



December 4, 2020

Good afternoon,

The number of Covid cases in town continues to increase steadily. For residents seeking the numbers, please see the daily data report at [ct.gov/coronavirus](http://ct.gov/coronavirus). Data from yesterday indicates 134 positive cases in Easton. Through the entirety of the spring, we had approximately 30 cases. This is clearly not apples to apples and there is a lot more testing going on. The per 100,000 two week rolling average is a rate of 35.1. This is a two week rolling average and reports with a 5 day lag. There have been 27 new cases in the two weeks ending November 28, 2020.

On a personal note, I understand where skepticism is natural, however, I have been on the medical staff at Bridgeport Hospital for 29 years. We are considering putting patients in cafeterias and auditoriums because of the number of Covid positive and total number of patients. This has never even been remotely considered in the past. This is unprecedented and unique, but may be necessary. I tell you this only to again underscore the **seriousness** of this virus.

Attached are a review of guidelines for quarantine for those exposed and those testing positive together with the CDC's newest recommendations.

Nowhere are the effects of the pandemic been felt more keenly than in our school aged children and their families. The Board of Education and the Superintendent operate somewhat independently from the town, but a lot of the feedback comes to my office. I

receive a spectrum of opinions from “Why are the schools not open?” to “Why are we putting our children and families at risk by keeping the schools open?” Again, I cannot emphasize how fortunate we are as a town to have contracted with the Westport/ Weston Health District at this time, giving us access to the expertise of a full time Health Director. The Health Director has been working with our Central Office throughout the pandemic. You may also know that the Westport schools have been open at times when ours have not. That reflects the fact that conditions vary from town to town and time to time, even within one health district. There is no one number or condition that determines a course of action. I have spoken to Superintendent Harrison and I know that he is absolutely committed to keeping our kids in school as much as possible. I agree with the philosophy of time limited decisions where changes from full in person to hybrid to all distant are made with end dates, to be reviewed based on all relevant circumstances. I support keeping our children safe and providing the best education we can under the circumstance with full recognition that in school learning is clearly what is best for our children. I am certain that that is the goal of the Superintendent and Board of Education and I urge you to be patient with, and cognizant of, the complexity of their decisions. I empathize with the frustrations of parents who see their kids suffering by not being in school and the inconvenience it causes parents who have to make arrangements for child supervision at home, but I would ask that we all support the extraordinary efforts of our teachers and administrators who are doing the best they can in extremely difficult circumstances.

We can all do our part in making the overall situation better by limiting opportunities for transmission by mask wearing and social distancing. From contact tracing we know that social events have helped increase the number of cases in town.

Many have complained about graffiti on our roads. The Department of Public Works has devoted significant effort this week at removing much of it. They have addressed 19 sites which is a tremendous amount of time and effort. People who have lived here for many more years than my 26, tell me they have never seen anything like this in our town. Given the expense to the town, I can only hope we never see this again, ever.

Earlier this week we had a pretty significant wind/rain storm and got through it with fairly minimal damage. Hopefully, our efforts since August to do tree work have paid off. Please, be safe as severe weather is again predicted for Friday night into Saturday.

Despite all the difficult issues the town has to deal with, it is nice to come to work and see our Town Hall decorated for the holidays. Maple Row Tree Farm again donated a tree which our tireless employees lighted and decorated. The Easton Garden Club decorated the front of the building and the police lobby entrance as well as other town buildings with wreaths and garland. We are the “Christmas Tree Capital of Connecticut” and driving down Sport

Hill Road, the smell of fresh cut trees is wonderful. Our tree farms are doing an excellent job of safely selling their wares with the help and supervision of the Agricultural Commission. During the last year, much has been done to promote and preserve our farming heritage. I believe as a town that is a big part of what Easton is all about.

There are still opportunities to enjoy the holiday time, even in this pandemic. Many have commented to me how there is some virtue in our now simplified lives. We are blessed to live in such physically beautiful town. Take advantage of the outdoors and the time we have to spend with our immediate families. Visit our farms, but be safe and have a great weekend!

Dave Bindelglass

## NEW CDC GUIDELINES FOR COVID19 QUARANTINE FOLLOWING EXPOSURE

The CDC has offered revisions to quarantine requirements to allow two scenarios following an exposure (a 14 day quarantine is still considered ideal, and individual schools may have their own requirements):

- 1. Quarantine can end after Day 10 without testing if no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring.** (With this strategy, residual post-quarantine transmission risk is estimated to be about 1% with an upper limit of about 10%.)
- 2. When diagnostic testing resources are available (rapid antigen or PCR testing), then quarantine can end AFTER Day 7 with a negative test within 48 hours of the end of the 7 day quarantine (test done on day 6 or 7) AND if no symptoms are reported during daily monitoring.** (With this strategy, the residual post-quarantine transmission risk is estimated to be about 5% with an upper limit of about 12%.)

In both scenarios, the patient must continue to wear a mask and socially distance in public, as well as monitor for symptoms (fever, cough, congestion, shortness of breath, vomiting, diarrhea) for the full 14 days. If symptoms develop you should promptly return to quarantine and get tested.

**Why the change?** A meta-analysis of 1,500 studies from 2003 to June 2020, including 79 SARS-CoV-2 studies, published in **The Lancet** in November found that infectiousness and virus shedding lasts only about 10 days after symptoms begin, with patient mainly infectious in the first week of illness. The hope is that people will better cooperate with a shorter length of quarantine.

### **What is considered an exposure?**

- Living in the same house (household contacts) or visiting with a

**person with confirmed or suspected COVID-19.**

- **Being within 6 feet (2 meters) of a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case for a TOTAL of more than 15 minutes over the course of 24 hours.**
  - **Having direct contact with infectious secretions of a confirmed COVID-19 case (e.g., being coughed on)**
  - **Walking by a person who has COVID-19 carries no risk.**
  - **Being with a contact of a contact (i.e. exposed to a sibling of a child who has been exposed) is not a risk.**
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# EASTON HEALTH DEPARTMENT COVID-19 QUARANTINE AND ISOLATION GUIDELINES

Questions? Email [NicoleC@eastonct.gov](mailto:NicoleC@eastonct.gov) or call 203-268-6291

PERSON A	PERSON B	PERSON C	PERSON D
<p>Any person who tests positive for COVID-19.</p> <p><b><u>With Symptoms</u></b></p> <p>Isolation until ALL of the following have been met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 10 days since symptoms first appeared</li> <li>✓ 24 hrs since last fever (without use of medication)</li> <li>✓ Symptoms have improved</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Without Symptoms*</u></b></p> <p>Isolation until ALL of the following have been met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 10 days have passed since positive test date</li> <li>✓ Person has monitored health daily and shows no symptoms</li> </ul> <p><small>*PCR test recommended for individuals without symptoms</small></p>	<p>Any person who lives in the same household as a person who has tested positive for COVID-19.</p> <p><b><u>With Symptoms</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Isolate immediately</li> <li>✓ Get tested</li> <li>✓ Follow guidelines for Person A</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Without Symptoms</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Quarantine immediately</li> <li>✓ Monitor health daily</li> <li>✓ Quarantine for 14 days past <i>last exposure</i>. This may be 14 days after the positive household member has recovered.</li> <li>✓ Remain in quarantine for 14 days even if tested with negative result</li> <li>✓ If symptoms develop, contact Primary Care Provider</li> </ul>	<p>Any person with close contact (within 6 ft for 15 mins or more) to a person who has tested positive for COVID-19.</p> <p><b><u>With Symptoms</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Isolate immediately</li> <li>✓ Get tested</li> <li>✓ Follow guidelines for Person A</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Without Symptoms</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Quarantine immediately</li> <li>✓ Monitor health daily</li> <li>✓ Quarantine for 14 days past <i>last exposure</i></li> <li>✓ Remain in quarantine for 14 days even if tested with negative result</li> <li>✓ If symptoms develop, contact Primary Care Provider</li> </ul>	<p>Any person who has been in close contact with person B or C (i.e. someone who has been exposed).</p> <p><b>NO QUARANTINE OR ACTION REQUIRED AT THIS TIME.</b></p> <p><b>*CONTACT OF A CONTACT*</b></p>
<p><b><u>Definitions:</u></b></p> <p><b>Isolation:</b> Separates infected and contagious people from people who are not sick.</p> <p><b>Quarantine:</b> Separates and restricts movement of a person who has been exposed, but not actively ill.</p> <p><b>Close Contact:</b> Within 6 ft. of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting 48 hours before the person became ill and/or tested positive.</p>			