

**Kirk of Kildaire
Safe Gathering Task Force**

Covid-19 Policy Update – March 28, 2023.

In recent weeks in North Carolina, almost 400 people with Covid-19 have been hospitalized each week. Roughly 30 deaths per week are still attributed to Covid-19. While these numbers have been decreasing, it is a reminder that Covid-19 is still with us, causing life-threatening disease in some people. Hence the Kirk still has a limited Covid Policy that is updated in this document.

In August 2022, virtually all Covid-related restrictions were eliminated. Currently, the only restrictions are as follows:

Testing and masking after exposure, involvement in a high-risk situation, or a positive test

Testing is required for staff as outlined in the exposure and testing protocol (below). The protocol is also recommended for people attending Kirk functions who have been exposed to Covid, have Covid symptoms, been in a high-risk situation, or have tested positive.

- ❖ A situation is high-risk if you are in crowded conditions for more than 15 minutes and are not wearing a close-fitting mask. An example is air travel.

Members and friends may elect not to be tested as outlined below in response to symptoms, close contact with an infected person, or involvement in a high-risk situation. Those who do not follow the exposure and testing protocol should avoid Kirk in-person activities for 10 days after close contact with an infected person/involvement in a high-risk situation, or 10 days after the appearance of symptoms, whichever is later.

Vaccination Required for New Staff Members

New staff members must be fully vaccinated, including boosters recommended by the CDC.

Voice Choirs

As Covid-19 cases continue, voice choirs should still maintain 3-foot horizontal spacing and 6-foot front-to-back spacing, particularly the 6-foot front-to-back spacing.

**Updated Covid-19 Exposure and Testing Protocol
3/28/2023**

Testing requirements

Testing is required for staff as outlined in the exposure protocol (below) and whenever a staff member has two or more of the following symptoms:

- Fever, chills, or night sweats
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Congestion or runny nose

- Fatigue
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- New loss of taste or smell
- Diarrhea

Background

The CDC has provided updated guidance concerning testing and isolation effective March 21, 2023. It is like the prior guidance but there are some nuances.

- ❖ CDC uses the term “isolation” to refer to behavior after testing positive and “quarantine” to refer to behavior after close contact with someone known to have Covid-19. This is a technical difference – the term “isolation” is used exclusively in this document.

Where a Covid-19 test is indicated, a rapid (antigen) test is fully acceptable, though be aware that it is more likely than a PCR test to return a false negative (i.e., you have Covid-19 but the test says you don’t).

- ❖ Most home tests are antigen tests. After an initial positive test and resolution of symptoms, an antigen test will return a positive result if you are still infectious to others. PCR tests may continue to give positive results by detecting genetic viral fragments when you are not infectious.

Counting days after exposure or receiving a positive test

Day 0 is the day of exposure/day of specimen collection for a positive test/day of the appearance of symptoms. Thus, for example, if you received a positive result and you were tested on a Monday, Day 1 would be Tuesday and Day 5 would be Saturday.

What to Do After a Positive Covid-19 Test

As noted, the day on which a positive specimen is collected is Day 0. On Day 6 you could end isolation if you had no symptoms or your symptoms have improved and you are fever-free, but you must wear a mask in public at least until Day 10. The mask must be any of the following (but not just a surgical mask):

- ❖ N95
- ❖ KN95 (Chinese N95)
- ❖ KF94 (Korean N95)
- ❖ Cloth mask worn over a surgical mask (but this is not as good as the above)

Masks must fit snugly and cover both mouth and nose.

Thus, the following table applies 1) if you had no symptoms or 2) your symptoms have improved by Day 6, and you are fever-free:

Day 0	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10	Day 11
Positive specimen collected	Isolate	Isolate	Isolate	Isolate	Isolate	Wear Mask	Wear Mask	Wear Mask	Wear Mask	Wear Mask	Mask Optional

Several things to note:

1. If symptoms are not improving or if they recur, isolation should continue until they do.
2. With two sequential negative tests 48 hours apart, you may remove the mask before Day 11.
3. If you had shortness of breath or were hospitalized, you must isolate until Day 11.
4. Stay 6 feet away from people who are at higher risk for serious disease until Day 11, even if wearing a mask. (Contact at a distance of less than 6 feet for a few minutes is ok.) For example:
 - a. Over 65
 - b. Heart disease
 - c. Lung problems
 - d. Diabetes
 - e. Overweight
 - f. Cancer
 - g. Kidney or liver disease
 - h. Immune compromised

What to do After Close Contact with Someone Who Has Covid-19

We define close contact (exposure) to Covid-19 as less than 3 feet for 15 minutes or more in a 24-hour period.

The following table shows what you should do after exposure:

Day 0	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10	Day 11
Exposure to Covid-19	Wear Mask	Wear Mask	Wear Mask	Wear Mask	Wear Mask	Wear Mask and Get a Test	Wear Mask	Wear Mask	Wear Mask	Wear Mask	Mask Optional

You should get tested on Day 6 or sooner if you develop symptoms.

- ❖ If the test is positive, you should isolate immediately and follow the advice above for someone who has tested positive for Covid-19. Thus Day 0 would then be the day on which the positive sample was collected.

What to do if you have been in a high-risk situation where likelihood of exposure is increased

If you have been in a high-risk situation which increases the likelihood of exposure to Covid, wear a close-fitting mask (N95, KN95, KF94) for six days and get a test on the sixth day if you have any Covid-19 symptoms (or as soon as symptoms appear). If no symptoms or a negative test on the sixth day, you may remove your mask. If you test positive, follow the protocol above for a positive test.

- ❖ As noted above, a situation is high-risk if you are in crowded conditions for more than 15 minutes and are not wearing a close-fitting mask. An example is air travel.

Questions?

If you have questions about what you should do in the above circumstances, contact our Parish Nurse, Caryn Mastalli: cmastalli@kirkofkildaire.org or Steve LaTour, Chair of the Safe Gathering Task Force: stephen.latour@gmail.com