

George Latimer
County Executive

Sherlita Amler, M.D.
Commissioner of Health

ATTENTION

Public Health Alert

DATE: March 31, 2020

SUBJECT: **Updated Standing Commissioner's Order for Isolation of Lab Confirmed COVID-19 with Release from Isolation Criteria**

Attached is a copy of the revised "Standing Commissioner's Order for Isolation of Lab Confirmed COVID-19", which I issued on March 29, 2020. This Standing Order replaces the March 23, 2020 Standing Order that I had previously distributed.

This Standing Order, as the prior Standing Order did, directs any person who has tested positive for COVID-19 to isolate themselves until such time as they have been cleared from isolation by the Westchester County Health Department. It also contains the following directives for medical professionals:

1) Any doctor, hospital, or other medical provider or facility operating within the County of Westchester shall provide a copy of the Standing Order to any person who has tested positive for COVID-19 at the same time as the provider or facility is providing the results of the positive test or, in lieu of providing the order, shall inform the person of the order and direct them to the Health Department's website for a copy (health.westchestergov.com). The provider or facility **must** maintain documentation that this provision has been complied with.

2) Every doctor, hospital, or other medical provider or facility operating within the County of Westchester shall conspicuously place a copy of this Standing Order in their place of business, where it may be viewed by any persons seeking treatment or testing.

It is critical that our medical community assist in preventing the spread and transmission of this highly infectious disease. As such, the Westchester County Department of Health encourages you to take additional steps to ensure that your patients are aware of their obligation to isolate if they become infected with COVID-19, such as posting the Commissioner's Order on your website, and explaining the duty to isolate at the time of testing.

This new Standing Order incorporates guidance received from the New York State Department of Health, relating to the release of persons from isolation. Under that guidance, which is attached to the Standing Order, individuals can self-release from isolation under the following circumstances:

If the individual experienced any of the following symptoms: Fever, Cough, Shortness of Breath/Difficulty Breathing, the Clearance Criteria are:

- It's been at least 7 days since they first started experiencing symptoms; AND
- They haven't had a fever in at least 3 days, without taking fever-reducing medication; AND
- Any shortness of breath/coughing/difficulty breathing has improved.

If the individual hasn't experienced any of those symptoms, the Clearance Criteria are:

- It's been at least 7 days since they had their first positive COVID-19 test; AND
- They haven't had any subsequent illness

I have also included a FAQ that you can distribute to your patients regarding isolation and release therefrom.

Also attached is the New York State Department of Health's updated guidance for Healthcare Professionals to return to work. Please review that carefully. There is no requirement that your employees receive clearance from the Westchester County Department of Health—as with the general public, they can self-release from isolation once they meet the clearance criteria. I would recommend that you screen your employees to ensure that they meet the clearance criteria before allowing them to return, but again, you do not need written documentation from the Westchester County Department of Health.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sherlita Amler MD". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sherlita Amler, M.D.
Commissioner of Health

STATE OF NEW YORK
COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

In re: 2019-Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

**STANDING COMMISSIONER'S ORDER
FOR ISOLATION OF LAB CONFIRMED COVID-19**

Pursuant to Section 2100 of the Public Health Law and Section
873.401 of the Westchester County Sanitary Code

WHEREAS, on January 30, 2020 the World Health Organization designated the COVID-19 outbreak as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern, advising that further cases may appear in any country; and

WHEREAS, on January 31, 2020, Health and Human Services Secretary Alex M. Azar II declared a public health emergency for the entire United States to aid the nation's healthcare community in responding to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, as of March 7, 2020, Andrew Cuomo, the Governor of the State of New York, declared a State of Emergency by Executive Order 202 as a result of the spread of COVID-19 in the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, as of March 13, 2020, Donald Trump, the President of the United States of America, declared a National Emergency as a result of the spread of COVID-19 in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Section 2100 of the Public Health Law mandates that all local health officers, being Commissioners of Health and Public Health Directors, as the case may be, of County Health Departments, guard against the introduction of such communicable diseases as are designated in the

State Sanitary Code, by the exercise of proper and vigilant medical inspection and control of all persons and things infected with or exposed to such diseases; and

WHEREAS, the New York State Department of Health has issued “2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Interim Containment Guidance: Precautionary Quarantine, Mandatory Quarantine and Mandatory Isolation Applicable to all Local Health Departments (LHD)” (“NYSDOH Guidance”); and

WHEREAS the NYSDOH Guidance requires that any person who has tested positive for COVID-19 be isolated; and

WHEREAS, on March 23, 2020, I issued a “STANDING COMMISSIONER’S ORDER FOR ISOLATION OF LAB CONFIRMED COVID-19”; and

WHEREAS, on March 28, 2020, the New York State Department of Health issued a “HEALTH ADVISORY: COVID-19 RELEASE FROM HOME ISOLATION” (“Clearance Criteria”); and

WHEREAS, as of March 28, 2020, the County of Westchester has over 7,000 individuals who have had laboratory confirmed COVID-19 infections; and

WHEREAS, it is expected that the number of persons infected will continue to increase; and

WHEREAS, given the volume of positive test results and the critical need to protect the public health;

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me by section 2100 of the Public Health Law of the State of New York and 10 NYCRR 2.25(f) and Section 873.401 of the Westchester County Sanitary Code, as Commissioner of the Westchester County Department of Health, I do hereby:

ORDER that, any person who has tested positive for COVID-19 through laboratory testing is required to remain isolated at the individual’s place of residence until such time as

that individual meets the Clearance Criteria as set forth by the New York State Department of Health;

FURTHER, I DO HEREBY ORDER that, any person so isolated must adhere to the Isolation Protocol attached hereto;

FURTHER, I DO HEREBY order that, any doctor, hospital, or other medical provider or facility operating within the County of Westchester shall provide a copy of this Standing Order to any person who has tested positive for COVID-19 upon delivery of the results of the positive test, or shall inform said person of this Standing Order and direct the individual to the website for the Westchester County Department of Health to obtain a copy. Documentation shall be maintained that this provision has been complied with, and shall be provided to the Westchester County Department of Health upon request;

FURTHER, I DO HEREBY ORDER that, every doctor, hospital, or other medical provider or facility operating within the County of Westchester shall conspicuously place a copy of this Standing Order in their place of business, where it may be viewed by any persons seeking treatment or testing;

FURTHER, I DO HEREBY give notice that the failure to comply with the provisions of this Order may subject an individual to criminal prosecution pursuant to the terms of Section 12-b of the Public Health Law;


FURTHER, I DO HEREBY give notice that an individual subject to this Standing Order has a right to challenge this Order in a Court of competent jurisdiction and to be represented by legal counsel or to have counsel provided, and that if the person qualifies to have counsel provided, such counsel will be made available. To the extent necessary, the Health Department will request that an individual subject to isolation be allowed to participate in any such proceeding by telephonic or video-conferencing means;

FURTHER, I DO HEREBY ORDER that, the Standing Order issued by my hand on March 23, 2020 is hereby deemed revoked;

FURTHER, I DO HEREBY ORDER that, any person subject to the March 23, 2020 Standing Order remains subject to this Standing Order in accordance with the terms contained herein;

FURTHER, I DO HEREBY ORDER that, this Standing Order shall remain in effect until revoked, in writing, by my hand.

DATED: WHITE PLAINS, NEW YORK
MARCH 29, 2020



DR. SHERLITA AMLER, M.D., COMMISSIONER
WESTCHESTER COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Westchester County Department of Health
Isolation Protocol for 2019-Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

1. I will remain at my location for the duration of the isolation period.
2. I am not permitted to attend work or school outside my home. I will not visit enclosed public spaces (grocery stores, drugstores, department stores, shopping malls, theaters, religious services, community centers) or attend any social gatherings.
3. WCDH staff may contact me at least daily to check my condition and symptoms during the isolation period. During the isolation period, WCDH may make unannounced visits.
4. If I am housed together with family or others then such household members are permitted to remain in the home but will not be permitted to leave the home. Other non-household members/visitors are not permitted in my living quarters. I will not share my bed, bedroom or bathroom with household members and will keep my bedroom door closed. I will not eat in the same room with household members and I will not share linens, towels, eating utensils, cups and plates. I will limit my time in common household area such as bathrooms and kitchens.
5. Persons in the household can walk outside their house on their own property, but they must not come within six feet of neighborhoods or other members of the public. Persons living in a multiple dwelling may not utilize common stairways or elevators to access the outside. Likewise you need to refrain from walking in your neighborhood.
6. All household members will be informed of my isolation status.
7. Garbage should be bagged and left outside by door for pickup.
8. If I have a fever of $\geq 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$ / $\geq 38.0^{\circ}\text{C}$ (or feel feverish) or develop any other symptoms of 2019-nCoV infection, I will call my medical provider or if I don't have a provider I will call WCDH immediately at: **(866) – 588-0195**.

Symptoms include:

- fever
 - cough
 - shortness of breath
 - any other lower respiratory symptoms
9. If I, or any household member, experiences a life threatening condition, call 911 and notify the caller that a person in the living quarters is under isolation for 2019-nCoV infection so that responders can take proper precautions.
 10. I am aware that if I become symptomatic or ill, those persons staying with me in my living quarters, may be subject to mandatory isolation and I may be subject to isolation.
 11. I will notify the WCDH of any needed care or services such as food, supplies, medicine or other supports that I require by calling **866-588-0195**
 12. I, or my legal guardian, may contact the WCDH for any questions or concerns with this protocol. Please contact the number above.



March 28, 2020

TO: Healthcare Providers, Healthcare Facilities, Clinical Laboratories, and Local Health Departments
FROM: New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH)

HEALTH ADVISORY: COVID-19 RELEASE FROM HOME ISOLATION

SUMMARY

- Widespread, ongoing community transmission of COVID-19 is occurring in the New York City metropolitan region of New York State.
- The criteria in New York State for release from mandatory home isolation is now being revised to use the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's \(CDC\) non-test-based strategy](#).
- [Release of immunocompromised persons with COVID-19](#) from isolation (e.g., medical treatment with immunosuppressive drugs, bone marrow or solid organ transplant recipients, inherited immunodeficiency, poorly controlled HIV) should be discussed in advance with NYSDOH.

RELEASE OF SYMPTOMATIC INDIVIDUALS ON ISOLATION

- Symptomatic individuals who were confirmed as having COVID-19 may discontinue home isolation once they meet the following conditions:
 - At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed *since recovery*, defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; **AND**
 - Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); **AND**
 - At least 7 days have passed *since symptoms first appeared*.
- This approach will prevent most, but may not prevent all, instances of secondary spread. The risk of transmission after recovery is likely substantially less than that during illness.
 - To further reduce the risk, individuals returning from isolation should continue to practice proper hygiene protocols (e.g., hand washing, covering coughs) and avoid prolonged, close contact with vulnerable persons (e.g. compromised immune system, underlying illness, 70 years of age or older).

RELEASE OF ASYMPTOMATIC INDIVIDUALS ON ISOLATION

- Asymptomatic individuals who were confirmed as having COVID-19 may discontinue home isolation under the following conditions:
 - At least 7 days have passed *since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test*; **AND**
 - The individual has had no subsequent illness.

COVID-19 ISOLATION

Who does this apply to?

Any person who resides in Westchester County, who has tested positive for COVID-19

Am I under isolation?

Any resident of Westchester County who has tested positive for COVID-19 is subject to isolation in accordance with the Standing Commissioner's Order.

What if I ignore the isolation order?

Ignoring the isolation order is a crime punishable under Section 12-b of the Public Health Law. Additionally, the Department of Health can seek to confine you a medical facility for failing to comply.

Okay, so how can I get out of isolation?

You must remain in isolation until you meet the Clearance Criteria set by the New York State Department of Health. Once you meet the Clearance Criteria, you can end your isolation.

What are the Clearance Criteria?

Here are the Criteria:

If you've experienced any of the following symptoms: Fever, Cough, Shortness of Breath/Difficulty Breathing, the Clearance Criteria are:

- It's been at least 7 days since you first started experiencing symptoms; AND
- You haven't had a fever in at least 3 days, without taking fever-reducing medication (such as Tylenol); AND
- Any shortness of breath/coughing/difficulty breathing has improved.

If you meet ALL THREE criteria, you can end your isolation.

If you haven't experienced any of those symptoms, the Clearance Criteria are:

- It's been at least 7 days since you had your first positive COVID-19 test; AND
- You haven't had any subsequent illness

If you meet BOTH of these criteria, you can end your isolation

So if I meet the Clearance Criteria I'm totally free?

NO! Meeting the Clearance Criteria only frees you from medical isolation. You're still subject to all other applicable State and Local laws and Executive Orders. So for example:

THINGS YOU CAN DO	THINGS YOU CAN'T DO
Go to the grocery store	Go to a party
Go for a walk outside	Play sports with a group of people
Go to work if you work for an essential business provide an essential service as defined by the Empire State Development Corporation	Go to work if you don't work for an essential business or essential service.

[Empire State Development Corporation](#)

But if I'm cleared, I can't get anybody else sick, right?

Wrong. While the Clearance Criteria are designed to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread, it's still possible that you can infect other people.

What can I do to prevent that?

Be careful. Wash your hands thoroughly and regularly. Cover any coughs. Avoid close contact with anyone over 65, or anyone with a compromised immune system or underlying illness. Maintain proper social distancing. Stay home unless you need to go out.

Are there any other special instructions I should be aware of?

If you're a healthcare worker or a first responder, please check with your employer for any additional instructions.

I understand all that. Do I need anything from the Health Department?

No. Once you meet the Clearance Criteria, your isolation period is finished.

I'm an essential worker, but my employer won't let me back to work without something in writing from the Health Department. Help!

The Health Department is currently building a web application where you will be able to request release from isolation letters. Please check back.

What if I have other questions?

Call (866) 588-0195