



A Tradition of Stewardship
A Commitment to Service

Napa County Public Health Division Case Contact Investigation Process

Updated July 24, 2020



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

1. **Testing:** When an individual meets criteria for testing either through their medical provider, Public Health, or through other testing entity, they are tested and are instructed to wait at home for results, wait times will vary. Please visit: <https://www.countyofnapa.org/2954/Waiting-for-Test-Results> for more information.
2. **Positive Result and Legal Orders:** If the result is positive, the person receives a phone call on the day the result comes in to Public Health and is given legal orders to isolate at home, while household members are given legal orders to quarantine in the home (in the person's preferred language).
 - a. The duration of isolation and quarantine, depend on how long symptoms are present and whether or not over people in the household test positive for COVID-19.
 - b. The index case (person who tested positive) is monitored for symptoms.
 - c. The household contacts (people who live in the home of the index case) will also be monitored for symptoms.
 - d. Public Health staff provide explanations on why isolation and quarantine are necessary, and work to connect families with resources they need to be able to stay at home
3. **Investigation:** Once the orders are given, the Public Health team will continue the investigation by asking the index case (person who tested positive) where this person has been in the last 48 hours prior to the onset of symptoms. This includes who the person has been around outside of the home and how long the contact has been with these people.
 - a. Public Health staff record locations (restaurants, businesses, place of employment) and names of individuals who have been exposed to the case.
 - b. Part of the investigation will be to determine if there is a connection with other positive cases, which might indicate the case is part of a cluster.
 - c. The investigator also identifies whether there are any unmet needs such as food, medication, or crowded housing situations where the risk for infection of others in the household may be higher, etc.
4. **Notification of exposure:** Once the appropriate documentation is complete, the Contact Investigation Team makes the initial calls to people and businesses to let them know that they or their employees have had close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19. No one on the team will share the name of the case to protect the person's privacy.
 - a. Please note, depending on the exposure, some individuals may be asked to self-quarantine for a period of 14 days.
 - b. If a contact to the case is symptomatic, the person may be immediately referred for testing. If the individual is tested and tests positive, process #1-3 repeats itself.

**GOAL: Search for patterns, clusters and continue
contact investigations to contain the spread of COVID-19.**

5. **Release from Isolation or Quarantine:** Once a person has completed their isolation/quarantine period they will receive notification that they are able to resume essential activities, including work if their work is operating. Please visit the industry guidance page on www.countyofnapa.org/coronavirus for more information.

***Please note** – there are many internal steps that take place between each process that are too detailed to be included in this document. The investigation for one index case can take hours, depending on the number of contacts and other factors. For specific questions about the case investigation process, please email: Coronavirus@countyofnapa.org.



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Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why can't you share the information of the person who tested positive or where they have been?

A: Protecting the privacy of people with COVID-19 infection and those with whom they come into contact is a very high priority for Public Health. The Public Health Division must also abide by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and may only share private health information, including name and other identifying information, for the purposes of treatment, payment, or operational purposes. People who have been exposed to an index case are notified and told that they have been exposed, but they are not told the identity of or any other information about the case to whom they were exposed.

The information on the COVID-19 testing data site is the information that we can share while still protecting the privacy of our community members.

Q: How can we be sure we haven't been exposed?

A: Not everyone who comes into contact with someone who has COVID disease will become infected. Your chance of becoming infected depends on several factors including: whether the infected person is coughing (coughing spreads the virus more easily); whether you are in contact indoors or out of doors (outdoors is safer than indoors); how close you get to the infected person (close is more dangerous than far away); how long you spend close to the person (the longer the time the higher the chance of getting infected); and whether you and the infected person are wearing masks (both people wearing masks is safest).

The best way to prevent exposure is practice physical distancing (6 feet or more from each other), wash your hands frequently and avoid touching your face, and always wear a mask if you can't stay at least 6 feet from others. Also, please do not go out or go to work if you are feeling unwell, even if your symptoms are mild.

If you are an essential services employee and must go to work, be sure to follow social distancing guidelines, wash your hands often, avoid touching your eyes, mouth and nose and wear a face covering whenever you must be closer than 6 feet to others.

Please note, we are not able to identify everyone infected with COVID because of our limited testing availability. We know that the COVID-19 virus is being widely transmitted in our community. Everyone should assume they are and will continue to be at risk of being exposed and take precautions to protect yourself from getting infected. For now, the best tool we continue to have to prevent the spread of disease continues to be: Watch your distance, Wear your mask, Wash your hands.

Q: I work with or have been around someone who tested positive and lives in another county. Why haven't I been notified?

A: Napa County Public Health only receives test results for people who live in Napa County. If someone lives in Solano or Sonoma County and works in Napa County, we may not know unless we are notified that workplace clusters are happening. If you know that you have been exposed, you can notify the Public Health Division. The Division can reach out to the other County to determine whether an investigation is needed in Napa County.