

Chautauqua County Department of Health and Human Services/Public Health

Chautauqua County School Districts

Partnership: COVID-19 Disease Investigation, Contact Tracing, and Testing

The Chautauqua County Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Division, as the local health department (LHD), is responsible for communicable disease surveillance and control, including the public health functions of case investigation and contact tracing.

School Reporting Responsibility

Under Education Law §906, school health services must notify the local public health agency of any disease reportable under Public Health Law. COVID-19 is a reportable disease and as such, school health personnel must contact the LHD when they learn that a student or staff member has tested positive for COVID-19. Notification can be made by calling 716-753-4491 during normal business hours or Sheriff's Dispatch at 716-753-4232 after normal business hours and a public health nurse will return the call. Notifications may also be sent to covid19nursing@co.chautauqua.ny.us during normal business hours.

Contact Tracing

The LHD issues mandatory isolation orders for any person who tests positive for COVID-19. Public health staff conducts investigations to identify the close contacts of anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 and issues mandatory quarantine orders for such close contacts.

In the event that there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the school, designated school personnel will work collaboratively with public health staff on contact tracing efforts as follows:

1. The (school point of contact title) will collaborate with the local health department (LHD) to gather information needed for the disease investigation. Information about the positive case will be shared with the (building principal) and school nurse. Confidentiality will be maintained as required by federal and New York State laws and regulations.

2. The (school designated staff title) in the building will compile student contact information including address, phone number, emergency contact information, and attendance records for the time period requested by LHD. The (school point of contact title) will then make records available to the LHD to complete contact tracing.

3. The (school designated staff title) in the building will compile student schedules for the time period requested by LHD. The (school point of contact title) will then make records available to the LHD to complete contact tracing.

4. Visitor logs will be kept daily by the (school designated staff title) to include the visitor's name, address, phone number and locations visited in the building. The (school point of contact title) will then make records for the time period requested available to the LHD to complete contact tracing.

Chautauqua County DHHS/Public Health Division, as the local health department, will complete the disease investigation with the confirmed COVID-19 case and complete contact tracing for anyone identified as a close contact. All individuals needing to quarantine will be sent orders by the Public Health Director and provided education by a public health nurse or virtual contact tracer. School staff

should not try to determine who is to be excluded from school based on contact without guidance and direction from the local health department.

If a student or staff member is identified as a close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case in the community, the student or staff member will be ordered to quarantine by the Public Health Director. The school will be notified when a student or staff member has been placed into quarantine; a copy of the release letter will be forwarded when quarantine has been completed.

If a student or staff member reports that they have traveled internationally or to state with a travel advisory issued by New York State, these individuals will need to quarantine for 14 days after their return. The school will refer them to www.chg.gov.com where they will complete the Traveler Health Form and review the travel documents that include information on how to safely quarantine.

The school will only be involved in contact tracing efforts when a positive case has been on school grounds two (2) days prior to testing or development of symptoms.

Communication

The LHD is responsible for communicating with the student (parents/guardians) or staff member who tests positive as well as all identified contacts. Confidentiality must be maintained as required by federal and state laws and regulations.

School closures

School administration will discuss each situation with the LHD to determine what remediation efforts need to occur including but not limited to, closing an area, a classroom, a building, or an entire school. In accordance with New York State guidance, a percent positivity rate of 9% or greater in the Western New York Region will result in a closure of all schools districts in the region. In Chautauqua County, the LHD will monitor the percentage of students in each school building under mandatory isolation orders and provide support to district administration in determining whether closure is necessary in conjunction with state guidelines.

Disinfection

Disinfection of facilities will occur according to CDC and New York State guidance.

Return to in-person school

The LHD has isolation and quarantine jurisdiction over students and staff members who test positive for COVID-19 or who are identified as close contacts of someone who tests positive for COVID-19.

Mandatory Isolation Release:

- Students or staff members who test positive for COVID-19 may return to in-person school when released from mandatory isolation by the LHD. This is contingent on the following conditions but may be subject to change on an individual basis as determined by the LHD:
 - It has been at least ten (10) days since the individual's test date; and
 - It has been at least three (3) days since the individual has had a fever (without the use of fever reducing medicine); and
 - The individual's symptoms have improved.

Mandatory Quarantine Release:

- Students or staff members who are identified as close contacts of a student or staff member who tested positive for COVID-19, regardless of symptoms and/or a negative COVID-19 test result, may return to school when released from mandatory quarantine by the LHD. This is contingent on the following condition but may be subject to change on an individual basis as determined by the LHD:
 - It has been fourteen (14) days since the last known exposure to the person who tested positive for COVID-19.

The following recommendations are made for students and staff who display symptoms of COVID-19 but are not diagnosed with COVID-19 through PCR testing and are therefore, not under the jurisdiction of the LHD:

- Students or staff members who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 but test negative and are not close contacts of a confirmed case may return to in-person school contingent on the following conditions:
 - The individual has a documented negative COVID-19 test result; and
 - It has been at least 24 hours since the individual has had a fever (without the use of fever reducing medicine); and
 - The individual's symptoms have improved. OR
 - The individual's healthcare provider has diagnosed another condition and the individual has a written note stating they are clear to return to school; and
 - It has been at least 24 hours since the individual has had a fever (without the use of fever reducing medicine); and
 - The individual's symptoms have improved.
- Students or staff members who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 but who are not tested for COVID-19 or do not have an alternate diagnosis by a healthcare provider may return to in-person school contingent on the following conditions:
 - It has been at least ten (10) days since the onset of symptoms; and
 - It has been at least 24 hours since the individual has had a fever (without the use of fever reducing medicine); and
 - The individual's symptoms have improved.

COVID-19 PCR (infection) Testing

Routine testing of students or staff members who demonstrate symptoms of COVID-19 should not be conducted. The decision of whether a test needs to be conducted is based on the individual and is determined by the student or staff member's healthcare provider*. The LHD may or may not be consulted by the healthcare provider in making that determination.

**If a student or staff member does not have a primary care provider, referral should be made to The Chautauqua Center (716-294-3985) or The Chautauqua County Health Network (716-338-0010) to assist in locating a provider.*

The LHD is notified of all positive COVID-19 test results through the New York State Electronic Clinical Laboratory Reporting System (ECLRS). To help ensure timely reporting for disease investigation and contact tracing purposes, healthcare providers, labs, and schools are also required to notify the LHD of positive results. Employers and individuals are encouraged to notify the LHD of positive results. As of August 13, 2020, reporting time of test analysis to NYS ECLRS is averaging 3-7 days, depending on the commercial lab utilized by the healthcare provider. Guidelines provided by the New York State Department of Health, *COVID-19 Testing Next Steps* should be followed while waiting for test results:

https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/05/13112_covid19_testingnextsteps_052120.pdf.

COVID-19 testing sites, including free sites run by the New York State Department of Health, can be located by calling the NYS COVID-19 hotline, 1-888-364-3065, or visiting <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/find-test-site-near-you>. Persons seeking testing are advised to check with the testing site and person's insurer in advance of being tested to confirm no patient responsibility for any fees associated with COVID-19 testing.

Outpatient COVID-19 testing requires an order by a licensed healthcare provider. In Chautauqua County, COVID-19 testing is available by appointment and with an order by the individual's healthcare provider at:

- Private primary care and pediatrician offices;*
- The Chautauqua Center, a Federally Qualified Health Center, with locations in Jamestown and Dunkirk;
- UPMC Chautauqua outpatient testing center, Jamestown;
- Westfield Memorial Hospital outpatient testing center, Westfield;

**Not all private primary care and pediatrician practices offer COVID-19 testing*

Urgent Care Centers and hospital emergency departments also provide COVID-19 testing for patients who present there with urgent and emergent health conditions. Patients are assessed by a healthcare provider to determine if COVID-19 testing is warranted and if so, it is ordered.

Hospitals in Chautauqua County:

- UPMC Chautauqua, Jamestown
- Brooks Memorial Hospital, Dunkirk
- Allegheny Health Network/Westfield Memorial Hospital, Westfield

Urgent Care Centers in Chautauqua County:

- WellNow in Jamestown, Lakewood, and Dunkirk

Outbreak Response

In the event of a COVID-19 outbreak in a school, the LHD, in conjunction with the New York State Department of Health, will implement its Public Health Emergency Pandemic Plan. Outbreaks are managed by the LHD based on individual circumstances and in full cooperation with the school district. During such outbreaks, the LHD will fully support the school district(s) with COVID-19 testing, investigations, contact tracing, and other appropriate actions, resources and consultation as deemed necessary and available.