



## Guidance on Potential Client Exposure to COVID-19

Last Updated: 3/3/2021

### Guidance Overview:

This document explains how shelter providers and other site-based programs should handle situations where a shelter resident tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) and other shelter residents may have been exposed to the virus. This guidance has been updated to reflect guidance from DC Health on whether individuals who have been fully vaccinated need to quarantine. Specific guidance may vary based on the details of each case and will be provided by the DC Department of Health (DC Health).

### Definitions:

**Close contact:** Someone who was within 6 feet of a person who tested positive for COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes over a 24-hour period, while that person was infectious.

**Infectious period:** The time period during which someone is able to spread their infection to others. The infectious period for COVID-19 starts two days before symptom onset and typically ends 10 days after symptom onset (or test date for people who don't have symptoms).

**Incubation period:** The time between when someone is exposed to an infectious agent and when the first symptoms may appear. The incubation period for COVID-19 can be as little as 2 days and as long as 14 days.

**Fully vaccinated:** An individual is considered fully vaccinated at day 14 after completion of a COVID-19 vaccination series (after the second dose of a 2-dose series, or after one dose of a single-dose vaccine).

**Quarantine:** The process of separating individuals who have been exposed to an infectious agent (like COVID-19) before they develop symptoms of infection or test positive for infection, for the duration of time that covers the incubation period for the pathogen.

### 1. Who does this guidance apply to?

- **Providers operating congregate emergency shelter facilities.** A congregate emergency shelter is a facility where a number of people reside in close proximity to one another. Multiple people sleep in the same room (often in bunk beds), bathroom facilities are shared, and meals are provided cafeteria-style.
- **Youth programs where self-isolation is not possible (included in the term “shelter” for the remainder of this document).** For example, youth programs where a youth is in a room with a roommate and is not able to self-isolate in a different room on the premises. *Note that isolation site capacity is limited, and providers should make an attempt to isolate clients on-site if a private room setting is available.*



## 2. What should providers do if they receive notification that one of their clients has tested positive for COVID-19?

The shelter does NOT need to close. It can remain open to serve individuals experiencing homelessness. The Shelter POC should take the following actions:

- **Identify close contacts**, both clients and staff, who had close contact (as defined above), with the client who tested positive. Clients who had close contact and have NOT been fully vaccinated and have NOT tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days need to be transported to DHS Isolation and Quarantine (ISAQ) – See Question #3 for more information.
- **Submit a deep cleaning request**, using this [FORM](#), to do a deep cleaning of areas occupied by the client as well as common areas. DHS will also work with providers to develop a plan for where other clients can go while the deep clean is taking place.
- **Support DHS in planning and implementing a Mass Testing Event**, including sharing a recent census list of clients currently residing in the shelter, notifying clients and staff about the Mass Test Event (see attached flyer), and supporting client participation. If during a mass testing event, there are additional new positive clients identified, DHS may schedule subsequent mass testing.

## 3. What is the process for clients who had close contact?

The Shelter POC shall refer ALL close contacts to the DHS Isolation and Quarantine (ISAQ) Sites by calling the **DHS COVID-19 Hotline (24 Hours / 7 days): 202-671-3076**.

*The DHS Hotline will confirm whether all close contacts need to be transported to ISAQ.*

*DHS Hotline staff will check whether any of the clients fit into either of the following two groups who do NOT need to be transported to the ISAQ sites:*

1. Clients who are fully vaccinated if they meet the following criteria:
  - a. It has been at least 2 weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or two weeks following receipt of one dose of a single dose vaccine; AND
  - b. The client is within 90 days of receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or the first and final dose of a single dose vaccine; AND
  - c. The client has remained asymptomatic since the current COVID-19 exposure.
2. Clients who have tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 90 days that are not showing any new symptoms of COVID-19.



\*\*If shelter staff is aware that one of the clients fits into one of the categories listed above, they should report the name of the individual to the DHS COVID-19 Hotline, but should notify the hotline that they believe the individual does not need to go and give the reason.

Other than the two groups listed above, all clients who had close contact with the client who tested positive will be transported to ISAQ.

Staff will need to collect information about each client being referred to ISAQ **BEFORE** calling the hotline. **ALL of the information is required** to ensure that we can arrange transportation and ensure that we give appropriate care at the ISAQ site. For example, if you do not report that the client is diabetic – no one at the site will know that the person needs a diabetic meal until further assessment is conducted, which may not be until the following day.

The hotline will ask for the following information for each client:

- Caller's name, phone and email
- Client name, weight, gender, race/ethnicity, date of birth, contact number
- Dorm and bed number where client slept
- Name of COVID-positive person the client came in contact with, if known
- Whether the client is showing symptoms and/or got tested
- Whether client smokes or has any language, mobility, dietary, or ADA needs
- Whether client has any known medical requirements
- Emergency contact name and number for client

Please see the attached spreadsheet to help collect this information before making the call.

Providers shall give all clients going to the ISAQ site the attached letter and walk through the information in the letter with the client. **This is a key part of the process**, as we want clients to understand the purpose of the site and what to expect.

The hotline will arrange for the transportation of clients to ISAQ. When transportation arrives, please have shelter staff verify that only clients referred to ISAQ through the hotline are getting into the vehicle.

Finally, use this [FORM](#) to report information on close contacts identified during the contact tracing process to DHS and TCP. We will use this information for monitoring and follow-up on contacts identified during the contact tracing process.

#### 4. **Where can I turn if I have additional questions?**

For questions or additional information, please email [dhs.covid19@dc.gov](mailto:dhs.covid19@dc.gov).