

## **Contact Tracing for COVID-19**

### **What is contact tracing?**

Contact tracing helps stop disease outbreaks by:

1. Notifying the close contacts that they have been exposed to COVID-19 and providing them with instructions for quarantine.
2. Enrolling individuals in contact tracing (Sara Alert™) for symptom monitoring.

### **Who is a close contact?**

Any person who was within 6 feet of a COVID-19 case for 15 minutes or more.

### **Who does contact tracing?**

In Maine, contact tracing is done by staff at Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) and in collaboration with other facilities.

### **Why it matters?**

Contact tracing informs people of their COVID-19 exposures. People who have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 are more likely to be infected.

Through contact tracing, Maine CDC can quickly identify people who develop symptoms and make recommendation for testing and isolation.

### **Why do contact tracing?**

Some people may show few or no symptoms, but they can still spread the virus to others without knowing it.

For others, COVID-19 can cause serious illness or death, especially in older adults and people with existing health conditions.

### **How are contacts identified:**

Maine CDC identifies contacts through case investigation of confirmed and probable COVID-19 cases. The investigator collects information on close contacts that is provided to the contact tracing team.

### **How does contact tracing work?**

1. Contact tracing enrollers call individuals identified through case investigation to:
  - a. Inform them of the close contact with someone with COVID-19.
  - b. Enroll them in contact tracing for daily symptom checks.
  - c. Provide information on quarantining.
  - d. Offer a letter for an employer stating they have been asked to quarantine.
  - e. Help connect to social services to provide support while in quarantine.

\*Maine CDC will not say who identified them as a close contact.

### **What is Sara Alert™**

Maine CDC uses Sara Alert™, a web-based tool, to help monitor symptoms for COVID-19 close contacts. People who may have been exposed to COVID-19 can report symptoms through web, text, email, or automated call. People enrolled in Sara Alert™ get messages each day to report if they have COVID-19 symptoms. This quickly identifies if people exposed to COVID-19 become ill so Maine CDC can give guidance to anyone reporting symptoms.

Learn more about Sara Alert™ at [www.saraalert.org](http://www.saraalert.org).

### **How do I know it is Maine CDC calling and not a hoax?**

Maine CDC **will NOT** ask for bank account information, your social security number, or immigration status.

### **Is there anyone else from Maine CDC who may call me?**

If you or others in your house are close contacts and begin to have symptoms, a case investigator will call.

### **About your privacy**

If Maine CDC calls, they will ask for your name, address, and date of birth. This helps make sure Maine CDC can identify individuals and not confuse a person with someone that has a similar name, address, or age. This information is kept private, just like a like a medical record.

Information that goes in the Sara Alert™ system includes date of birth and address. It is deleted 14 days after you end quarantine or isolation. You may request your data not go in the Sara Alert™ system. If you request to not share the information, the team will continue to monitor you without messages from Sara Alert™. You can also choose not to answer questions that make you uncomfortable.

### **Language Access**

Interpreters are available by request. Maine CDC works with cultural brokers to ensure cultural and linguistic needs are met.

