

Karnataka govt revises Covid testing, quarantine guidelines. Details here

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The Karnataka government on Wednesday issued new guidelines for the testing and home isolation of Covid-19 patients in the state in line with the central government's protocols.

As per the fresh order, all symptomatic people will be required to compulsorily undergo a rapid antigen test (RAT). If the test shows a negative result, it will be followed up by an RT-PCR, as per ICMR protocols.

Further, all primary contacts of Covid-19 patients (at home or workplace) will be tested for the infection even if they are asymptomatic and irrespective of their age and comorbidities.

The patients will have to undergo home isolation and will be released after seven days if they have not experienced fever for three preceding days. "There is no need for re-testing after the home isolation period is over," said the order.

The primary contacts will also be required to quarantine at home for seven days.

For healthcare workers, the state said that if they show any signs or symptoms indicative of Covid-19, they will be tested for the infection.

Those HCWs who are asymptomatic or exhibiting mild symptoms will have to isolate themselves for five days at home or a hotel.

"If asymptomatic for during the preceding three days with oxygen saturation greater than 94% at room air, they will be released from isolation with an advisory to strictly wear a mask or PPE when people are around for the next five days," said the order.

Their primary contacts will have to undergo home or institutional quarantine for three days and if asymptomatic, may be released thereafter without any testing.

This comes days after the ICMR said that anyone who has come in contact with a COVID-infected patient, does not necessarily need to take the Covid-19 test unless the person is in the 'high-risk' category based on age or comorbidities.

In the advisory on Purposive Testing Strategy for Covid-19, ICMR stated that people who need not be tested include "contacts of confirmed cases of Covid-19 unless identified as high risk based on age or comorbidities".

Besides, asymptomatic individuals in community settings, patients who stand discharged as per home isolation guidelines, patients discharged from a Covid-19 facility as per revised discharge policy and individuals undertaking inter-state domestic travel need not be tested, ICMR has said.

But individuals with cough, fever, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, breathlessness and other respiratory symptoms should be tested, the government body said.

Covid situation in state

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This comes as Karnataka reported 40,499 new Covid-19 cases in the 24 hours ending on Wednesday evening. Out of the total, 24,135 infections were logged from Bengaluru alone.

The positivity rate stands at 18.80%. Currently, there are 2,67,650 active cases in the state and 1,84,000 in the capital city.

In the last 24 hours, the state also recorded 21 deaths and 23,209 recoveries.