



December 7, 2020

Dear Employer,

Due to increasing case volume, laboratory processing lag times, and continuing challenges with the laboratory reporting system, the Tennessee Department of Health (TDH) and Knox County Health Department (KCHD) have implemented [CDC recommendations](#) for prioritizing investigations and monitoring.

As a part of this change, we can no longer provide proof of quarantine and therefore will not be providing 'return-to-work' letters for all cases or contacts. Moving forward, it's important that employers work with their employees and medical providers much like they currently do for other illnesses while following the [CDC quarantine guidance](#).

Based on emerging data, the CDC has developed several [quarantine timeframe options](#):

- Please be aware that the CDC still maintains 14 days to be the safest option for quarantine.
- In addition to the 14-day quarantine, the options are: a.) 10 days as long as people are asymptomatic, or b.) 7 days with no symptoms along with supportive testing.
- The CDC believes the shortened timeframe will increase compliance. And, the risk of transmission decreases enough after the new timeframe that the benefits of increasing compliance outweigh the additional risk of spread.

We are asking businesses and employees to take personal responsibility in following the new quarantine guidelines and continue to follow the five core actions of wearing masks, social distancing, handwashing, staying home when sick, and disinfecting surfaces regularly. Implementing these guidelines in your business will help ensure the safety of not only your employees but all Knox County citizens.

Helpful resources are posted on our website with isolation/quarantine guidelines, including the state's [isolation and quarantine calculator](#). Additionally our phone bank is available Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to answer any questions at (865) 215-5555.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Martha Buchanan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Martha Buchanan, MD