

**North Carolina Division of Public Health**  
**Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)**  
**Contact Tracing Instructions for Non-healthcare Settings**

Contact tracing is the systematic identification and monitoring of all persons who might have been exposed to a person diagnosed with COVID-19. Because these persons are at risk of developing disease, contacts should self-monitor and may be monitored by the local health department for 14 days (the maximum incubation period) from the last date they had exposure to a confirmed case. For COVID-19 we are only conducting contact tracing for contacts of confirmed cases (individuals who have tested positive for the virus that causes COVID-19). We will not do contact tracing for persons under investigation. All contact tracing documents for COVID-19 refer to close contacts of confirmed cases.

The goals of contact tracing are to:

1. Rapidly identify all potential contacts,
2. Ensure appropriate medical evaluation and care if the contact becomes symptomatic, and
3. Ensure immediate isolation precautions are implemented if the contact becomes symptomatic.

Timely and thorough contact tracing can effectively interrupt the chain of disease transmission and is an important public health intervention to contain an outbreak.

When you have a confirmed case of COVID-19 in your county, please use this toolkit to identify and monitor all close contacts of the confirmed case-patient. If you have questions, please call the North Carolina Division of Public Health's (NC DPH) Communicable Disease Branch (CDB) 24/7 Epidemiologist on Call at 919-733-3419.

**Steps to identify and monitor contacts of confirmed COVID-19 case-patients**

**When a Patient Under Investigation (PUI) becomes a confirmed case-patient:**

- Contact the case-patient and use the **LHD Form to Identify Contacts** to determine all the people the case-patient has been in close contact with during their period of infectivity. Close contacts are defined as having direct contact with, or being within 6 feet for at least 10 minutes, of a case-patient while not wearing recommended personal protective equipment. Caregivers and household members of the case-patient are considered close contacts.
- Only notify close contacts who had contact with the case-patient during the period of infectivity (defined as the date the case-patient developed symptoms up to the time the case-patient went into isolation).

**Initiate Contact Tracing**

- For contacts in your jurisdiction: Notify contacts that are residents of your county of their exposure and ask them to self-monitor for an increased temperature and respiratory symptoms.
- For contacts who do not live in your jurisdiction: Use the **LHD Form to Identify Contacts** to distribute information to the appropriate counties as needed.
- Discuss **RECOMMENDATIONS** for monitoring and based on the risk assessment from the initial interview. Use CDC's Interim US Guidance for Risk Assessment: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/risk-assessment.html> to determine the contact's risk classification and provide appropriate guidance
- Send the contact the **Symptom Self-monitoring Form**. Instruct the contact to monitor for symptoms twice a day (morning and evening) for 14 days from the date of last contact with the case-patient or for 14 days after the case-patient's isolation ends if in continued contact throughout their illness, i.e. household members of the patient, fellow residents of congregate living facilities, etc.

- Send the contact the 'End of Monitoring Letter' after they complete the monitoring period to let them know that their monitoring period is over. This should be sent on day 15, the day after their last day of monitoring.

**If the county desires, contacts can be actively monitored. For all contacts undergoing active symptom monitoring:**

- Symptom monitoring should be conducted from the date of each person's first contact with the case-patient continuing through 14 days after their last contact with the case-patient or for 14 days after the case-patient's isolation ends if in continued contact throughout their illness.

If you are notified of any additional contacts of the case patient during their period of infectivity, please [notify](#) them of their exposure and initiate self-monitoring.