Isolation and Quarantine

Isolation and quarantine help protect the public by preventing exposure to people who have or may have a contagious disease. The State of RI has specific requirements for isolation and quarantine of students arriving at a higher education environment for the start of the school year. Many of these requirements also apply to University employees who have traveled recently or been in contact with those who may be sick. More information about the difference between isolation and quarantine can be found here.

Overview

The University has implemented a program to isolate and quarantine students as required by State orders and supplemental guidance from the Rhode Island Department of Health and the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner, and to ensure that University employees adhere to related requirements of the State of Rhode Island. Students must comply with quarantine and isolation requirements outlined below. Employees must comply with State of RI COVID-19 Travel Information for Residents and Visitors.

All members of the campus community are required to comply with quarantine and isolation instructions issued by URI Health Services.

Definitions

**Close Contact.** Someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated. Also includes persons with direct physical contact with a probable or confirmed case, direct care for a patient with probable or confirmed COVID-19 disease without using proper personal, and other situations as indicated by local risk assessments.

**Fully Vaccinated.** Someone who has received all recommended doses of a COVID-19 vaccine and more than 14 days have passed since receipt of the final dose.

**Isolation.** Used to separate people infected with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, from people who are not infected. People who are in isolation should stay home until it’s safe for them to be around others. In the home, anyone sick or infected should separate themselves from others by staying in a specific “sick room” or area and using a separate bathroom (if available).

**Quarantine.** Used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others. Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms. People in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, monitor their health, and follow directions from their state or local health department.

**Post-Exposure Testing**

In addition to participation in the University's routine surveillance testing program for COVID-19, close contacts of people with COVID-19 should be tested on day 5 or later following their exposure. (Testing prior to day 5 may give a false negative test result.) This includes individuals who are fully immunized against COVID-19 and those who had COVID-19 more than 90 days prior to the exposure. For more information, see the University's [Precautions After COVID-19 Illness](uri.edu/coronavirus/precautions) and [Vaccination](uri.edu/coronavirus/vaccination) guidelines.
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Quarantine

As required by the State of Rhode Island, all members of the campus community must quarantine and self-monitor for symptoms unless they meet exemption criteria (see below):

- When arriving at URI from a state with a high community spread rate as set forth on a list maintained by RIDOH at health.ri.gov/covid;
- When arriving URI from outside the United States; or
- After being in close contact with someone who has COVID-19.

Quarantine procedures

While quarantining, individuals must:

- Stay home (or in their assigned campus residence).
- Not go to work, school, clinicals, or public areas.
- Not use public transportation.
- Distance themselves from others, including at home (these people should monitor themselves for symptoms as well.)
- For residents of campus residence halls, plans are in place to provide meals and other essential services to individuals in quarantine on campus.

Duration of quarantine

The recommended duration of quarantine is 14 days from the last day of contact/exposure to the case (during the infectious period of the case, whether probable, test-confirmed, or asymptomatic test-confirmed), or from arriving at URI, as applicable.

Individuals may end their quarantine after 10 days if they have no symptoms, though they must continue to self-monitor for signs of illness through day 14. Non-students may further shorten their quarantine to 7 days if they have a negative result from a test taken at least 5 days from the start of quarantine. NOTE: Students must complete the full 10-day quarantine following exposure.

More information about quarantine is available here.

Isolation

Individuals must isolate:

- If they have symptoms of COVID-19 that do not require hospital care and test positive for SARS-CoV-2; or
- If they have no symptoms (are asymptomatic) but have tested positive for infection with SARS-CoV-2.

They must also isolate while waiting for a negative test result if they present with symptoms consistent with COVID-19.

More information about isolation is available here.

NOTE: Students who test positive for COVID-19 will be required to stay in the University provided isolation space or return home if it’s safe to do so with family/parental approval. If a student requests to travel home to complete isolation, URI Health Services staff will speak with family to provide guidance and explain risk to the household. Students must travel by private car and limit any stops.
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Isolation procedures

While isolating, individuals must:

- Stay home (or in their assigned isolation space) except to get medical care.
- Monitor their symptoms. If they have an emergency warning sign (including trouble breathing), seek emergency medical care immediately.
- Stay in a separate room from other household members, if possible.
- Use a separate bathroom, if possible.
- Avoid contact with other members of the household and pets.
- Don’t share personal household items, like cups, towels, and utensils.
- Wear a mask when around other people, if they are able to.

For residents of campus residence halls, plans are in place to provide meals and other essential services to individuals in isolation on campus or in contracted space.

Duration of isolation

A symptomatic person who is not immunocompromised must isolate for at least 10 days until:

- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared; and
- At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without fever-reducing medications; and
- Symptoms have improved.

A symptomatic person who is immunocompromised must isolate for at least 20 days until:

- At least 20 days have passed since symptoms first appeared; and
- At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without fever-reducing medications; and
- Symptoms have improved.

An asymptomatic person who is not immunocompromised must isolate for at least 10 days following the date of their first positive diagnostic test.

An asymptomatic person who is immunocompromised must isolate for at least 20 days following the date of their first positive diagnostic test.

Exceptions

Quarantine

Per the State of Rhode Island, individuals are exempt from all quarantine requirements if:

- The person is fully vaccinated prior to the date of their arrival in Rhode Island, provided they are asymptomatic upon arrival; or
- The person was previously diagnosed with COVID-19, had COVID-19 symptoms, the onset of which occurred no more than 90 days prior to the person’s arrival in Rhode Island, the person completed the isolation requirement in accordance with State of Rhode Island Executive Order 21-17 or its successor, and the person is asymptomatic upon arrival in Rhode Island; or
- The person previously tested positive for COVID-19 from a specimen taken no more than 90 days prior to the date of the person’s arrival in Rhode Island, had no COVID-19 symptoms previously,
completed the isolation requirement in accordance with State of Rhode Island Executive Order 21-17 or its successor, and the person is asymptomatic upon arrival in Rhode Island.

Individuals who test negative COVID-19 within 72 hours prior to arrival in Rhode Island may end their quarantine upon receiving the negative test result. Additionally, individuals who have traveled to Rhode Island from locations with a high community spread rate may end their quarantine upon receiving a negative test result after arriving in Rhode Island (this does not apply to individuals arriving in Rhode Island after travel outside the 50 states or the District of Columbia.) Fully vaccinated individuals are exempt from travel-related quarantine.