

Guidance for Schools Responding to LPHA Capacity Needs Related to Contact Tracing



April 2, 2021

Local Public Health Authorities (LPHAs) in Oregon may continue to experience high volumes of COVID-19 cases or other workload priorities, leading to challenges in completing case investigations and contact tracing. [Surge conditions and priorities have previously been identified by OHA.](#)¹ In order to support LPHAs and reduce the time it takes for an LPHA to respond to an individual and/or to address capacity issues, schools have support from OHA and ODE to use one of three options. The third option has been updated to reflect the development of a new training by OHA, in collaboration with ODE, that is tailored to Oregon.

- **The first and primary option** is to resolve and respond to the outlined need for districts to *quarantine entire cohorts* whenever there is a presumptive or confirmed case following the quarantine guidance outlined in [Scenario Planning for COVID-19 in Schools](#). This option resolves the need for additional contact tracing and allows LPHAs to focus on case investigation. This option is the simplest and most efficient, if blunt. It does have the potential impact of having more people or staff needing to quarantine than might be determined through the next option.
- **The second option** is to request that your LPHA partner with OHA for additional operational support to complete contact tracing in your region. [LPHAs can submit an operational request](#)² to get rapid confidential and customized support. OHA will set up ground rules for collaboration, get clear on role responsibilities, and get agreements on deployment and data sharing plans. Linda Swyers, OHA's Contract Tracing Dispatch Manager, can be reached with questions at Linda.s.swyers@dhsosha.state.or.us.
- **The third option**, given current LPHA capacity, is for schools, districts, and ESDs to work through contact tracing protocols, after completing sufficient training, utilizing this guidance and applying the tools outlined by ODE and OHA in coordination with LPHAs to support contact identification and notification. The remainder of this supplemental guidance is focused on this third option.

¹ <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/DISEASESCONDITIONS/DISEASESAZ/COVID19/COVID-19-Surge-Condition-Protocol.pdf>

² This form is required and supports FEMA reimbursement needs for the state support of counties.

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A school-based plan to support identification and notification

Implementing a school-based plan that supports the contact tracing process can support schools and public health authorities to triage situations, make swift contacts, and support the health of students, their families, and staff. As part of a school-based plan for responding to a positive or presumptive case, schools have the option to gather and synthesize the pertinent contact logs and subsequent information, evaluate close contacts, and work in partnership with their LPHA to contact appropriate individuals and notify them of quarantine requirements. The schools part to play in this effort is focused on contact identification and notification. The LPHA's responsibilities continue for formal case investigation and formal contact tracing.

Training requirements

Schools using any staff to serve in the capacity of a "School-based COVID-19 notifier" are highly encouraged to participate in tailored training developed by OHA and ODE for this specific purpose. [Information about that training or a recording is available here.](#)

The following training resources are also supported for now:

- [Johns Hopkins training](#)
- [Association of State and Territorial Health Officials \(ASTHO\) training](#)

Additional resources

These resources may also be helpful for review and consideration:

- [Planning for COVID-19 Scenarios in Schools](#)
- [MultCo's Workplace Outbreak Guide](#)
- [MultCo's guide for individuals](#)
- [4J Contact Tracing Script](#)

A recommended contact identification and notification protocol

With sufficient training there is a range of ways a school or district can collaborate with different LPHAs. This protocol offers a guide that makes sure the most essential steps are covered by either the district, an ESD, a community partner, or the LPHA. In practice, there should be a detailed agreement on who does what by when.

Once a school or district has been made aware of a student or staff that has tested positive or identified as presumptive positive, the following will occur:

1. The school or district will:
 - a. Collect relevant contact logs
 - b. Evaluate who has been in close contact with the individual within the context of the school day or site using details in [Planning for COVID-19 Scenarios in Schools](#).
 - c. Note all known information:
 - i. Where the exposure occurred
 - ii. How long

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- iii. How close to the positive individual
 - d. Contact all individuals who have been in close contact and ask them to quarantine until further contact by the school, district, partner, or the LPHA.
 - e. Prepare a report for the designated LPHA representative that includes:
 - i. Name of each person who has been in close contact, contact information and specific case information collected.
2. The school or district reviews the initial report with the case investigator and determines who will continue the contact tracing process: School, District, Partner, or LPHA?
 - a. If School or District or Partner:
 - i. Review each contact identified with the designated LPHA representative that has the ability to make decisions about quarantine cases given needed information. Determine who and how data is shared and entered.
 - ii. Make a determination if the individual needs to stay in quarantine or can be released.
 - iii. School district will call and inform individual of decision and ask that they call the district's designee if they have the primary symptoms.
 - iv. If an individual has questions that are outside the scope of the school they will provide them LPHA contact information and/or refer them to their doctor or an identified clinic location.
 - b. If LPHA:
 - i. School district will send the report data to the LPHA designated individual and wait for any additional questions from the LPHA.