**New Jersey Department of Human Services Division of Developmental Disabilities**



### **Receipt of COVID-19 Information Form**

Currently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention[[1]](#footnote-1) [[2]](#footnote-2) (CDC) provides the following information about COVID-19:

**How COVID-19 Spreads**

COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly through close contact from person to person, including between people who are physically near each other (within about 6 feet). People who are infected but do not show symptoms can also spread the virus to others. [Cases of reinfection with COVID-19 have been reported but are rare](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/reinfection.html#/). We are still learning about how the virus spreads and the severity of illness it causes.

**COVID-19 spreads very easily from person to person**

How easily a virus spreads from person to person can vary. COVID-19 appears to spread more efficiently than influenza but not as efficiently as measles, which is among the most contagious viruses known to affect people.

**COVID-19 most commonly spreads during close contact**

* People who are physically near (within 6 feet) a person with COVID-19 or have direct contact with that person are at greatest risk of infection.
* When people with COVID-19 cough, sneeze, sing, talk, or breathe they produce *respiratory droplets*. These droplets can range in size from larger droplets (some of which are visible) to smaller droplets. Small droplets can also form particles when they dry very quickly in the airstream.
* Infections occur mainly through exposure to respiratory droplets when a person is in close contact with someone who has COVID-19.
* Respiratory droplets cause infection when they are inhaled or deposited on mucous membranes, such as those that line the inside of the nose and mouth**.**
* As respiratory droplets travel further from the person with COVID-19, the concentration of droplets decreases. Larger droplets fall out of the air due to gravity. Smaller droplets and particles spread apart in the air.
* With passing time, the amount of infectious virus in respiratory droplets also decreases.

**COVID-19 can sometimes be spread by airborne transmission**

* Some infections can be spread by exposure to virus in small droplets and particles that can linger in the air for minutes to hours. These viruses may be able to infect people who are further than 6 feet away from the person who is infected or after that person has left the space.
* This kind of spread is referred to as *airborne transmission* and is an important way that infections like tuberculosis, measles, and chicken pox are spread.
* There is evidence that under certain conditions, people with COVID-19 seem to have infected others who were more than 6 feet away. These transmissions occurred within enclosed spaces that had inadequate ventilation. Sometimes the infected person was breathing heavily, for example while singing or exercising.
  + Under these circumstances, scientists believe that the amount of infectious smaller droplet and particles produced by the people with COVID-19 became concentrated enough to spread the virus to other people. The people who were infected were in the same space during the same time or shortly after the person with COVID-19 had left.
* Available data indicates that it is much more common for the virus that causes COVID-19 to spread through close contact with a person who has COVID-19 than through airborne transmission[[3]](#footnote-3).

**COVID-19 spreads less commonly through contact with contaminated surfaces**

* Respiratory droplets can also land on surfaces and objects. It is possible that a person could get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes
* Spread from touching surfaces is not thought to be a common way that COVID-19 spreads

**Public health recommendations for vaccinated persons[[4]](#footnote-4)**

Currently authorized vaccines in the United States are highly effective at protecting vaccinated people against symptomatic and severe COVID-19. Additionally, a [growing body of evidence](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/fully-vaccinated-people.html) suggests that fully vaccinated people are less likely to have asymptomatic infection and potentially less likely to transmit COVID-19 to others.

At this time, people are considered fully vaccinated for COVID-19 ≥2 weeks after they have received the second dose in a 2-dose series (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna), or ≥2 weeks after they have received a single-dose vaccine (Johnson and Johnson [J&J]/Janssen).

How long vaccine protection lasts and how much vaccines protect against emerging COVID-19 variants are still under investigation. Until more is known and vaccination coverage increases, some prevention measures will continue to be necessary for all people, regardless of vaccination status.

In public spaces, fully vaccinated people should continue to follow [guidance](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html) to protect themselves and others, including wearing a well-fitted [mask](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html), [physical distancing](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html) (at least 6 feet), avoiding crowds, avoiding poorly ventilated spaces, covering coughs and sneezes, [washing hands](https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html) often, and following any applicable workplace guidance. Fully vaccinated people should still watch for [symptoms of COVID-19](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html), especially following an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19. If symptoms develop, all people – regardless of vaccination status – should isolate and be clinically evaluated for COVID-19, including COVID-19 testing, if indicated. Fully vaccinated people should also continue to follow current [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html) and [NJDOH](https://covid19.nj.gov/faqs/nj-information/travel-and-transportation/are-there-travel-restrictions-to-or-from-new-jersey) travel guidance.

**Who is at Higher Risk**

Everyone, regardless of disability, is at risk for being exposed to COVID-19 and getting sick. Certain populations, including those who are older or have underlying medical conditions are more likely to become severely ill, which means that they may require hospitalization, intensive care, a ventilator to help them breathe, or may even die.

Per the CDC[[5]](#footnote-5), certain disability groups might be at an increased risk of becoming infected.

* People who have limited mobility or cannot avoid close contact with others who may be infected;
* People who have trouble understanding information or practicing measures like hand washing and social distancing;
* People who may not be able to communicate symptoms of illness.

Individuals, families, guardians, providers and other stakeholders are encouraged to review the CDC links in this document for more information.

People with the below medical conditions **are at an increased risk** for severe illness at any age:

* Cancer;
* Chronic kidney disease;
* COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease);
* Down Syndrome;
* Serious heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies;
* Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant;
* Severe Obesity (BMI ≥ 40 kg/m2)
* Pregnancy;
* Sickle cell disease;
* Smoking;
* Type 2 diabetes mellitus.

Based on the information available at this time, people with the following conditions **might be at an increased risk** for severe illness from COVID-19:

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| * Asthma (moderate to severe); | * Neurologic conditions, such as dementia; |
| * Cerebrovascular disease; | * Overweight (BMI > 25 kg/m2, but < 30 kg/m2); |
| * Cystic fibrosis; | * Pulmonary fibrosis (damaged/scarred lung tissues); |
| * Hypertension or high blood pressure; | * Thalassemia (a type of blood disorder); |
| * Liver disease; | * Type 1 diabetes mellitus. |
| * Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from blood or bone marrow transplant, immune deficiencies, HIV, use of corticosteroids, or use of other immune weakening medicines. | |

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Per the CDC, certain disability groups might be at an increased risk of becoming infected.

* People who have limited mobility or cannot avoid close contact with others who may be infected;
* People who have trouble understanding information or practicing measures like hand washing & social distancing;
* People who may not be able to communicate symptoms of illness.

**How to reduce the risk of getting COVID-19**

It is especially important for people at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19, and those who live with them, to protect themselves from getting the virus. The best way for someone to protect himself or herself and help reduce the spread of COVID-19 is to: wear a mask; stay six feet away from others; avoid crowds; avoid poorly ventilated spaces; wash your hands often; cover coughs and sneezes; clean and disinfect; and monitor your health daily.

Face coverings are a critical preventive measure and should be worn in public settings and when around people who don’t live in the same household. Information on types of masks and guidance on how to best wear these masks are available from the CDC[[6]](#footnote-6). They are **most** essential when social distancing is difficult. If an individual does not tolerate a face covering or it is not medically advisable to wear one, measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread must occur, including social distancing, frequent hand washing, and cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces[[7]](#footnote-7).  
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Your provider can relay what precautions they are taking to lower the risk of transmission. Division policies related to COVID-19 can be found on the [DHS COVID-19 Information](https://nj.gov/humanservices/coronavirus.html) webpage. If a self-directed model is being used, families are encouraged to consider risks and talk with their staff about screening and prevention strategies that may be used.  
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If you or someone you know has questions about COVID-19 risk, it is recommended that you consult your health care provider, visit New Jersey’s [COVID-19 Information Hub](https://covid19.nj.gov/), or call New Jersey’s 24/7 COVID-19 Call Center at 1-800-962-1253.

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By signing this document, the individual or their legal representative acknowledges receipt of this information and will consider it in their planning.

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| Name of Individual (Please Type): | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| DDDiD/MIS Number: | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Name of Legal Representative (Self or Guardian – Please Print): | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Signature of Legal Representative: | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
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1. [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Pathogens that are spread easily through airborne transmission require the use of special engineering controls to prevent infections. Control practices, including recommendations for patient placement and personal protective equipment for health care personnel in healthcare settings, can be found in Section 2 of [Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the COVID-19 Pandemic](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-disabilities.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)