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**TO: DDD SUPPORT COORDINATION AGENCIES**  
**FROM: Division of Developmental Disabilities**  
**RE: Response to COVID-19 (rel30)**  
**DATE: 01/6/22**

**COVID-19 Guidance for Alabama HCBS Support Coordination Agencies**  
**Division of Developmental Disabilities Services**

**The latest ADPH/CDC recommendations regarding Covid-19 and the Omicron Variant.**

The best protection against serious effects of the COVID-19 virus is being fully vaccinated. Booster doses offer important protection against the new Omicron variant even though the initial two doses appear significantly less effective. ADPH and CDC recommends vaccinations, including boosters, testing, wearing a mask in indoor public places, cleaning and disinfecting, and social distancing together as the primary ways to mitigate risks preventing illness and death from Covid-19 and the Omicron variant.

**In an effort to protect the health and safety of workers, individuals served, family members and visitors, CDC has provided the following definitions and Covid-19 and Omicron guidance:**

**Definitions:**

**Quarantine** is a strategy used to prevent transmission of Covid-19 by keeping people who have been in close contact with someone with Covid-19 apart from others. You quarantine when you might have been exposed to the virus and may or may not have been infected.

**Exposure** is contact with someone infected with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19, in a way that increases the likelihood of getting infected with the virus.

**Close Contact** is someone who was less than 6 feet away from an infected person for 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.

**Isolation** is used to separate people confirmed or, are symptomatic suspected Covid-19 from those without Covid-19. You isolate when you are sick or when you have been infected with the virus regardless of vaccination status. This includes:

- Anyone who has a positive viral test for Covid-19, regardless of whether or not they have symptoms.
- Anyone with symptoms of Covid-19, including people who are awaiting test results or have not been tested.
  - People with symptoms should isolate even if they do not know if they have been in close contact with someone with Covid-19.

**Boosted** is when an individual has completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine within the last 6 months, or completed the primary series of J&J vaccine within the last 2 months, AND has received the booster dose specific to your vaccine.

**Resources:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html>

**Guidance:**

In certain high-risk congregate settings that have high risk of secondary transmission, CDC recommends a 10-day isolation period for residents. During periods of critical staffing shortages, facilities may consider shortening the isolation period for staff to ensure continuity of operations.

**The following guidance from CDC is based on vaccination status of healthcare professionals and type of exposure to Covid-19:**

Workers who test positive for SARS-CoV-2 infection who are boosted, vaccinated, or unvaccinated should isolate for 10 days OR 7 days with a negative test result within 48 hours before returning to work. They should also be asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic, with improving symptoms.

For workers who are exposed to Covid-19 who are boosted, there are no work restrictions with a negative test on days 2 and 5-7.

Workers who are exposed to Covid-19 who are unvaccinated, vaccinated, even if within 90 days prior infection, should quarantine 10 days OR 7 days with a negative test. For further guidance go to

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assesment-hcp.html>

**Signs & Symptoms:**

They would do this by taking each person's temperature using a no-touch thermometer and asking if they have experienced Covid-19 symptoms that include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

**Workforce:**

To mitigate risk of exposure during this pandemic, all providers must continuously review and update their Infectious Disease Emergency Plans with the latest ADPH/CDC Guidance. It is anticipated there will be other strains of COVID-19 following Omicron. Check out this link! [What You Need to Know About Variants?](#)

Individuals and staff are strongly encouraged to continue to follow all COVID-19 risk mitigation strategies regardless of vaccination status:

- Wash their hands.
- Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people.
- Cover their mouth and nose with a mask/face shield when around others.
- Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces.

**ALL PROVIDERS must contact their Community Service Director by email to inform them of staff shortages due to COVID-19 related concerns. The email should include the following:**

- Location of shortage
- Required staffing levels for the specific setting under normal
  - # of individuals in setting
  - # of individuals requiring special level staffing due to medical support needs
  - # of individuals requiring special level staffing due to behavioral support needs
- # of staff short
- How the provider intends to mitigate risk due to staff shortage
- Time-frame the setting will operate with a staff shortage
- Date the provider will provide a follow-up status report

**Support Coordinators are encouraged to work with Providers who serve individuals desiring and capable of more independence to explore alternative support/service options. Remote Supports, for example, is a service historically used as an overnight support for individuals assessed not to need overnight staffing.**

Comments/questions may be submitted to: [ADMH-DDD.Questions@mh.alabama.gov](mailto:ADMH-DDD.Questions@mh.alabama.gov)