

### Outbreak Definitions

#### Outbreak Definition

- Long-term care facility (LTCF), skilled nursing facility, or assisted living facility outbreaks
  - One or more facility-acquired laboratory-confirmed\* COVID-19 cases in a resident.
  - Two or more laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases in staff with epi-linkage<sup>†</sup> who do not share a household and are not listed as a close contact<sup>‡</sup> of each other outside of the workplace during standard case investigation or contact tracing.
  - Two or more acute respiratory illness (ARI)<sup>§</sup> cases among residents or staff within 72 hours with epidemiological linkage<sup>†</sup> who do not share a household and are not listed as a close contact<sup>‡</sup> of each other outside of the workplace during standard case investigation or contact tracing.
- Correctional facility/juvenile detention center, adult or child daycare, hospital, primary or secondary school, post-secondary school, shelter, workplace, or other setting type outbreaks
  - Two or more laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases among individuals with onset dates or specimen collection dates within a 14-day period, who are epidemiologically linked, and were not identified as close contacts of each other in another setting during standard case investigation or contact tracing.
  - Two or more ARI cases within 72 hours who are epidemiologically linked, and were not identified as close contacts of each other in another setting during standard case investigation or contact tracing.

#### Outbreak-Associated Cases

Confirmed and probable secondary cases among individuals in the setting should be classified as outbreak associated. Individual cases outside of the setting that resulted from secondary transmission from an outbreak-associated case (e.g. family member) should not be included in the outbreak case count.

#### Outbreak Resolution

No new confirmed or probable COVID-19 cases identified after two incubation periods (28 days) have passed since the last known setting exposure from a case, or if that cannot be determined, the last case's onset date or specimen collection date (whichever is later).

\*Laboratory confirmation: detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA in a clinical specimen using a PCR or antigen test.

<sup>†</sup>Epidemiological linkage: cases were present in the setting during the same time period (e.g. same classroom, school event, work shift or department) within 14 days prior to the event date and that there is no other more likely source of exposure for identified cases (e.g. same household).

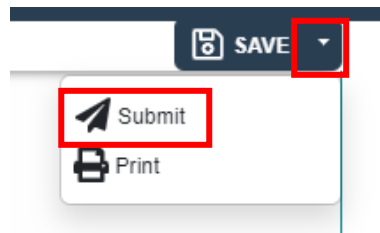
<sup>‡</sup>Close contact: Being within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes.

<sup>§</sup>ARI case is defined as an individual with two or more of the following symptoms: Coryza/runny nose, cough, difficulty breathing, fever, shortness of breath, sore throat, or wheezing.

## Entering Outbreaks in Merlin

- **Create an outbreak in Merlin’s outbreak module within the same day of notification of an outbreak that meets the above definitions.**
  - If you’ve already entered an outbreak for a setting previously, you should only create a new outbreak for facilities when it has been greater than two incubation periods (28 days) between the last case’s onset date or specimen collection date (whichever is later) at that setting and the new case’s onset date from the same setting.
- **Link any COVID-19 cases to the outbreak you create.**
  - Cases should be associated with an outbreak location/ facility where they became a case (not where they were transferred if transferred to an isolation facility).
  - All probable and confirmed COVID-19 cases, as well as their contacts (dx status “not a case”) should be linked to the outbreak.
- **Add any ARI cases who have specimens collected for testing to the people roster in the outbreak.**
  - Adding people will prompt COVID-19 laboratory results to auto-attach to the outbreak as they become available on the individual cases.
  - Adding an individual to the people roster will create a case under the COVID-19 disease code (00342) with a dx status of “not a case”, but it will not become a case unless it meets case definition.
- **Complete the following essential fields upon outbreak creation:**
  - Background section:
    - Outbreak name
    - FDOH notified date
    - Syndrome
      - Select “respiratory illness”
    - Disease
      - Select “coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-2019) – 00342”
    - Outbreak
    - Investigated
  - Geographic location section:
    - County
  - Setting information section:
    - Setting type
    - Setting name
    - Setting address
    - Number potentially exposed
  - Transmission:
    - Primary mode of transmission
      - Select “direct – person to person or droplet”
  - Results section:
    - Total cases & total type
    - Total non-staff cases
    - Total staff cases

- Total unknown cases
      - Leave blank or record “0” if you record staff and non-staff case counts
    - Number hospitalized & total type
    - Number died & total type
  - Additional information section:
    - Question 1 (number of cases with reported pneumonia) & total type
    - Question 2 (were specimens collected for testing at BPHL?)
    - Question 3 (were viral agents identified outside of BPHL?) & table (if applicable)
    - Question 4 (other pathogens, if applicable)
    - Question 5 (active surveillance recommended & implemented)
    - Question 6 (postponement of group activities recommended & implemented)
    - Question 7 (isolation/quarantine of residents recommended & implemented)
    - Question 8 (coordination of additional PPE or other supplies)
    - Question 9 (employee education on hand hygiene and PPE use)
  - Clinical results section:
    - Symptoms
  - Laboratory results section:
    - Laboratory-confirmed human specimens
  - Conclusions/lessons learned section:
    - Recommendations/specific control measures provided to site/facility
    - Method of providing recommendations (select all that apply)
    - Recommendations implemented
- **Update the outbreak daily until the outbreak has ended.**
- **Close the outbreak when the investigation has ended by entering the date the investigation ended (background section).**
- **Once closed, submit the outbreak by clicking the down arrow next to the save button and clicking submit.**



## Outbreak and COVID-19 Isolation Centers

- **Close outbreaks that are COVID-19 isolation centers.** Facility list available at: [https://ahca.myflorida.com/covid-19\\_inf.shtml](https://ahca.myflorida.com/covid-19_inf.shtml)
- **Do not create new outbreaks for isolation centers while they remain isolation facilities.**