



ISOLATION AND QUARANTINE

What is ISOLATION AND QUARANTINE?

The purpose of isolation and quarantine is to prevent or limit the transmission of an infectious agent, biological toxin, or chemical release to protect the public's health, safety, and welfare.

Isolation is for people who are sick with a contagious disease. They are separated from others until they are no longer considered contagious. Hospitals isolate some patients so they do not infect others with their illness. People in isolation may be cared for in their homes, hospitals, or in designated facilities.

Quarantine is for people who were exposed to a contagious disease but are not sick. They are separated from others as they could become sick and contagious. People may be asked to stay in their homes so they do not possibly spread the disease to others.

When is the decision made?

The decision to isolate or quarantine someone is made when it is clear that an individual or group of individuals poses a significant risk of transmitting a contagious disease or agent to others, potentially harming the public's health.

Initially, a person is asked to voluntarily isolate or quarantine himself or herself. However, if necessary federal, state or local authorities may be asked to enforce isolation and quarantine requests to protect the public.

Authority and Procedures:

According to Title 20 and Title 16 of the Delaware Code, once a decision has been made to isolate or quarantine an individual, the public health authority or public safety authority will request an order from a judge authorizing the isolation or quarantine of an individual or group of individuals. In the order, the public health authority or public safety authority will decide the length of isolation or quarantine based on the disease factors or Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations. The public health authority or public safety authority reserves the right to request amendment of a legal order to extend the length of isolation or quarantine, if an individual becomes ill or disease factors change.

Monitoring:

The Delaware Division of Public Health is responsible for monitoring isolated or quarantined individuals by a daily phone call or a home visit. If an individual is isolated at the hospital, the hospital will notify the Division of Public Health daily with a status update.

24/7 Emergency Contact Number: 1-888-295-5156

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What happens if the isolated or quarantined person becomes ill?

If an individual becomes ill while quarantined at home, the individual will notify their primary care physician and the Division of Public Health about the illness. Depending on the availability of hospital beds, the type of disease, and the availability of home care, the Division of Public Health may arrange for alternate care and/or provide essential services.

Essential Services:

If necessary, the Division of Public Health is responsible for assisting isolated and/or quarantined individuals to provide essential services. Essential services may include one or more of the following: food, water, medical care, trash removal, and/or financial support.

Whom do you call?

Delaware Division of Public Health: 1-888-295-5156

For more information:

Visit the CDC website:
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars/isolationquarantine.htm>.