

September 1, 2021

TO: Midland County Businesses

FROM: Dr. Larry Wilson, Chief Medical Officer/Vice President of Medical Affairs at Midland Health and Local Health Authority at the City of Midland Health Department

SUBJECT: Midland Health and the Health Department do not recommend seeking a negative COVID-19 test to prove recovery from a COVID-19 infection

There has been a number of persons seeking a repeat test for COVID-19 prior to resuming normal activity including businesses requiring a test. A test for cure is not necessary and can be misleading. An antigen test can be falsely negative in as many as 15% of cases. If tested and negative, there is a 15% chance you can return to normal activity while still infectious. Additionally, the PCR test can remain positive, from remnants of the viral mRNA, when there are no longer viable viral particles present (falsely positive) thus preventing resumption of normal activity unnecessarily.

For these reasons, time and symptom improvement are the means to determine when it is safe for a recovering COVID-19 infected person to resume normal activity.

You can be around others after:

- 10 days since symptoms first appeared **and**
- 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
- Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving*

**Loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation.*

Note that these recommendations **do not** apply to people with severe COVID-19 or with weakened immune systems (immunocompromised).

If one never had symptoms, but tested positive:

If you continue to have no symptoms, you can be with others after 10 days have passed since you had a positive viral test for COVID-19.

If you develop symptoms after testing positive, follow the guidance above for the symptomatic COVID-19 patient.