COVID-19 Contact Tracing
How it Works and What to Expect

What is Your Role?

Do your part to keep your family, friends, and community safe.
Be transparent and cooperative with the nurse who calls. Any information you share with a public health nurse is confidential. This means that your personal and medical information will be kept private.

1. Positive Result
The Health Department receives a COVID-19 positive test result.

2. Contact & Assess Positive Case
A Public Health Nurse calls the individual to notify them of the positive result and conduct an interview.

3. Determine Close Contacts
Health Department staff determines who is a close contact (within 6 ft of distance for 10 minutes or more) of the positive case.

4. Contact & Assess Close Contacts
Health Department staff calls these individuals to notify them of an exposure.

5. Daily Monitoring
Close contacts are contacted (call or SMS text) daily for 14 days after exposure.

6. Released from Isolation
The Health Department will determine when individuals can be released from isolation (after 10 days or once symptoms have resolved).

The Health Department receives a COVID-19 positive test result. Contact tracing begins immediately when a positive test result is received. Usually the investigation is completed during the same day, but this can depend on the number of close contacts.

A Public Health Nurse calls the individual to notify them of the positive result and conduct an interview. The nurse determines if the individual is in an appropriate setting for isolation and makes sure that basic needs are met. The case will be contacted daily to monitor. The case will be asked for demographic info and when symptoms began or if asymptomatic based on date of test result, and about close contacts.

Health Department staff determines who is a close contact (within 6 ft of distance for 10 minutes or more) of the positive case. Health Department staff calls these individuals to notify them of an exposure. The Health Dept does not share the identity of the positive case. Close contacts are asked about their demographics and any symptoms they may be experiencing. They are given instructions about how to safely quarantine or isolate if they have symptoms.

Close contacts are contacted (call or SMS text) daily for 14 days after exposure. Testing is determined and advised on a case by case basis.

The Health Department will determine when individuals can be released from isolation (after 10 days or once symptoms have resolved).

New York State COVID-19 Hotline at 1-888-364-3065 or visit the NYSDOH website https://covid19screening.health.ny.gov
Cayuga Health System Mass Sampling Site: TCHD Contact Investigation FAQ and Video: https://tompkinscountyny.gov/health/factsheets/coronavirusfaq#contactinvestig
Tompkins County Health Department: https://tompkinscountyny.gov/health