

COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT
JOINT INFORMATION CENTER
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Public Health Asks for Community's Assistance with Contact Investigations

Public Health is modifying the contact investigation process and asking for the community's assistance in order to better respond to an unprecedented surge in COVID-19 cases.

Contact tracers will continue to reach out to each county resident who tests positive and will conduct an initial interview. The investigator will assign the case as either "priority" or "low-risk." Some examples of priority cases include health care workers in hospitals or clinical settings, staff in school or daycares and those who reside or work in congregate living facilities, but priority will be assigned on a case-by-case basis.

Humboldt County Health Officer Dr. Teresa Frankovich said, "We are at a point where we need the community to assist us in quickly reaching their close contacts in order to help contain spread of the virus."

If a case is designated as priority, case investigators will be assigned to follow up directly with their close contacts. If a case is designated lower-risk, the contact investigation team will ask that individual to reach out to their own close contacts right away to notify them of the exposure and forward information on quarantine.

- A **close contact** is defined as:
 - Anyone who was within six feet of a COVID-positive person for 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour timeframe during the infectious period.
- A person's **infectious period** is:
 - Two days before the onset of symptoms until it has been at least 10 days since symptoms began; AND
 - No fever for at least 24 hours; AND
 - Symptoms have improved.
 - For positive individuals who do not have symptoms, the infectious period begins two days before the test and continues for 10 days.

Dr. Frankovich said it is no longer practical for case investigators to reach out to all contacts of a known positive. "We reported 56 new cases since Friday alone, and last week the county saw its largest weekly case increase since the beginning of the pandemic," she said. "It's clear that it's time to adjust our strategy as much of the state has already had to do."

Read more about what to do while waiting for your test results, and access information on isolation and quarantine at humboldt.gov/blanketorders.

For the most recent COVID-19 information, visit cdc.gov or cdph.ca.gov. Local information is available at humboldt.gov or during business hours by contacting covidinfo@co.humboldt.ca.us or calling 707-441-5000.

Humboldt County COVID-19 Data Dashboard: humboldt.gov/dashboard,

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