K-12 Schools COVID-19 Contact Tracing Support Request Process

Rapid response to COVID-19 cases is important to stop chains of transmission and limit transmission in schools. Some K-12 Schools, School Districts, and Local Health Jurisdictions (LHJ) do not have enough staff to complete this additional workload. The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) now offers the following support options, which may be requested in any combination. We are all working together to find the best ways to accomplish this important process, and DOH will continually re-evaluate and adjust our efforts to be most effective.

What is Contact Tracing?

- Letting people know they may have been exposed to COVID-19, should monitor their health for signs and symptoms of COVID-19, and provide guidance on getting tested.
- Asking close contacts to self-quarantine and/or get tested, as recommended by current guidelines.

Support Options

- **Option 1: Contact Tracing Process Assessment & Consultation**
  - DOH will consult with school staff regarding their process for contact tracing within the school setting. During this consultation, DOH staff will review the DOH K-12 Schools Contact Tracing and Case Investigation Toolkit, provide DOH and LHJ-specific guidance, offer technical assistance, and answer questions that school staff have about contact tracing.

- **Option 2: Contact Identification**
  - K-12 schools or school districts can submit records and information to DOH staff, who will use this data to compile a line list of close contacts of COVID-19 case(s) at the school. Records may include seating charts, attendance records, extracurricular rosters, etc. for settings where students or staff may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19.

- **Option 3: Contact Notification**
  - Using a line list of school close contacts compiled by the school or DOH, DOH will notify all close contacts about their exposure and advise them on next steps, including LHJ-specific quarantine and testing recommendations. A report of the final status of each contact will be created and emailed to the school/school district and LHJ.

How to Request Support

- **LHJ Collaboration and Approval.** DOH is pleased to partner with our Washington State LHJs, to provide direct support to schools/school districts if the LHJ does not currently
have capacity to manage all incoming requests. DOH will integrate regional guidance to provide site-specific support.

- **Schools/School Districts:** You can request contact tracing support directly from your LHJ. If you instead reach out directly to DOH via email doh-outbreakcoord@doh.wa.gov or by submitting the request form linked below, DOH will contact the appropriate LHJ for approval.

- **LHJs:** Please forward any support requests that you will not be able to fulfill to doh-outbreakcoord@doh.wa.gov or by submitting the request form linked below, along with your approval of our collaborative support for that school. LHJs may proactively contact DOH at doh-outbreakcoord@doh.wa.gov to grant approval, either by school, by district, or for their entire jurisdiction.

  - **Request form:** Please be prepared to provide the following information if you are submitting the request form, [https://redcap.link/WASchoolCICT](https://redcap.link/WASchoolCICT)

    - LHJ (schools/school districts, please leave this blank)
    - LHJ point of contact name and email address (schools/school districts, please leave this blank)
    - School district
    - School district contact name and email address
    - School name and address
    - School point of contact name and email address
    - School point of contact phone number
    - Has a COVID-19 case been identified at the school in the previous 7 days?
    - Support requested
      - Contact Tracing Process Assessment (option 1 above)
      - Contact Identification (option 2 above)
      - Contact Notification (option 3 above)
    - Does your LHJ have guidance that differs from the DOH? Check all that apply and please describe or include links to LHJ-specific guidance:
      - Isolation and quarantine
      - Testing
      - High priority settings for contact tracing
      - Other – please specify
      - None, please use DOH guidance
    - Additional notes or information

**DOH Response to Requests**

Requests for support will be immediately reviewed by our support teams, which have been expanded and specially dedicated to support and execute K-12 School Contact Tracing.

- DOH response to support option 1 will involve a phone call to begin an assessment and schedule consultations as needed.

- DOH response to support options 2 and 3 may involve a request for more information or a brief meeting, and a link will be sent for submitting records/information/line lists. Our
teams will then begin contact identification or notification after receiving the required information. A report of our work and the final status of each contact will be created and email to the school/school district, with a copy sent to the regional LHJ.

Have More Questions?

Please see the following documents for additional information on contact tracing in schools:

- K-12 Requirements for the 2021-2022 School Year
- K-12 Supplemental Considerations to Mitigate COVID-19 Transmission in Schools
- Symptom Decision Tree and Contact Tracing Checklist for K-12 Schools
- Contact Tracing Guide and FAQ for K-12 Schools
- K-12 Schools Contact Tracing and Case Investigation Toolkit

More COVID-19 Information and Resources

Stay up-to-date on the current COVID-19 situation in Washington, Governor Inslee’s proclamations, symptoms, how it spreads, and how and when people should get tested. See our Frequently Asked Questions for more information.

A person’s race/ethnicity or nationality does not, itself, put them at greater risk of COVID-19. However, data are revealing that communities of color are being disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. This is due to the effects of racism, and in particular, structural racism, that leaves some groups with fewer opportunities to protect themselves and their communities. Stigma will not help to fight the illness. Share only accurate information to keep rumors and misinformation from spreading.

- WA State Department of Health 2019 Novel Coronavirus Outbreak (COVID-19)
- WA State Coronavirus Response (COVID-19)
- Find Your Local Health Department or District
- CDC Coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Stigma Reduction Resources

Have more questions? Call our COVID-19 Information hotline: 1-800-525-0127

Monday – 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., Tuesday – Sunday and observed state holidays, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. For interpretative services, press # when they answer and say your language. For questions about your own health, COVID-19 testing, or testing results, please contact a health care provider.

To request this document in another format, call 1-800-525-0127. Deaf or hard of hearing customers, please call 711 (Washington Relay) or email civil.rights@doh.wa.gov.