



**Special Communication to City of Burlington  
Emergency Operations Center and Mayor  
Regarding COVID-19**

**To:** Mayor Weinberger, Chief Locke, Chief Morrison, Chief Innovation Officer Lowe

**From:** Kayla Donohue, Carolyn Felix, Nancy Stetson, Meagan Tuttle of City Analytics Team

**RE:** Voluntary Isolation/Quarantine sites for COVID-19 positive individuals that do not require hospitalization

**Date:** Original March 26, 2020

*Updated: April 14*

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**Key Messages:**

- **Isolation and quarantine sites are being used in many locations in the U.S. for voluntary isolation of both suspected and confirmed COVID-19 positive individuals who do not require hospitalization and/or cannot safely isolate from household members** (particularly from household members who are elderly or medically fragile), and for individuals experiencing homelessness. In some cases, this includes individuals who are awaiting test results are using these sites; due to the US testing strategy, these are likely individuals who are symptomatic and suspected of being positive. Entry to a site requires a recommendation by a HCP. This may evolve as the US testing strategy evolves.
- **Limited direct information is available regarding how these sites are staffed, secured, and what services are provided, but the CDC has now produced specific guidance for the operation of these sites.**
- **Many communities are utilizing hotel rooms, RVs & trailers, cabins in state parks rather than large, open-air facilities.** CDC guidance indicates that positive/suspected positive patients should have an **individual room with a private bathroom, surfaces that are easy to clean, and individual HVAC/operable windows if possible.** Positive and suspected positive cases should not be cohorted; to the greatest extent possible all individuals should be separated.
- All guidance regarding care for infected or suspected infected individuals regardless of setting focuses on the physical isolation of and limited contact with the individual by HCP. Therefore, it is **unlikely that physical visitation is occurring in isolation sites**, but rather access to communicate with family via remote methods.
- There is emerging advice regarding incentives and wraparound support for individuals in isolation/quarantine sites, particularly as we think about this as a piece of a long-term strategy for reopening. Further, **Emergency Paid Leave and Paid Sick Leave benefits in the Federal Stimulus Bill extend to individuals in isolation/quarantine.**

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- According to the CDC, states have police power functions to protect the health, safety, and welfare of persons within their borders. To control the spread of disease within their borders, states have laws to enforce the use of isolation and quarantine. These laws can vary from state to state and can be specific or broad. In most states, breaking a quarantine order is a criminal misdemeanor. In some cases where COVID-19 positive individuals are not compliant with medical advice, court orders are being issued to mandate isolation and policed used to enforce such orders.

## Key Resources

- [CDC Guide for Alternate Care Sites & Isolation Sites](#)
- [Lancet: Deciphering the power of isolation in controlling COVID-19 outbreaks](#)
- [WHO: Considerations for individuals in the context of containment for coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [CDC Interim Guidance: Risk Assessment and Public Health Management of Persons with Potential Coronavirus Disease 2019 Exposures](#)
- [CDC Interim Guidance: Implementing Home Care for People Not requiring Hospitalization](#)
- [CDC Interim Guidance: Discontinuation of Home Care for COVID-19 Patients](#)
- [NEJM – COVID-19: The Law and Limits of Quarantine](#)

**Summary of Research on Isolation & Quarantine Sites in the U.S.** *(This section was prepared prior to CDC Resource specific to these sites was published, but consistent with the guidance)*

## Background

[Isolation and quarantine](#) are public health practices used to stop or limit the spread of disease.

- **Isolation** is used to separate ill persons who have a communicable disease from those who are healthy. Isolation restricts the movement of ill persons to help stop the spread of certain diseases. For example, hospitals use isolation for patients with infectious tuberculosis.
- **Quarantine** is used to separate and restrict the movement of well persons who may have been exposed to a communicable disease to see if they become ill. These people may have been exposed to a disease and do not know it, or they may have the disease but do not show symptoms. Quarantine can also help limit the spread of communicable disease.

When recommended, monitored home-care and home-isolation can relieve the burden on health-care providers and health care centers. This strategy, along with formal Isolation Sites operated by health departments and medical networks can be part of a multi-pronged effort to reduce transmission and burden on facilities, if there is not adequate capacity within healthcare settings. However, it is essential to ensure that the non-healthcare facilities for isolated individuals include appropriate engineering controls for infection control and prevention, and are adequately resourced to protect both the public and individual patient health. [[Lancet](#), [WHO](#)]

Transmission by people with no or mild symptoms can dampen the power of the isolation strategy because of reduced likelihood of isolating all cases and tracing all contacts. The identification and testing

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of potential cases need to be as extensive as is permitted by health care and diagnostic testing capacity—including the identification, testing, and isolation of suspected cases with no or mild disease (eg, influenza-like illness) [[Lancet](#)].

#### Intended Populations Served

- Individuals meeting the CDC definition of those needing quarantine or isolation, deemed by a health care professional, and who will be compliant with requirements for isolation.
- Individuals who cannot safely self-isolate or self-quarantine at home (e.g. individuals experiencing homelessness, individuals living in a group setting, individuals living in a home that does not have facilities to isolate the infected individual from the rest of the household, individuals living with someone who is high risk or immunocompromised)
- Based on initial operation of sites in King Co. WA, these sites may not be appropriate for individuals in need of significant social and/or behavioral support services, particularly if needed resources are not accessible on site. Further, supervised isolation outside of healthcare facilities for patients that do not comply with isolation orders can be detrimental to public health.

#### Ideal Specs for a Site

- Adequately ventilated, spacious single rooms with en-suite hand hygiene and toilet facilities, preferable with individual HVAC units in each room as opposed to a central source (particularly because AIIRs are unlikely to be available)
- Suitable environment for infection control and prevention, including adequate air ventilation, air filtration systems, and waste management protocols (e.g. hard washable surfaces, seamless floors)
- Social distancing must be maintained between all persons who are quarantined to lessen the viral load for HCPs/staff within these facilities; best practices for use of PPEs by HCP interacting with infected patients, hygiene, and infection control and prevention are necessary to be closely followed in these facilities
- Possible settings include: hotels, modular homes, RV's, cabins, and may include dormitories if they meet the above standards

#### Services at Sites

- Persons who are quarantined need to be provided with health care; financial, social and psychological support; and basic needs, including food, water, and other essentials. The needs of vulnerable populations should be prioritized. These are not only legal requirements, but essential to individuals' compliance with isolation.
- Those in quarantine must be able to communicate with family members who are outside the quarantine facility
- Free internet access, along with news and entertainment should be provided (perhaps with free access to subscription services)
- Communication in languages that those who are quarantined can understand, with an explanation of their rights, services that will be made available, and how long they will need to stay and what will happen if they get sick should be provided

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- HCPs need to be able to continue to provide monitoring to patients, particularly to assess discontinuation of isolation and monitoring for recovered patients, based on CDC guidance for test-based and non-test-based discontinuance. [[CDC](#)]
- There is a growing understanding that isolation/quarantine is not only necessary during the current mitigation phase, but will also be a core strategy during the suppression phase (See Post Stay Home Order memo). Therefore, communities should also be looking into providing the services offered at dedicated sites to those isolating/quarantining at home.

### Staffing Sites

- Medical care, psychological supports, and environmental cleaning personnel
- Some have mentioned use of National Guard, local police presence, or private security companies to keep the public out
- Some sites have hired contractors to provide food, janitorial services and laundry
- All personnel working in the facility need to be trained on infection control and prevention measures and should have access to PPE and personal hand hygiene supplies
- Older persons with comorbid conditions may need additional supports

### Incentivizing Participation

The [Local Response Initiative](#) on Apr 9 suggested that in addition to the core resources/services at these sites, that governments may consider financial benefits for people using these sites, such as a stipend for those without sick leave, or who will need to arrange for child or dependent care. Again, isolation and quarantine will be necessary in Phase 2 of the coronavirus response. Therefore, incentives and support resources should be extended to individuals in isolation or quarantine at home, in addition those using dedicated facilities.

Benefits that individuals in isolation/quarantine will be eligible for from the Federal Stimulus bill:

- Eligible full-time employees are entitled to two weeks (80 hours) of fully paid time off (up to \$511 per day) to self-quarantine, seek a diagnosis or preventive care, or receive treatment for COVID-19.
- Eligible part-time employees are entitled to fully paid time off (up to \$511 per day) for the typical number of hours that they work in a typical two-week period to self-quarantine to seek a diagnosis or preventive care, or receive treatment for COVID-19.
- Eligible full-time employees and part-time employees are entitled to 12 weeks of job-protected leave to take care for their children in the event of a school closure or their child care provider is unavailable due to COVID-19.
- Unemployment Insurance eligibility has been expanded to workers (both full and part-time, newly hired workers, workers who have exhausted previous UI benefits, and gig workers, freelancers, independent contractors) who are sick or caring for a sick family member or under quarantine (pending legislation).

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## Isolation and Quarantine Sites in the US

From Bloomberg Health Daily email:

- **Adapting shelters, acquiring new space, and creating isolation capacity.** A lot of hotel rooms are sitting vacant right now. Cities like Chicago and San Diego are moving to rent those rooms for homeless people to use temporarily. Covington, Ky., Dallas, and Seattle have turned convention space into homeless shelters. Anchorage, Alaska, is using its sports arenas, Spokane, Wash., a library under renovation, and Los Angeles its recreation centers that would otherwise be closed during the crisis.
  - Goal is to get people off the street and allow for social distancing in homeless shelters by expanding that capacity.
  - Also provides a location for individuals to either quarantine or isolate if they do not have a home.

Plans from other Municipalities:

- California
  - Berkeley plans to set up quarantine sites on basketball courts and other lots, primarily for homeless populations
  - Likewise, Alameda County will lease 2 hotels to house homeless
    - \$3.2 million through the end of April – pending Board of Supervisors approval
  - Two hotels in Kearny Mesa used to quarantine Grand Princess cruise ship passengers
    - Cared for by a federal disaster medical assistance team
- Georgia
  - COVID-19 quarantine sites pop up outside of Atlanta city limits
    - 20 temporary housing units
    - This is supposedly the 4<sup>th</sup> quarantine site in the region
- Illinois
  - Chicago plans to reserve at least 1,000 hotel rooms for quarantine
- Louisiana
  - Three state parks are being used as "regional overflow isolation areas" and are closed to the public.
    - National Guard troops are staffing the these isolation area and the Louisiana Department of Health will provide medical support at the site.
    - A contractor has been hired to provide food, janitorial services and laundry at the sites.
- Pennsylvania
  - Center City's Holiday Inn Express To Be Quarantine Site for Homeless People with COVID-19
    - For people experiencing homelessness in Philadelphia and tested positive but refuse treatment, city leaders say they may force them
- Washington
  - King County is repurposing four properties, including space at the airport, two motels and a parking lot with fully self-contained tent for isolation sites.

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- One person left while test was pending from Kent site, state had no enforcement power to keep them isolated.
- One site has modular housing units on a county-owned lot
- The lot is in a residential neighborhood; some people living there have expressed concerns
- Individuals can only be placed into these sites after a health professional with Public Health has determined that they need isolation or quarantine
- On April 13, King Co Public Health update reported 66 people currently staying in King County isolation and quarantine facilities. **It is unclear how many of these guests are positive versus suspected positive.** If all guests are positive, this represents 1.4% of the reported positive cases in the County. [\[source\]](#)

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