

**TAUD COVID-19 UPDATE: New CDC Quarantine Guidelines and Electronic Participation in Utility Board Meetings Extended through December 27, 2020**

**December 7, 2020**

**New CDC Quarantine Guidelines After Exposure to COVID-19**

On December 4, 2020, the CDC updated its guidelines on the recommended quarantine period for anyone who has been in “close contact” with someone with COVID-19: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>. The CDC’s definition of “close contact” with someone who has COVID-19 remains the same. Close contact means:

* You were within six feet of someone who has COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes during a 24 hour period
* You provided care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19
* You had direct physical contact with the person (touched, hugged, or kissed them)
* You shared eating or drinking utensils
* The person with COVID-19 sneezed, coughed, or somehow got respiratory droplets on you

***The CDC continues to endorse quarantine for 14 days and recognizes that any quarantine shorter than 14 days balances the reduced burden against a small possibility of spreading the virus.***

Nevertheless, the CDC has given local public health departments options to shorten the 14-day quarantine period as follows:

* On day 10 without testing
* On day 7 after receiving a negative test result (test must occur on day 5 or later).

After stopping quarantine using one of these options, an exposed person should:

* Watch for symptoms until 14 days after exposure.
* If you have symptoms, immediately self-isolate and contact your local public health authority or healthcare provider.
* Wear a mask, stay at least 6 feet from others, wash your hands frequently, avoid crowds, and take other steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

**Electronic Participation in Utility Board Meetings**

By Executive Order No. 65, Governor Lee extended the authorization for the members of governing bodies of local governments to participate in board meetings electronically through December 27, 2020. The guidelines for having an electronic meeting remain the same as those outlined in TAUD COVID-19 Update – September 30, 2020, which are the following:

1. All meetings of a governing body conducted by electronic means under this Order when a quorum of the governing board is not present at the meeting site must remain open and accessible to the public by providing real-time, live audio or video access to the public using Zoom, Web-Ex or other similar software programs. Providing a clear audio or video recording within two days of a public meeting in lieu of providing real-time, live audio or video access to the meeting ***is no longer acceptable***.
2. A clear audio or video recording of the meeting shall be made available to the public as soon as practicable following the meeting, and in no event more than 2 business days after the meeting. Providing a clear audio or video recording within 2 days of a public meeting is now ***mandatory*** when an electronic board meeting is held – even when the public has been given real-time, audio or video access to the board meeting.
3. In the public notice of a board meeting required by Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 8-44-103, governing bodies shall provide information regarding how the public can obtain real-time, live access to or broadcast of the meeting, and governing bodies are strongly urged to provide an agenda for the meeting in such notice.

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