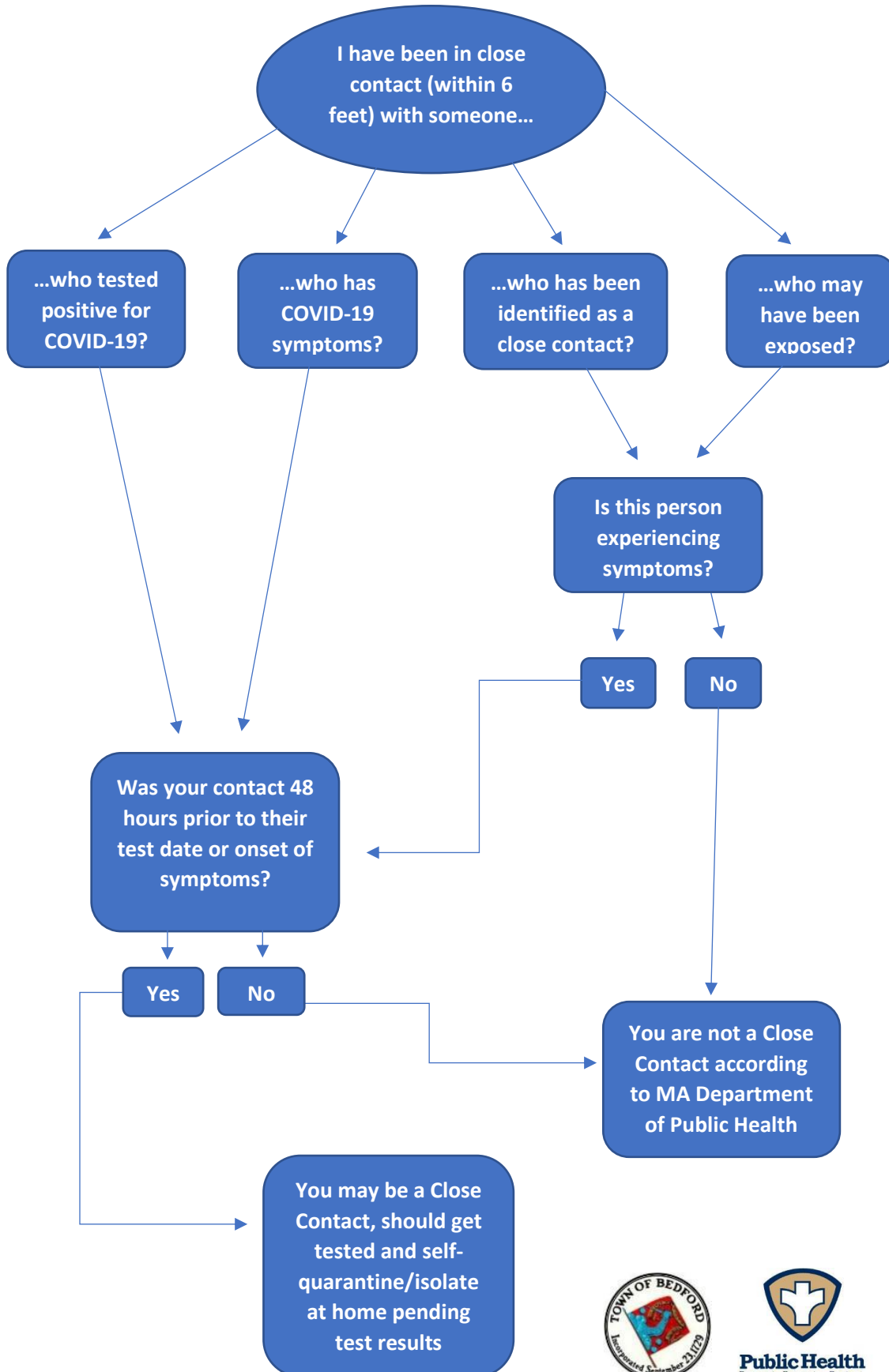


COVID-19 – Am I a Close Contact and What Should I Do?



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

COVID-19 – Am I a Close Contact and What Should I Do?

Residents often have a difficult time determining if they have been exposed to COVID-19 and/or if they may be identified as a close contact. The flow chart above may assist residents with these questions. If you are unsure and need additional assistance, please contact the Bedford Health Department at 781-275-6507.

Important Reminders:

1. Close Contact – Someone who was within 6 feet of a COVID-19 infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period, starting from 2 days before illness onset or 2 days prior to test specimen collection, until the time the infected person is isolated.
2. Isolate – Isolation means the separation of a person or group of people known or reasonably believed to be *infected with a communicable disease and potentially infectious*, from those who are not infected, to prevent spread of the communicable disease. You must isolate if you are symptomatic or have tested positive for COVID-19. This means you must be alone, without direct contact with anyone else (including those within your household), until you can no longer spread the virus. This typically lasts about 10-14 days. You cannot test out of isolation. For additional information on isolation please view MA DPH quarantine guidance here: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-isolation-and-quarantine-information#learn-about-isolating->
3. Quarantine – In general, quarantine means the separation of a person or group of people reasonably believed to have been *exposed to a communicable disease but not yet symptomatic*, from others who have not been exposed, to prevent the possible spread of the communicable disease. You must quarantine if you were exposed to someone with COVID-19 but haven't shown symptoms or had a positive COVID-19 test. It's best if you can quarantine for 14 days. However, if you meet specific criteria (i.e. get a test on day 5 of quarantine or later), you may be eligible for a shortened quarantine period and may be released after day 7 or after day 10. For additional information on quarantine please view MA DPH quarantine guidance here: <https://www.mass.gov/guidance/information-and-guidance-for-persons-in-quarantine-due-to-covid-19>
4. Answer the Call – If you are identified as a close contact of a COVID-19 positive case or recently tested positive, the Bedford Health Department or Community Tracing Collaborative will call you to explain next steps to keep you and your loved ones healthy, connect you with support and resources you may need, and answer any questions you may have. This process is important to help reduce further spread of COVID-19.

If you are unsure if you were exposed to COVID-19, the safest option and most protective option for all is to self-isolate within your home until you are able to gather additional information regarding your potential exposure. The Town of Bedford currently offers COVID-19 testing opportunities free to Bedford employees and residents. Navigate to the following Town of Bedford website for information on the program and to make an appointment: <https://www.bedfordma.gov/home/news/free-covid-19-testing->

[for-bedford-residents](#) and additional information on testing can be found on the Center for Disease Control and Prevention website at : <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/testing.html>