

NEWS BRIEF

Provided by: Sullivan Benefits

CDC Ends COVID-19 Social Distancing and Quarantine Recommendations, Eases Testing Guidance

On Aug. 11, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released new COVID-19 community [guidance](#) that ends or eases several key recommendations, including social distancing and quarantine. This change shows how much has changed since the pandemic began more than two years ago. The agency stated that nearly the entire U.S. population has some COVID-19 immunity through vaccination, previous infection or both.

What Changed?

The CDC updated its COVID-19 community guidance, changing some recommendations that have been in place since the early days of the pandemic:

- **Social distancing**—People no longer need to stay at least 6 feet away from other people to reduce the risk of exposure to the virus.
- **Quarantining**—People exposed to the virus no longer need to quarantine at home, regardless of vaccination status. However, they should still wear a mask for 10 days and get tested on day five.
- **Testing**—Routine testing of people without symptoms is no longer recommended in most settings. Contact tracing and testing should be limited to hospitals and certain high-risk group-living situations (e.g., nursing homes and prisons).

The CDC continues to recommend wearing a mask indoors in areas where the COVID-19 community level is high. The agency also reiterated that regardless of vaccination status, people should

isolate themselves from others when they have COVID-19, staying home for at least five days.

“We know that COVID-19 is here to stay. High levels of population immunity due to vaccination and previous infection, and the many tools that we have available to protect people from severe illness and death, have put us in a different place.”

- Dr. Greta Massetti, CDC epidemiologist

What Does It Mean?

These changes largely shift responsibility for COVID-19 risk reduction from institutions to individuals. To help reinforce the new guidance, the CDC provided information about [understanding the risk](#) of COVID-19 to help make decisions to stay healthy.

As history has shown, the pandemic could change at any time and employers should continue to monitor updates and stay agile. Sullivan Benefits will keep you apprised of notable changes.

