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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Essex County Health Department adopts quarantine recommendations for fully vaccinated persons

Elizabethtown, NY – Last week, Governor Cuomo announced plans to update state guidance eliminating the quarantine requirement for fully vaccinated people who have had close contact exposure to COVID-19. This aligns with recently updated recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Following consultation with state partners, the Essex County Health Department (ECHD) is adopting these recommendations for Essex County residents, effective February 19, 2021.

Pending official changes to New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) guidance, Essex County residents with known exposure risks (either via contact or travel) will not be required to quarantine if the following circumstances apply at the time of their exposure:

- They are fully vaccinated with a with FDA-authorized vaccine product;
- They are within 90 days following receipt of the last dose in the series;
- They have remained asymptomatic since the current COVID-19 exposure;
- Their vaccination status can be verified in the New York State Immunization Information System (NYSIIS), the state’s online portal that allows health care professionals access to vaccination histories, and;
- Travel, if applicable, was to an area in the United States covered by the [NYS Travel Advisory](#).

Individuals meeting this criteria will still be required to complete a contact tracing interview and may need to quarantine while vaccination status is verified by the health department. Once ECHD has confirmed the eligibility of the individual to forego quarantine, that person will be notified. “Depending on the situation, this verification could occur during the initial contact tracing interview, or it may take some time,” noted Jessica Darney Buehler, Director of Health Planning & Promotion for ECHD. “We ask that residents be patient while we implement these changes to our current process”.

At this time, the recommendations are limited to the parameters outlined above. “We are still learning about the virus that causes COVID-19,” stated Linda Beers, Director of Public Health for Essex County. “The vaccines approved to prevent the disease are new as well, and while they have demonstrated great success at preventing severe and symptomatic COVID-19, we just don’t know yet how long that protection lasts or how much the vaccines reduce transmission to others,” Beers added.

In addition, the efficacy of the vaccines against emerging variants is not known. “Until we know more, we are asking all Essex County residents and visitors into our region, fully vaccinated or not, continue to protect themselves and others by wearing a mask, staying at least 6 feet away from others, avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated spaces, covering coughs and sneezes, and washing hands often,” emphasized Beers.



**HEALTH
DEPARTMENT**
Public Health Unit

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH- Linda Beers, MPH

Any additional updates to NYSDOH and/or CDC guidance regarding quarantine requirements for fully vaccinated individuals will be considered for local adoption, as appropriate. For more information about ECHD COVID-19 response activities, visit www.co.essex.ny.us/Health or connect with us on Facebook (@EssexCountyPublicHealth).

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