



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Requirements of Quarantine and Isolation

Sterling, Colo. – March 30, 2020: Northeast Colorado Health Department (NCHD) wants to remind everyone that isolation and quarantine are serious steps taken to protect the public by preventing exposure to people who are sick or have been exposed to people who are sick. Generally, a person's residence is the preferred setting for quarantine and isolation.

“As the number of positive cases increases in northeast Colorado, contact investigations we are performing may begin to reveal common community exposures”, said Trish McClain, Public Health Director. “It is important that if you have been advised by your doctor to self-isolate or self-quarantine that you follow their directions. This means you need to stay at home for the duration of time your physician told you, probably 14 days.”

Isolation or self-isolation applies to people who are either getting ill and think they may have COVID-19, have been tested and are awaiting test results, or have a positive COVID-19 test result. Quarantine or self-quarantine applies to people who have had close contact to an individual who has symptoms or a positive COVID-19 test result. Isolation and quarantine require that you remain

at home at all times for the entire duration, usually 14 days. If you need critical services such as groceries, please ask someone to go for you, deliver to your doorstep, and then leave. Once they have left, you can go out and retrieve your things.

In the state of Colorado it is a legal order when you have been placed in quarantine or isolation by a public health agency, whether verbally or in writing. Physicians and local public health agencies only give this directive and put a person in quarantine or isolation when it is necessary for the protection of the public.

NCHD emphasizes the importance for individuals, who have been advised by their physician to self-isolate or self-quarantine, to voluntarily cooperate with isolation and quarantine instructions. NCHD may issue isolation or quarantine orders in some high-risk situations or if non-compliance is anticipated. If people do not follow the order, public health agencies can involve law enforcement. If enforcement were to become necessary, violation of that order is a Class 1 misdemeanor and is punishable by up to one year in jail and a \$1000 fine.

Most people are taking the instructions given by their physicians as well as the state public health orders seriously and we thank you. For those few individuals who are downplaying the seriousness of the situation, we ask you to reconsider your choices and please make the health of the community your priority. Healthcare providers and public health professionals are dedicated to keeping people healthy and saving lives. We can't do it alone. We are asking everyone to please do your part in helping stop the spread of COVID-19!

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