



Buffalo County Health Department

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

MEMO: COVID-19 QUARANTINE AND SCHOOLS

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COVID-19 QUARANTINE UPDATES

The Buffalo County Health Department along with local school administrators and neighboring county health departments are working to implement the CDC and DHS options for reducing duration of quarantines as it relates to COVID-19 exposure. Effective immediately, the Buffalo County schools are planning to shorten the quarantine timeframe for both students and staff as follows:

- **Employees will be allowed to return to work on day 8 following 7 days of quarantine and a negative PCR test on day 6 or 7 if they remain asymptomatic for the duration of the 14 days.**
- **Students will be allowed to return to school for academics on day 11 following 10 days of quarantine if they remain asymptomatic for the duration of the 14 days.**
- **Students returning to school on day 11 may have alternatives to certain high-risk activities such as physical education, band, choir, recess and lunch locations to assure adherence to the guidelines.**
- **Students may return to use of the school transportation (buses/ vans), athletics and other extra-curricular activities on day 15 following the 14-day quarantine.**

In a Health Alert released on December 4th, DHS announced that they support the CDC guidelines for shortening the standard quarantine period from 14 days to 10 days for people who remain asymptomatic, provided that daily symptom monitoring continues for the full 14-day period. This change is based on data that suggests the risk of transmission after 10 days is very low. **Ideally, the quarantine should be continued for the full incubation period, but to lessen the burden to our communities these options are being provided.**

According to the CDC and DHS, for these two alternative strategies to be acceptable, **the following conditions must be met for the duration of the entire 14-day quarantine:**

- **Daily symptom monitoring must continue**
- **Remain asymptomatic**
- **Must adhere strictly to all recommended non-pharmaceutical interventions including consistent mask use, social distancing which includes physical contact and avoiding gatherings**