The CDC has announced an expanded definition of who is considered a COVID-19 close contact. We continue to follow guidance from the CDC and work in partnership with the Harford County Health Department. The new definition is: Someone who was within six (6) feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period* starting from two (2) days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, two (2) days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.

*Individual exposures added together over a 24-hour period (e.g., three 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes). Data are limited, making it difficult to precisely define “close contact;” however, 15 cumulative minutes of exposure at a distance of six (6) feet or less can be used as an operational definition for contact investigation.

Please note the significant difference is that now 15 minutes is measured cumulatively, rather than in one sustained time period.