



## Prioritizing Case Investigations and Contact Tracing

December 4, 2020

- Regardless of case load, investigations of cases and outbreaks in long-term care facilities (skilled nursing, assisted living, rehabilitation facilities, etc.) and other health care settings are a top priority to ensure that appropriate surveillance and infection control efforts have been implemented.
- Prioritize case and contact investigations for the following persons (if known):
  - Priority 1
    - Hospitalized patients
    - Health care personnel (HCP)
    - First responders (e.g., emergency medical services (EMS) personnel, law enforcement, firefighters)
    - Individuals living, working or visiting acute care, skilled nursing, mental health and long-term care facilities
    - Individuals living, working or visiting community congregate settings (e.g., correctional facilities, homeless shelters, educational institutions, mass gatherings and crowded workplaces including production plants)
    - Members of a large household living in close quarters
    - Individuals known to live in households with a higher-risk individual or to provide care in a household with a higher-risk individual
    - Critical infrastructure workers *who work closely with other critical infrastructure workers or are in close contact with large numbers of people (e.g., transportation, food service)*
  - Priority 2
    - Critical infrastructure workers *who **do not** work closely with other critical infrastructure workers or are in close contact with large numbers of people (e.g., transportation, food service)*
    - Individuals 65 years of age and older
    - Individuals of any age with certain underlying medical conditions who are at increased risk for severe illness.
    - Pregnant females
  - Priority 3
    - Individuals **with** symptoms who do not meet any of the above categories
    - Individuals who are deceased
  - Priority 4
    - Individuals **without** symptoms who do not meet any of the above categories
- Additional prioritization considerations based on disease burden
  - Highest Priority Activities
    - For cases, prioritize case investigations for people diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 6 days (based on specimen collection date or symptom onset, if known)
    - For contacts, prioritize:
      - Household contacts exposed in the past 6 days
      - People living, working, or visiting congregate living facilities, high density workplaces or other settings (or events) with potential extensive transmission

- Next Level Priority Activities
  - As resources allow, expand case investigations and contact tracing to people outside the household who are:
    - At increased risk for severe illness
    - Part of a cluster
    - Exposed within the past 6 days
- Low Priority Activities
  - As resources allow or COVID-19 case rates decline, expand case investigation interviews to people with positive COVID-19 test specimens collected in the past 14 days, and expand contact tracing to all contacts exposed within the past 14 days
  - **If more than 14 days have elapsed since specimen collection, case investigation and contact tracing should generally not be pursued**
- Strategies to assist case investigation and contact tracing at all priority levels
  - Provide information to medical providers to empower them to educate patients on proper isolation, quarantine and self-contact tracing.
  - Provide guidance materials to critical infrastructure businesses on how to prevent COVID-19 spread in the workplace.
  - Conduct medical record abstraction investigation for all known deaths and hospitalizations associated with COVID-19. Merlin profile, basic data and extended data should be completed to the extent possible from medical records.
  - Implement self-contact tracing by texting approved messaging with links to infographics.
    - Utilize Lexis-Nexis or other tools such as FLSHOTS and HMS to identify the best cell phone numbers to use.
    - Requests for batch Lexis-Nexis lookup of demographic and contact information can be sent to [BatchLexisNexis.Search@flhealth.gov](mailto:BatchLexisNexis.Search@flhealth.gov)
    - Self-contact tracing infographic:  
[ww11.doh.state.fl.us/comm/\\_partners/action/you\\_tested\\_positive\\_for\\_covid\\_19.pdf](http://ww11.doh.state.fl.us/comm/_partners/action/you_tested_positive_for_covid_19.pdf)

**Resources:**

Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Prioritizing Case Investigations and Contact Tracing for COVID-19 in High Burden Jurisdictions

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/prioritization.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/prioritization.html)

Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Critical Infrastructure Definition:

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/appendix.html#critical](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/appendix.html#critical)

CDC Close Contact Definition:

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/appendix.html#contact](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/appendix.html#contact)

CDC Underlying Medical Conditions:

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html)

CDC Increased Risk for Severe Illness:

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/index.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fneed-extra-precautions%2Fpeople-at-increased-risk.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fneed-extra-precautions%2Fpeople-at-increased-risk.html)

CDC Symptoms of Coronavirus:

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html)