

# Bedford County Public Schools: Contact Tracing

## Plan

Each School Nurse in Bedford County is certified as a contact tracer and works in cooperation with the Virginia Department of Health COVID-19 specialists.

## Process

School Nurses work extensively with families and school staff from the start of the case investigation to conclusion of contact tracing and tracing procedures may take several hours with a single case. Families are provided follow-up nurse consultation during quarantine to ensure children are improving from symptoms or being monitored for symptom onset.

## Keeping Students Safe

Contact tracing slows the spread of #COVID19. See these answers to Frequently Asked Questions about contact tracing: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#Contact-Tracing> . #SlowTheSpread



- Contact tracing is the process of notifying people (close contacts) of the potential exposure to COVID-19 and providing relevant health information.
- Contact tracing will include instructions regarding self-quarantine and monitoring for symptoms
- Any information you share with contact tracing staff is confidential.
- Specific school site information about positive cases findings is posted daily on the [BCPS website](#).

## WHAT HAPPENS IN CONTACT TRACING?

Contact tracing begins with a case investigation with the individual who has tested positive. Through a rigorous series of questions regarding symptoms, onset of symptoms and activities during the days preceding symptoms, the School Nurse then determines any close contacts to the affected individual. Close contacts are determined on a case-by-base basis and is someone who was within 6 feet for a total of 15 minutes with a person diagnosed with COVID-19. The assessment of close contact will be made by the School Nurse based on physical distancing, proper use of face coverings, prolonged versus brief periods of contact, types of activities during contact and relevant health factors for the exposed individual. Each close contact is then notified individually (adult or parent) and provided information of the exposure and instructed for quarantine procedures.

## WHAT WILL PARENTS BE TOLD?

Professional standards for the School Nurse team and protocols of public health codes requires confidentiality of all protected health information. Contact tracing must be conducted in a manner that preserves the confidentiality and privacy of all involved. If a specific class group was advised of a positive case and then a child/adult is absent from that setting for an extended period of time, the identity of the affected individual becomes apparent. Even though this disclosure is indirect, it is not an allowable disclosure. While not revealing a name, the specific class information would indirectly compromise the privacy BCPS is required to uphold with HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) and public health regulations that protect our students and staff..

# What is Contact Tracing?

The school is notified of a positive COVID case by a parent/guardian, staff or the local health department.



Those identified as close contacts will be asked to quarantine at home even if they do not have symptoms. Individuals are given health consultation and quarantine guidance.



School Nurses will begin an investigation to “trace” and determine possible exposure. School Nurses will notify anyone that is identified as having close contact with the individual that is positive.



While in quarantine, students can continue to work on their school-work through Canvas or with work sent home from teachers.

