



1. What is contact tracing?

Contact tracing is an important step in slowing the spread of COVID-19. The contact tracing team will talk to those who have tested positive for COVID-19. They'll alert anyone they may have exposed, keeping names confidential. They'll check symptoms, offer testing, and discuss the next steps like self-quarantine and treatment.

By finding spread patterns quickly, we slow infection and help avoid outbreaks.

2. What does it mean to be a Close Contact?

A close contact is someone who has been within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes. By identifying close contacts, the spread of COVID-19 can be contained.

3. Who performs contact tracing for the Alameda County Public Health Department?

The contact tracing team includes a Team Clinician, Team Lead, and Contact Tracing Staff. This team of public health professionals and community partners work together to connect individuals to appropriate support and medical services as needed to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

4. What is the purpose of a contact tracing interview?

The goal of a contact tracing interview is to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Contact tracers conduct conversations with confidentiality, care, and cultural humility to provide guidance, resources, and support for isolation and quarantine.

5. What information can contact tracers provide?

Contact tracers will discuss quarantine or isolation to limit further exposure, quarantine housing if required, and referrals for other services and resources that may assist with isolation and quarantine.

6. How is privacy protected through the contact tracing process?

Contact tracers receive training on the privacy of protected information that emphasizes privacy and confidentiality of personal health information. Contact tracers also sign a confidentiality agreement. The information gathered will only be shared with Public Health officials, and cannot be shared with law enforcement, immigration, or for business purposes.

7. How many attempts will a contact tracer make to reach a close contact?

Contact tracers will make 3 calls across two days in a good faith attempt to reach a contact. When unable to reach a contact by phone, contact tracers will leave a voicemail with their name and phone number for a callback. If a contact's email address is on file, then Isolation and Quarantine Order and Instructions are emailed. Orders may also be mailed if there is an address on file.



8. What happens if a contact tests positive for COVID-19?

Contacts may receive testing for coronavirus through their medical provider or an Alameda County testing site (www.acphd.org/2019-ncov/testing.aspx). If a contact receives a positive test result for COVID-19, then they will also receive a more in-depth case interview to discuss symptoms and identify their close contacts.

9. What should I do if I think I have been exposed to someone with COVID-19?

If you believe you have come into close contact with someone who has COVID-19, please contact your medical provider to inquire about COVID-19 testing or visit any of the free-testing sites listed on the public health department's website. Quarantine yourself (stay at home) to prevent potential spread. Alameda County Public Health Department will only reach out to people who tested positive for COVID-19 and others who are identified as close contacts during the in-depth case interview.

10. Contact tracing is one of five indicators that Alameda County is monitoring as part of the Shelter in Place Order. What does the County hope to achieve by tracking progress on contact tracing?

Contact tracing is a well-known public health practice that aims to control and prevent the spread of diseases, like COVID-19. Alameda County seeks to reach 90% of all COVID-19 cases and close contacts through case investigation and contact tracing. These activities will help reduce the spread of disease by timely isolating people who test positive for COVID-19 and quarantining persons who have been in close contact.

11. As Shelter in Place Orders are relaxed and business/activity resumes, how does Alameda County plan to continue contact tracing?

Alameda County is committed to conducting contact tracing long-term while COVID-19 is present in our community, as we do with all communicable diseases. Contact Tracing takes considerable training and coordination, and we are expanding the effort in phases. We are currently in the process of scaling up our Contact Tracing team by partnering with community medical providers and community-based organizations. We are unable to accept volunteers at this time.



Alameda County
Health Care Services Agency



Alameda County Public Health Department
Celebrating Healthy People in Healthy Communities

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