



## State of New Jersey

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To: Local Health Departments and Other Public Health Partners  
From: New Jersey Department of Health Communicable Disease Service  
Date: November 13, 2014  
Subject: Interim Guidelines for Social Distancing

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has not published formal guidelines regarding social distancing between persons under active monitoring, direct active monitoring or quarantine due to exposure to Ebola virus or travel to a country where an outbreak of Ebola virus disease (EVD) is occurring. Until formal guidelines are released by the CDC, the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) has developed the following recommendations, based on consultation with the CDC and careful review of other guidance documents.

As a reminder, Ebola can only be transmitted through direct contact with an infected person exhibiting symptoms of EVD. When a person is symptomatic with Ebola, the virus can be transmitted through contact with infected blood and body fluids, most commonly through a needle stick or splashes into eyes, nose or mouth. Direct, unprotected contact with perspiration, feces, vomit, urine, semen and saliva can also be a source of exposure. Ebola is not spread through the airborne route or through contact with a person who is not exhibiting symptoms.

The following social distancing recommendations apply to situations where public health and support staff, as well as household contacts, may be interacting with an asymptomatic person, in a private residence, quarantine location, or motor vehicle, who is undergoing active monitoring, direct active monitoring or quarantine for EVD:

- As a precaution, skin- to-skin contact (i.e., touching) should be avoided. Although the CDC does not recommend maintaining a specific distance between public health officials and a monitored/quarantined person, the NJDOH suggests a distance of three (3) feet be considered if skin-to-skin contact could occur.
- If, during a home visit, a person is observed to be ill, public health and/or support staff should refrain from providing medical care. If immediate care is needed or the person is displaying Ebola-like symptoms, contact 9-1-1.
- If driving in a motor vehicle, a distance of three (3) feet should be maintained, in case a person becomes symptomatic during transit and cannot immediately isolate themselves.
- In order to prevent skin-to-skin contact from occurring when a person may not recognize the onset of symptoms, household members should sleep in a separate bed and, if possible, use a different bathroom than individuals under active monitoring or quarantine.

- Persons should refrain from kissing and sexual contact with monitored/quarantined individuals; these activities are considered high risk.

As a reminder, an individual who may have been exposed to Ebola virus or traveled to a country where an EVD outbreak has occurred within the past 21 days should immediately and completely isolate themselves from all persons and pets as soon as they become ill or have a fever, subjective or measured  $\geq 38.0$  C or 100.4 F. The individual should seek immediate medical evaluation at a hospital by calling 9-1-1 and informing the dispatcher of their travel history and symptoms, so appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) can be worn by emergency medical services (EMS).

Social distancing guidelines are not applicable to asymptomatic persons in the community (e.g. attending school or going to work) who are being actively monitored by local health departments, as these individuals have been instructed to immediately self-isolate from others if symptoms arise.

For additional information on EVD, refer to the NJDOH website at (<http://www.state.nj.us/health/cd/vhf/index.shtml> ) or the CDC website at (<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/> ).