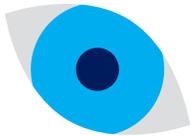


Contact Tracing

How-To-Guide for Schools



Contact tracing is critical to Harris County COVID-19 response efforts. Contact tracing slows the spread of infectious disease by gathering information from COVID-19 cases, notifying close contacts, and monitoring symptoms of cases and contacts during their isolation or quarantine period.

To assist with effective contact tracing and slow the spread of COVID-19: Be Prepared

- Educate staff and parents on COVID-19 symptoms:

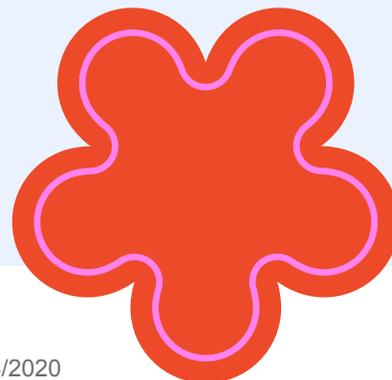
- o Fever (100.0°F) or chills
- o Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- o Fatigue
- o Cough
- o Congestion or runny nose
- o Muscle or body aches
- o Headache
- o Sore throat
- o New loss of taste or smell
- o Nausea or vomiting
- o Diarrhea

- Though cases are encouraged to notify their school of their illness directly, they are not required to do so.
- Schools should identify and establish a point-of-contact (POC) or team for staff, students and parents to notify if they are diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Provide contact information for the POC to HCPH. This POC or team will work to identify and notify parents, students, or employees who may have had close contact with a case and provide quarantine information.

When an Individual Tests Positive for COVID-19:

- When a parent, student or employee notifies the school of a positive COVID-19 result, the designated school POC will notify HCPH.

- Once HCPH receives the information, HCPH will begin case investigation.
- HCPH will protect the patient's confidentiality and will only share information necessary to inform the investigation and prevent others from getting sick.
- HCPH will conduct the case investigation and provide isolation guidelines to the individual who tested positive. Quarantine notices can also be given to other household members of the case.
- HCPH will monitor individuals until they have completed their isolation/quarantine period and are able to return to school. Those Quarantined should not return to school until they have completed their full quarantine period, even if a negative test result was received during their quarantine period.
- The designated POC will identify and notify anyone who came into close contact (within 6 ft or less for 15 minutes or more) with the case and record their information on the Contact List document. This list should include close contacts 48-hours before illness onset up until the positive student or staff member was sent home to isolate. For asymptomatic cases, contact-tracing should be completed 48-hours prior to positive test date until isolation.
- While Contact Tracing is being conducted, the Contact List and updates should be sent to HCPH via secure email to schoolreopeningtaskforce@phs.hctx.net.



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POC should communicate with HCPH School Investigation Team (SIT) if the school plans to send out a public communication regarding case investigation and contact tracing.
Maintain Confidentiality

- If a student or employee is diagnosed with COVID-19, school leadership should inform the school of their possible exposure to COVID-19. The school must maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Employers should never divulge the name of an infected parent, student or employee to others at the workplace beyond those conducting the investigation.

Keep Schools Safe

- Consider [prevention measures](#) like virtual learning or staggered schedules to reduce potential exposures.
- The POC should work with school officials to ensure prevention measures are followed or increased according to the school's plan.
- Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
- Encourage students and employees to follow any new policies or procedures related to illness, cleaning and disinfecting, and work meetings and travel.
- Practice routine cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched objects and surfaces such as desks, workstations, keyboards, telephones, handrails, and doorknobs. Dirty surfaces can be cleaned with soap and water prior to disinfection. To disinfect, use products that meet EPA's criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2, the cause of COVID-19, and are appropriate for the surface.
- While mask wearing is our best practice for prevention, it does not change someone's status for whether or not they are a close contact (within 6 feet for 15 or more minutes to a confirmed COVID-19 case).

