quarantine.** The CDC no longer recommends quarantining following COVID-19 exposure, regardless of vaccination status. Instead, the CDC recommends anyone exposed to COVID-19 to wear a high-quality mask for 10 days and get tested on day 6. Previously, the CDC recommended a 5-day quarantine for anyone who was not up to date with vaccinations.
- **Isolation.** The CDC continues to recommend that, regardless of vaccination status, individuals should isolate from others if they are sick and suspect that they have COVID-19 or have tested positive for COVID-19.
 - The CDC recommends that individuals with COVID-19 stay home for at least 5 days. After 5 days, if the individual is fever-free for 24 hours without the use of medication, and their symptoms are improving (or they never had symptoms) they can end isolation.
 - However, the CDC now recommends that individuals who had moderate illness (experienced shortness of breath or had difficulty breathing) or severe illness (were hospitalized) due to COVID-19 or have a weakened immune system isolate through at least day 10. It recommends that those who had severe illness or have a weakened immune system consult with their healthcare provider before ending isolation.
 - The CDC also recommends that an individual who has ended isolation avoid being around anyone who is at high risk for a serious case of COVID-19 until at least day 11.
 - Finally, the CDC recommends that if an individual's COVID-19 symptoms worsen, they should restart their isolation at day 0.
- **Testing.** The CDC no longer recommends screening testing of asymptomatic people

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without known exposures in most community settings.

- *Physical Distance.* The CDC emphasizes that physical distance is just one component of how individuals can protect themselves and others. It recommends considering the risk in a particular setting, including local COVID-19 Community Levels and the important role of ventilation, when assessing the need to maintain physical distance.

The CDC's latest focus on individual responsibility, removal of distinctions between vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals, removal of quarantine recommendations, and discussion of mask wearing as an individual responsibility should be helpful to employers considering relaxing their COVID-19 workplace requirements.

If you have questions or need assistance, please reach out to the Jackson Lewis attorney with whom you regularly work, or any member of our [COVID-19 team](#).

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