



# TULE RIVER TRIBE PUBLIC HEALTH AUTHORITY

## ORDER OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH AUTHORITY

No. C19-08

Amendment 6 (October 14, 2021)

### **SUBJECT: Covid-19 Duration of Isolation and Quarantine**

#### **I CURRENT SITUATION**

Covid-19 is a highly contagious novel coronavirus spread mainly from person to person through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks.<sup>1</sup> As of October 13, 2021, there have been 586 cases of Covid-19 identified through the Tule River Indian Health Center, Inc. including 4 deaths, 64,248 cases and 941 deaths in Tulare County,<sup>2</sup> and 4,565,279 cases and 70,010 deaths in the State of California.<sup>3</sup> Recovered patients sometimes suffer permanent heart, lung, or neurological damage from Covid-19. The Tule River Indian Reservation must take precautionary steps to protect its people, community, and elders from Covid-19.

#### **II SUMMARY GUIDANCE**

The following order is designed to protect the Tule River Indian Reservation, its residents, and its way of life. It begins at 12:00AM on October 15, 2021 and continues until otherwise noted.

The Public Health Authority requires all individuals on the Tule River Indian Reservation, or its properties, with a positive COVID-19 test or a known contact with a positive case of Covid-19 to isolate or quarantine until they are deemed safe to be released by the Public Health Authority. A Covid-19 test includes any test authorized by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for detection of Covid-19, such as antigen (rapid), or PCR (polymerase chain reaction) test.

While there may be different future policies based on new information about variants of Covid-19, individuals are now deemed safe and therefore released according to the following policies:

#### ***Isolation Orders***

If an individual has a positive COVID-19 test AND shows symptoms of Covid-19, they will be cleared of isolation restrictions when:

1. All Covid-19 symptoms have substantially improved, including fever without the use of medication for at least 24 hours; AND
2. At least 10 days have passed since either the first positive test OR symptom onset (whichever is most recent); AND

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#Basics>

<sup>2</sup> <https://covid19.tularecounty.ca.gov/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://covid19.ca.gov/state-dashboard/>

3. Written approval through completion of the PHA Isolation clearance form by a healthcare provider or the Tribal Public Health Officer, that there are no other clinical concerns.

If an individual has a positive COVID-19 test AND remains asymptomatic (never had symptoms), they will be cleared of isolation restrictions when:

- At least 10 days since first positive test AND
- Written approval through completion of the PHA Isolation clearance form by a healthcare provider or the Tribal Public Health Officer that there are no other clinical concerns.

### ***Quarantine Orders***

Individuals with a known exposure to Covid-19 must quarantine for 10 days and be tested for COVID-19 by a healthcare provider 7-10 days after their exposure.

An individual is exempt from quarantine if:

- More than two weeks have passed since they received a second dose of a 2-dose series of a COVID-19 vaccine, or more than two weeks from receipt of one dose of a single-dose COVID-19 vaccine, AND
  - They have remained asymptomatic since the current COVID-19 exposure.
- OR
- Less than 90 days have passed since first positive test of COVID-19, AND
  - Have remained asymptomatic since the current COVID-19 exposure.

Any vaccinated individual exempt from quarantine must be tested for COVID-19 3-5 days after their exposure. Quarantining is not necessary before the test result.

**Emergency Exemption:** Exemptions for quarantine may be offered for anyone in an emergency situation, such as fighting wildfires. Requests for exemption should be sent to the Tribal Public Health Officer (TPHO) at [pha@tulerivertribe-nsn.gov](mailto:pha@tulerivertribe-nsn.gov). The TPHO will make a decision on a case-by-case basis in consultation with clinical staff.

Household members of anyone in isolation or quarantine must follow directions as given by the Covid-19 contact tracing team, which may vary based on the specific living arrangements of the household.

**Presumptive Positives:** Anyone who has Covid-19 symptoms, such as fatigue, headache, loss of taste/smell, etc., and a known contact of Covid-19 (thus already in quarantine) can be treated as a presumptive positive and go through contact tracing. If the first test is negative for Covid-19, a second test does not need to be performed.

### **Rationale**

These policies are enacted to protect the community from the spread of COVID-19 and to avoid putting unnecessary burden on individuals and households afflicted with COVID-19. They align with

the isolation and quarantine guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC)<sup>4</sup>, the California Department of Public Health<sup>5</sup>, and Los Angeles County.<sup>6</sup>

For isolating people who test positive for COVID-19, the CDC’s website states that “Available data indicate that adults with mild to moderate COVID-19 remain infectious no longer than 10 days after symptom onset.” There are very rare cases of individuals being infectious for longer than 10 days. However, the PHA believes the overall risk of infection from these rare cases is small. The PHA is also aware that isolation can create an economic burden on individuals from keeping them out of work. Thus, we have decided that 10 days is the appropriate timeframe for the community.

We are aware that many in the community would like to have a negative test before someone is released from isolation or quarantine. However, the CDC states that the latest research recommends AGAINST requiring a negative test. Current COVID-19 tests indicate if there is virus in your body, not whether you are infectious to others. Most cases of COVID-19 will not be contagious more than 10 days after their first test. However, people can test positive for up to 12 weeks after their first positive test, even though they are not contagious. There are no current widely available COVID-19 tests that indicate whether someone is contagious or not. Requiring a negative test, therefore, is not the recommended approach to keep the community safe.

For quarantining someone who was exposed as a contact to COVID-19, the CDC gives three recommendations. One recommendation is a 10-day quarantine period without testing at the end of it. According to available data, a 10-day quarantine is believed to be 99% effective in preventing post-quarantine transmission.<sup>7</sup> Since the PHA has testing capacity, we decided to add a test at the end of quarantine for further protection for the community. The test can be conducted between 7 to 10 days after the exposure to limit the inconvenience and hardship on individuals.

On August 3, 2021, the delta variant of the COVID-19 virus was confirmed on the Reservation. The delta variant is much more contagious than the original virus.<sup>8</sup> Due to the high rate of infections, the CDC has updated their guidance to call for people who are vaccinated to test 3-5 days after their exposure. The PHA has updating our policy to match this change in policy.<sup>9</sup>

## Definitions

- a) “Contact” means spending more than 15 minutes within 6ft of someone without protective equipment, OR significant potential exposure through surfaces or time spent together as determined by a healthcare provider.
- b) “Isolation” means the separation, for the period of communicability, of infected persons from others in such places and under such conditions as to prevent or limit the direct or

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/duration-isolation.html#:~:text=Available%20data%20indicate%20that%20persons,20%20days%20after%20symptom%20onset.>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Guidance-on-Returning-to-Work-or-School-Following-COVID-19-Diagnosis.aspx>

<sup>6</sup> <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/ncorona2019/isolationquarantine/#Isolation>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/scientific-brief-options-to-reduce-quarantine.html>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/delta-variant.html>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>

indirect transmission of the infectious agent from those infected or contaminated to those who are susceptible or who may spread the agent to others.

- c) "Quarantine" means the limitation of freedom of movement of such well persons or domestic animals as have been exposed to, or are suspected to have been exposed to, an infectious agent, for a period of time not longer than the longest usual incubation period of the infectious agent, in such manner as to prevent effective contact with those not so exposed.
- d) "Covid-19 vaccine" is a vaccine for the prevention of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), which has been authorized or approved by the US Federal Government and administered by a healthcare professional according to prescribed practice.

### III ENFORCEMENT

- 1) Violation of this order may result in civil fines set out in the Tribe's Communicable Disease Ordinance, or any other applicable tribal, state, or federal penalties.
- 1) Pursuant to Tribal Resolution No. FY2020-110, the Public Health Authority requests that Chief of Police of the Tule River Tribal Police enforce this Order to ensure compliance with its provisions. The violation of any provision of this Order may constitute an imminent threat and an immediate menace to public health.
- 2) This Order shall become effective on December 10, 2020 and will continue to be in effect unless extended, rescinded, superseded, or amended in writing by the Public Health Authority.
- 3) The Public Health Authority must promptly provide copies of this Order as follows: (1) by posting on the Tule River Indian Health Center Inc., website ([www.trihci.org/Covid-19](http://www.trihci.org/Covid-19)) and all of the Center's social media sites (2) by posting at the Tule River Tribal Council Administration Building and requesting that the Tribe distribute to all other tribal entities, departments, and organizations for immediate posting, and (3) by providing a copy to any member of the public requesting a copy. In addition, the owner, manager, or operator of any facility that is likely to be impacted by this Order is strongly encouraged to post a copy of this Order onsite and to provide a copy to any member of the public requesting a copy.
- 4) If any provision of this Order or its application to any person or circumstance is held to be invalid, then the remainder of the Order, including the application of such part or provision to other persons or circumstances, shall not be affected and shall continue in full force and effect. To this end, the provisions of this Order are severable.

Signature:   
Tribal Public Health Officer

Date: October 14, 2021

## FAQS

### 1. What's the difference between isolation and quarantine?

Isolation is for someone who has tested positive for Covid-19. Quarantine is for someone who may have Covid-19 but does not have a positive test. It is important for both groups to stop contact with other individuals to curtail the spread of Covid-19. There are different policies for these groups because they present different risk to the community.

### 2. What's the difference between symptomatic and contagious?

Someone is "symptomatic" if they are actively displaying symptoms, such as coughing, fever, loss of taste or smell, congestion, or headaches. Someone is 'contagious' if the virus inside their body can be passed to someone else and replicate, causing that person to test positive for the virus. According to the latest recommendations, someone with Covid-19 is often contagious before they show symptoms. Most cases are not contagious after 10 days if symptoms improve.

### 3. Did this policy change?

Yes. The previous policy required a negative test or 21 days to end isolation and 14 days to end quarantine. We had these long timelines to be extra cautious, especially as the Reservation saw a large increase in cases in the months of December and January. In light of decreasing cases on and off the Reservation, and further research, we decided to shorten timeframes for isolation and quarantine. These new guidelines are very similar to those recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the California Department of Public Health, and Tulare County Department of Public Health.

### 4. What should I do if I don't have a healthcare provider?

For anyone without healthcare provider, such as a primary care doctor, contact TRIHCI at (559) 784-2316 and they will consult with you on the best approach moving forward. TRIHCI staff is dedicated to ensuring the Tribal community stays safe and is protected from Covid-19.

### 5. Who should receive the clearance letter?

If you have your doctor or another healthcare provider complete the PHA Isolation clearance, please send it to your employer or organization to keep for their records. The letter does not need to be sent to TRIHCI.

### 6. If I'm cleared of quarantine, am I back to normal?

The vast majority of people who are exposed to Covid-19 develop symptoms within the first 10 days. The latest information from the CDC says that the risk of getting Covid-19 after 10 days is 1%.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, we ask anyone who is cleared of quarantine to self-monitor symptoms for 4 more days, so 14 days after exposure to ensure you are not positive. If you develop symptoms, such as fever, cough or loss of taste and smell, please contact TRICHI immediately at 559-784-2316.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/scientific-brief-options-to-reduce-quarantine.html>