

CUYAHOGA COUNTY
BOARD OF HEALTH
YOUR TRUSTED SOURCE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH INFORMATION

August 25, 2020

Questions and Answers

In-service provided for contact tracing and case investigation

Presented in cooperation with the NEO ESC

1. Will these slides be available later?

Yes, they will be on the ESC website. You will be able to print them off once they are made available. The session has also been recorded and is available on the ESC website.

2. Do we receive CEUs for these webinars?

CEUs are available for sanitarians, but unfortunately, the process is much more involved for getting nursing CEUs. The application must be submitted at least 6 weeks in advance with additional time allotted for approval. We were not able to plan this webinar that far in advance.

3. Will participants receive certificates after presentation?

No.

4. When is CCBH coming out with a flow chart of when to send kids home from school?

We are currently finalizing a flow chart. It will be part of our website toolkit.

5. Where on the CCBH website will the toolkit be found?

You will receive the link from the ESC when it is available.

6. Are teachers counted as essential workers?

There are differing opinions on whether or not teachers are considered essential workers. That designation is not determined at the local health department level.

7. Are administrators aware of the need for a building contact to do contact tracing?

Yes, they should be aware through their respective superintendents.

8. Will we be notified of staff members who test positive?

You will be notified if you are identified as a close contact. Your school administrators may choose to notify you as well.

9. Should the nurse be the point of contact?

The school nurse should not be the main point of contact. Some nurses may be covering multiple buildings, and many nurses will find themselves very busy caring for ill students. The nurse should be kept informed and may be part of a response team, but we do not recommend that they be the only point of contact.

10. What should we do when someone has a fever?

The person should immediately return home. If the ill person is a student waiting for a ride home, they should be isolated from others if possible to prevent potential transmission. Parents/guardians should contact the family medical provider for clinical guidance.

Students/staff cannot return to work until fever-free, without the aid of fever-reducing medicine, for at least 24 hours. ***CCBH recommends 72 hours fever-free before returning.***

11. Should students stay home for 14 days if they are having any symptoms?

No, students identified as having COVID-19 symptoms should be isolated for 10 days from the date of symptom onset, be fever-free, without the use of fever-reducing medications like Tylenol or Motrin for 24 hours, and have improvement with symptoms. It is best to be evaluated by their healthcare provider who can assess their symptoms and provide guidance.

12. Clarify 48 hour window with symptomatic and asymptomatic cases.

This applies to how contacts of a confirmed case are identified. A contact is anyone who has been within 6 feet of a confirmed case for at least 10 minutes, during the period of time in which the case was symptomatic. This includes the 48 hours prior to the first date of symptoms (or 48 hours prior to the date of testing, if the case is asymptomatic).

13. I thought if students had symptoms of COVID, they had to stay home for 14 days, unless the healthcare provider stated otherwise?

In order to discontinue isolation, a person with COVID-19 symptoms needs to:

- Isolate for 10 days from the date that symptoms began
- Be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication
- Show continued improvement with symptoms - headed toward resolving

14. Can a negative COVID test allow for an earlier return to school?

If a student or staff member has been identified as a close contact, then that individual is required to be in quarantine for 14 days. A negative COVID test result cannot release an individual from the 14-day quarantine because it does not confirm that the virus is not still incubating in the body. It can sometimes mean that the virus just hasn't replicated to a sufficient degree to be detectable.

15. When is a parent notified of a positive case?

When a child tests positive for COVID-19, the medical provider informs the parent(s) of the results.

16. When do we notify the parents within a class of a positive case of COVID?

Do we wait until after the school receives confirmation from the healthcare provider?

When a school learns that it has a COVID-positive student, it can notify the parent(s) and guardian(s) of the rest of the students by sending out the general letter that CCBH will provide.

As opposed to hearing from a medical provider, a school may receive calls from parents/guardians about their child/student being a positive case or from an individual staff member about being a positive case themselves.

17. Do parents need to be notified if a staff member is COVID positive?

If their child is identified as a close contact of that staff member, then the parent(s) would be notified. If anyone tests positive in the school, it is our recommendation that the school district exercise transparency and inform all parents and guardians that a positive case has been identified and that the appropriate mitigation measures are being taken.

We are presently awaiting an order from the state which will define reporting requirements for schools in regard to covid cases. This will provide additional opportunities for transparency,

though likely in an aggregate manner by school district or possibly by building if not a public school.

18. With contact tracing and referring to a “close contact,” does this include only individuals within 6 feet for 10/15 minutes?

Yes.

19. With contact tracing, what if a person is not wearing a mask and is in close contact for at least 15 minutes?

Whether or not individuals are wearing a mask, they are considered close contacts if they have been within six feet for 15 minutes. Although cloth masks, surgical masks and all other facial coverings are very capable of containing an individual’s respiratory droplets, if they are not rated as N95 or higher, they are not capable of filtering viruses.

20. Why does the CDC define close contact as more than 15 minutes and CCBH defines it as 10 minutes?

CCBH is taking a more precautionary approach. Either time frame can be used as a guide.

21. When identifying a confirmed case, will a sibling of a close contact also need to be quarantined?

No, not unless the close contact became symptomatic during their quarantine period. In this case, the close contact becomes a probable and their sibling would have to quarantine.

22. When the school’s covid liaison is calling contacts, do they have to keep the name of the index case private?

It is always best to maintain privacy, but this is a public health investigation so it may be necessary to reveal the name of the index case.

23. Is it the two cases that determine the “outbreak” if the primary exposure was at school?

Yes.

24. Defining an outbreak- if there are two cases determined, should a school shut down and for how long?

The decision to close is usually up to the schools and is typically based on the school’s ability to provide adequate staffing. Exceptions would be the occurrence of an imminent public health emergency where CCBH may have to intervene.

25. Can CCBH assist districts with sports outbreaks?

Yes, we already have been assisting several districts with sports-related outbreaks. As with all other school associated outbreaks, it is necessary for school staff and coaches to identify close contacts and advise on the required 14-day quarantine.

26. Can the CCBH communications director assist districts in communication of outbreaks to reduce stigma parents are feeling?

Yes.

27. Can CCBH provide assistance to the schools as they respond to issues involving bullying of a case?

The following links provide useful information:

<https://www.cdc.gov/injury/features/stop-bullying/index.html>

[COVID-19 \(coronavirus\) stigma: What it is and how to ...](#)

[Reducing Stigma | CDC](#)