



Communicable Disease Branch Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Weekly Key Points

May 26, 2020

The North Carolina Division of Public Health (NC DPH) Communicable Disease Branch will be releasing COVID-19 weekly key points that includes information discussed on the weekly Tuesday Local Health Department call. Recordings of the call will not be made available; please use the information below as a summary of the topics presented on the call. As guidance changes, please use the most recent information provided. For questions, contact the NC DPH Communicable Disease Branch 24/7 Epidemiologist on Call at **919-733-3419**.

Important updates

- **New:** [COVID-19 Cluster Guidance](#)
- **Update:** [Contact Tracing Instructions](#)

NC EDSS

A new Employment Information section has been added to the Demographic package. Included are questions about occupation, employer name, and in what business or industry the patient works.

Clusters and Outbreaks

NC DPH recommends the following definition for reporting clusters of COVID-19 in workplace, educational, and other community settings. A cluster is defined as:

- A minimum of 5 cases with illness onsets or initial positive results within a 14-day period AND
- Plausible epidemiologic linkage between cases*

*Local health departments should verify that cases were present in the same setting during the same time-period (e.g., same shift, same classroom, same physical work area); that the timing fits with likely timing of exposure; and that there is no other more likely source of exposure for identified cases (e.g., household or close contact to a confirmed case in another setting).

Local health departments should report all COVID-19 clusters that meet the above definition to NC DPH. Reporting may be done through the Epidemiologist on Call at 919-733-3419 and/or by submitting an outbreak worksheet to CDOutbreakWorksheet@dhhs.nc.gov. An updated version of the outbreak worksheet is available on the CD manual.

Contact Tracing

When entering data on NC EDSS case events, please indicate whether the patient was interviewed, including if the interview was done with proxies for the patient (e.g. legal guardian or healthcare provider). There are also new variables in the NC EDSS Risk History package aimed at collecting information on contacts and whether they



were entered into the CCTO tool. Once you have access to the CCTO tool please complete this entire section, as it will indicate the number of the COVID-19 patients reached and contacts identified and notified.

The updated [COVID-19 contact tracing instructions](#) are now available on the CDB website: updates include the recommendation to:

- Contact trace all close contacts for COVID-19 patients
- Refer all contacts for COVID-19 testing (immediately if symptomatic or 6 days after last known exposure if asymptomatic)
- Enter all contacts into the CCTO tool for management (again, after your county HD has been onboarded)

Onboarding of all LHDs into the CCTO tool begins this week. Prior to your scheduled onboarding day, you will receive an email with links to both the practice and live CCTO tool sites and the invite for your live office hour session where you will be able to get real-time answers to questions about the tool. Questions about the tool should be sent to Covid19CTSoftwareQuestion@dhhs.nc.gov. We request that each LHD identify 1-2 individuals to receive training and be the point person for uploading lists of contacts into the CCTO tool. Please ensure that if you plan to utilize this function of the CCTO tool, the contacts will need to be entered into the [Contact-Case patient CCTO Tool Import Template](#) excel spreadsheet, which is available on the Communicable Disease Branch [website](#).

County staff that will need access to the CCTO tool but don't currently have an NCID will need to contact their LHD NCID administrator who can generate the ID. LHD administrator help desk numbers can be found [here](#).

Requesting CCNC surge staff can be done by emailing any of the following:

- cctc-staffing@communitycarenc.org
- Christina Page (cpage@communitycarenc.org)
- Wendy Sause (wsause@communitycarenc.org)

Prison Release Procedures

DPS will not schedule early release for people who are currently in isolation or quarantine, but they cannot keep people past their release date, even if they have COVID-19. DPS works with incarcerated people to ensure that they have a home upon release, but occasionally they are not able to find housing for someone. They are currently working on setting up non-congregate housing options for people in isolation or quarantine who are being released and who do not have a home situation where they can maintain isolation/quarantine requirements. DPS will notify and work with LHDs when someone in isolation or quarantine is being released in your county.

Camp Guidance

Guidance on [day camps](#) and [overnight camps](#) is available on the NC DHHS website.