



## **COVID-19 Case and Contact Reporting to Schools/School Districts; Verification of COVID-19 Cases**

### **Authority for Information Sharing**

All information obtained during a disease outbreak investigation is confidential and not subject to public disclosure. ORS 433.008(1). However, it may be necessary to release information during a disease outbreak investigation in order to control the disease. ORS 433.004(1)(d). In addition, OHA as the state public health authority, and local public health authorities (LPHA) may release information to federal, state or local agencies who are authorized to receive such information. School districts and schools fall within the category of a local agency for purposes of disclosure under ORS 433.008(2)(a) and are authorized to receive information concerning individuals who attend, work or volunteer at schools. Schools and school districts are subject to FERPA, the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act, and information disclosed to schools and school districts by OHA or a LPHA will be governed by FERPA which contains strong privacy protections.

### **Amount/Level of Information to be Shared**

Information disclosed pursuant to this protocol should be the minimum amount necessary for the intended purpose. ORS 433.008(4).

### **Definitions**

For purposes of this document the following definitions apply:

- “Case” means a confirmed or presumptive COVID-19 case.
- “Close Contact” means an individual who has had a substantial exposure to a confirmed COVID-19 case or a presumptive COVID-19 case.
- “Confirmed COVID-19 case” means an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 by a nucleic acid amplification test or an antigen test, or another method considered reliable by a state or local public health authority.
- “Presumptive COVID-19 case” means an individual who has symptoms consistent with COVID-19 and close contact to a confirmed COVID-19 case.

### **Data Sharing/Disclosure Protocols**

#### **I. Reporting of Individual Cases during a Case Investigation (School Associated Cases)**

An LPHA must provide a school with the name of a case if during a case investigation it is determined that the case attends (in person or virtually), works at, or volunteers at a school that is providing any degree of in-person services (e.g. instruction, after school care, counseling, athletics, activities). Such disclosure is necessary for the school to ensure the individual is excluded from being physically present at the school.

When disclosing information to a school it is a best practice to share the information with a school or school district nurse, human resources staff, or someone in school administration. An LPHA can contact the school district's Office of the Superintendent to determine the best point of contact for the school.

## II. Reporting of Cases, Other Information for Purposes of School Reopening Metrics

OHA and the LPHA can and should verify confirmed and presumptive COVID-19 case information if the request for verification is coming from a school staff person, which can include a school nurse, if the request is being made for any of the following purposes:

- Confirming case information provided to the school by a student, parent, staff person or volunteer to the school.
- Determining whether the school or district can meet school reopening metrics, whether that is a limited opening, hybrid, or full in-person instruction.

An LPHA may verify COVID-19 close contact information for a school, but such information sharing is not required. Each LPHA must make a decision about whether it has the capacity to undertake close contact verification, given current case rates in the county, and should communicate that to the local school district.

Requests for information should be in writing (email is fine) and if necessary, steps can be taken to verify the person requesting the information has the appropriate credentials.