Allegany COUNTY New York

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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TO: All Media Sources
FROM: Allegany County Department of Health
RE: COVID-19 fully vaccinated individuals exempt from quarantine
DATE: February 23, 2021

BELMONT, NY-The Allegany County Department of Health will be adopting the quarantine recommendations for COVID-19 fully vaccinated persons issued by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Residents may be considered fully vaccinated two weeks (14 days) after receiving their second dose of either of the approved COVID-19 vaccines (Pfizer or Moderna). An individual who is considered fully vaccinated may be exempt from quarantine for up to 90 days.

On February 11, 2021, Governor Andrew Cuomo announced that New York State will be adopting the CDC recommendations for fully vaccinated individuals. Although the official written State guidance has not yet been released, Local Health Departments have been told that they may move forward with adopting these recommendations.

Moving forward, fully vaccinated individuals (individuals who are 2 weeks post second dose) who are **exhibiting no symptoms** may be exempt from both travel quarantine and quarantine due to close contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19.

However, there are some exceptions to the new quarantine guidelines. According to the CDC, fully vaccinated hospitalized persons and fully vaccinated residents of healthcare settings who are exposed to a confirmed COVID-19 case should not be exempted from quarantine. This exception is due to the unknown vaccine effectiveness in these specific populations, the higher risk of severe disease and death, and challenges with social/physical distancing in healthcare settings.

"Allegany County residents have done an excellent job at helping to slow the spread of COVID-19, and this is just one small step forward toward normalcy. We are not done yet, these highly effective vaccines allow us to reduce the number of residents in quarantine which in turn may also relieve some financial burdens for families as well as staffing issues for employers," said Tyler Shaw, Public Health Director.

Until this recent change, individuals who were identified as direct/close contacts to a COVID-19 positive case were required to quarantine for a minimum 10 days. Also, individuals who may have traveled outside of New York State or returning to New York State from a non-contiguous State were also required to quarantine for a minimum of 10 days unless they tested out per the New York State travel advisory guidelines.

This is just a starting point and the 90-day exemption may be extended past the 90-day mark as research and information becomes more readily available about vaccine effectiveness and additional recommendations are made by the New York State Department of Health and the CDC. With all of that being said, everyone, to include fully vaccinated individuals, MUST continue to comply with the NY Forward re-opening guidelines for businesses and gatherings to include wearing a mask, washing your hands frequently, and practicing social distancing.

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