



## **INFECTIOUS DISEASE CONTROL POLICY - COVID-19**

### **CONTACT TRACING**

#### **Contact Tracing**

Contact tracing is the process of identifying, notifying, and monitoring anyone who came in close contact with an individual who tested positive for COVID-19 while they were infectious (2 days before onset of symptoms until the end of the person's isolation period). Contact tracing is a key strategy for preventing the further spread of infectious diseases, such as COVID-19. Close contacts of a person who tested positive for COVID-19 are considered to have been exposed to COVID-19, and may go on to develop the disease. Identifying and quarantining close contacts limits the spread of the disease.

#### **What Does Contact Tracing Look Like?**

1. When an individual is tested and confirmed positive for COVID-19, they are asked to isolate for a minimum of ten days. They must also be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of anti-fever medication and show an improvement in symptoms before isolation can be discontinued. These individuals are called “cases.”
2. Positive COVID-19 test results are reportable to the PA Department of Health (1.877.724.3258). Within 24 hours of receiving the positive result, trained public health staff conduct an interview with the case to obtain a list of close contacts they had while infectious. Cases are considered to be infectious beginning two days before onset of symptoms or two days before the date of the positive result if the person did not have symptoms. The cases are encouraged to utilize calendars, social media, etc. to remember where and who they were around during their infectious period. During the case investigation, the public health staff attempt to obtain as much information as possible on the contacts (address, phone, email, etc.) and then share the contact information with the designated contact tracers.
3. Contact tracers reach out to educate, inform and support those who had a known close contact with a COVID-19 positive individual through phone calls, texts, emails and mailings. To protect patient privacy, close contacts are only informed that they may have been exposed to an individual with COVID-19.

4. Close contacts are told to:

- Stay home and maintain social distancing through the end of their quarantine period (14 days from the date of their last exposure to a case).
- Monitor themselves daily for symptoms of COVID-19, including checking their temperature.
- Be aware that they could possibly spread the infection to others, even if they do not feel sick.
- Exceptions to these instructions may occur for healthcare workers and critical infrastructure workers who have no symptoms. They may be permitted to work with special precautions in place, such as daily symptom checking prior to reporting to work and masking while at work.

5. With consent, contacts are enrolled into a daily symptom monitoring system called Sara Alert. The Sara Alert system sends the contacts a daily symptom questionnaire via text, email, or robo-call, using whichever method is preferred by the contact. Public health staff and contact tracers review the contacts' responses on a real-time dashboard and promptly reach out to anyone who answers "yes" to having a symptom(s).

6. If a contact develops symptoms, they should isolate themselves and let their healthcare provider and public health staff know. The contact will be evaluated to see if they need medical care and/or COVID-19 testing.

7. Consistent with applicable confidentiality laws, the school will promptly notify other employees who had close contact with any probable or confirmed COVID-19 case. The school will notify any employee in close contact with the affected individual while the individual was infectious (48 hours before the onset of their symptoms until the end of their isolation period).

*The Archdiocese of Philadelphia reserves the right to modify, revoke, suspend, terminate and/or change any and all policies and procedures at any time, with or without notice.*

*This coronavirus (COVID-19) policy is susceptible to changes with the introduction of additional CDC or governmental guidelines. If so, we will update you as soon as possible by email.*