

COVID-19 Guidance: What to do when a confirmed COVID-19 has been in your facility

This guidance provides general recommendations on steps to take when an individual with COVID-19 has been in your facility. This includes notification of contacts, cleaning and reporting clusters of cases to the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH). Healthcare facilities should follow guidance found on the [Chicago Health Alert Network website](#).

For reopening guidance, review the [City of Chicago's Industry Guidelines](#). Questions on reopening may be directed to reopening@cityofchicago.org.

For COVID-19 updates, data and resources, visit www.chicago.gov/coronavirus.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Communicate general guidance to your employees, contractors and patrons coming into your facility about how your organization is responding to COVID-19.
2. Require people to stay home if they are sick per [Public Health Order No. 2020-1](#).
3. Ask staff and patrons to self-report if they are diagnosed with COVID-19 so that you can take the necessary steps to ensure the safety of others.
4. Regularly review [CDC guidance for Communities, Schools, Workplaces, and Events](#) and the latest [CDPH guidance](#).
5. Designate a team in your administration to manage COVID-19-related matters, including
 - Receiving self-reports from individuals diagnosed with COVID-19
 - Communicating with staff and patrons regarding potential exposure
 - i. Ensure the team has access to accurate staff, contractor and patron contact lists.
 - Arranging for enhanced cleaning of the facility
 - Reporting to CDPH: If 2 or more COVID-19 cases are identified at your facility within 14 calendar days of each other, consider reporting to CDPH within 24 hours of identifying the cluster. Some congregate settings are required to report per [Public Health Order No. 2020-2](#). For others, reporting is optional but encouraged. Reports should be submitted via CDPH's confidential [online reporting form](#).

WHAT TO DO IF YOU GET NOTIFICATION OF A SELF-REPORTED POSITIVE CASE

1. If someone in your facility self-reports that they have been diagnosed with COVID-19, ensure their identity is protected.
2. Interview the individual by telephone. Questions to ask include:
 - The last day they were in the facility.
 - The first day of their symptoms, or if asymptomatic, their test date.
 - Whether they were diagnosed through a test and if so, what type.
 - If they had an antibody (blood test) and they have not had any symptoms, no further action is required as it is unlikely they have an active infection.
 - The names of individuals at your facility with whom they had close contact (within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes, including anyone with whom they shared a car) starting 2 days prior to their first day of symptoms (or for asymptomatic individuals their test date) through their last day at the facility.
3. Ensure the positive individual is aware that they should stay home and away from others for at least 10 days since their symptoms first appeared (or for asymptomatic individuals, from their test date) and at least 3 days (72 hours) with no fever (without using fever-reducing medications) and improving symptoms, whichever is longer. Refer them to CDPH guidance on [What to Do if You're Sick](#).
4. Notify the identified close contacts that they were exposed to someone with COVID-19 at your facility. It is recommended that you use a form of contact that will allow for quick notification, confirmation of receipt of notification, and maintenance of privacy, e.g., a telephone call. A sample close contact notification template is included at the end of this document for those you may be unable to reach by other means or if you choose to send an additional written notification.
 - Instruct them to quarantine at home for 14 days from the last day of contact with the person who self-reported (do not reveal the identity of the positive case).
 - [Critical infrastructure workers](#) may be permitted to work following exposure, provided they remain asymptomatic and additional precautions are taken. See [CDPH Guidance for Critical Infrastructure Workers](#).
 - Close contacts should monitor their symptoms and contact their medical provider if they develop symptoms of COVID-19.
5. Facility closure or alteration of services depends on multiple factors including how quickly enhanced cleaning can occur, the number of employees affected, and whether you serve a high-risk patron population, etc. Follow [CDC guidance](#) specific to your setting.

CLEANING

Perform enhanced cleaning and disinfection after persons suspected/confirmed to have COVID-19 have been in the facility. Follow [CDC cleaning and disinfection recommendations](#).

COMMUNICATION REGARDING COVID-19 CASES WITHIN YOUR FACILITY

Inform facility staff of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain confidentiality of the positive individual as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Staff should self-monitor for symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, or difficulty breathing).

Communicate with patrons regarding possible COVID-19 exposure, facility closure decisions, and alterations to services, if applicable. Again, it is critical to maintain confidentiality of the positive individual.

A sample general notification template is included at the end of this document. It is recommended to include CDPH's COVID-19 website (www.chicago.gov/coronavirus) on all communications to ensure your employees and patrons have the most up-to-date information.

REPORTING TO CDPH

Under [Public Health Order No. 2020-2](#), healthcare facilities and congregate facilities, including schools, jails, correctional facilities, adult transition centers (halfway houses), children's services facilities, child care institutions, adult family care centers, assisted living establishments, long-term care facilities, adult family care homes and all community living facilities must report to CDPH clusters of 2 or more cases of COVID-19 occurring within 14 calendar days of each other within 24 hours of identifying the cluster.

Other facilities, such as large workplaces, faith communities, and businesses, are encouraged to report potential clusters of 2 or more cases. Per the [Illinois Communicable Disease code](#), these facilities must cooperate with a public health investigation.

Reports should be submitted via CDPH's confidential [online reporting form](#).

NOTIFICATION TEMPLATES

GENERAL COMMUNICATION

Subject: Confirmed COVID-19 Case at _(FACILITY)_

Dear Staff and Patrons,

We are writing to update you on a recent development regarding the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). We have learned that a _(FACILITY)_ employee/patron has been diagnosed with COVID-19.

[The employee/patron was last at the facility on (DATE) - only to be included if it can be done without obviously identifying the individual. If needed, give a broad date like “the week of _____.”] To ensure the health and safety of our employees and patrons, following CDC guidance, _(FACILITY)_ [will ensure/has conducted] a thorough cleaning and disinfection of our facility.

Employees and patrons who have been identified as having been in prolonged close contact with this individual [will be/have been] notified via a separate communication. As a reminder, prolonged close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of an infected person for 15 minutes or more. Those who had brief, casual contact with an infected individual are not considered at great risk of transmission and, for most people, the illness is generally mild and can be safely managed at home. As always, everyone should monitor their health and stay at home if they develop symptoms. Anyone who develops severe symptoms should seek medical care immediately.

We continue to follow Chicago Department of Public Health and CDC guidelines as we ensure proper protocols and preventative measures are in place for the health and safety of our staff and patrons.

Public Health Guidance

Some common [symptoms of COVID-19](#) include fever (temperature greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit), cough, and shortness of breath. If you develop symptoms of COVID-19, please contact your medical provider to discuss whether you need to be evaluated in person or tested.

If your symptoms are severe, such as difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion or difficulty waking up, or bluish lips or face please seek the closest emergency department or call 9-1-1 immediately.

Any individuals who are sick with or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 must stay home and away from others for at least 10 days since their symptoms first appeared and at least 3 days

(72 hours) with no fever (without using fever-reducing medications) and improving symptoms, whichever is longer.

For any additional COVID-19 questions or support, please visit www.chicago.gov/coronavirus for the most reliable information. If you do not find the information you need on the website, email coronavirus@chicago.gov.

The health and wellness of our staff and patrons are the highest priority of _(FACILITY)_. Please contact us at _(FACILITY CONTACT INFORMATION)_ if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

SIGNATURE

(FACILITY LEADERSHIP NAME)

CLOSE CONTACT COMMUNICATION

Subject: Exposure to COVID-19 Case at _(FACILITY)_

Dear _(Individual's Name)_,

We are writing to update you on a recent development regarding the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). We have learned that a _(FACILITY)_ employee/patron has been diagnosed with COVID-19. You were identified as a close contact of this individual.

You should monitor your health starting now through _(DATE of 14 days after last exposure to positive case)_. Some common symptoms of COVID-19 include fever (temperature greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit), cough, and shortness of breath.

You should not go to work or school and should avoid public places during this time.

If you develop [symptoms of COVID-19](#), please contact your medical provider to discuss whether you need to be evaluated in person or tested. See the Chicago Department of Public Health's [guidance on what to do if you are sick](#). If your symptoms are severe, such as difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion or difficulty waking up, or bluish lips or face please seek the closest emergency department or call 9-1-1 immediately.

Any individuals who are sick with or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 must stay home and away from others for at least 10 days since their symptoms first appeared and at least 3 days (72 hours) with no fever (without using fever-reducing medications) and improving symptoms, whichever is longer.

For any additional COVID-19 questions or support, please visit www.chicago.gov/coronavirus for the most reliable information. If you do not find the information you need on the website, email coronavirus@chicago.gov.

The health and wellness of our staff and patrons are the highest priority of _(FACILITY)_. We continue to follow Chicago Department of Public Health and CDC guidelines as we ensure proper protocols and preventative measures are in place for the health and safety of our staff and patrons. Please contact us at _(FACILITY CONTACT INFORMATION)_ if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

SIGNATURE

(FACILITY LEADERSHIP NAME)