



CONTACT TRACING CHANGES FAQ

As of September 29, 2020 Governor Reynolds changed the definition the State of Iowa is using to define close contacts for the purposes of contact tracing of positive COVID-19 cases. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines close contacts as persons within 6 feet of each other for 15 minutes or longer regardless of mask use. Today the State of Iowa announced that if both individuals are wearing masks in non-residential or non-healthcare setting, regardless of distance or duration, they are not considered close contacts.

Linn County Public Health advises the following:

Health Protocols for Individuals



- For updated guidance from the Iowa Department of Public Health, [click here](#).
- Wash hands often, cover your cough and sneezes, stay home when ill, and avoid touching your face.
- Maintain at least a six foot distance from others not within the same household.
- The use of a mask, or facial cloth covering, is encouraged to protect those that you may come into contact with and unable to maintain a social distance of six feet or greater.
- Wash or disinfect hands upon entering a business and after interacting with others.
- Individuals, aged 65 or older, and those at higher risk for COVID-19 should stay home.
- Avoid gatherings of more than 50 people. The larger the gathering, the greater the chance for transmission of the virus.
- Self-isolate when ill, no matter how mild the illness. If you have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or have symptoms consistent with COVID-19, but have not been tested, then you should self-isolate at home until:
 - * 10 days from onset of symptoms
 - * Symptoms have improved
 - * No fever for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications

Health Protocols for Businesses and Schools



- Screen upon arrival for COVID-19 symptoms, including temperature checks (send home anyone with temperature of 100.4 or greater): <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>
- Anyone demonstrating symptoms are sent home.
- Everyone must stay home when ill, no matter how mild the illness.
- Review and suspend leave policies that penalize employees for staying home when ill.
- Require anyone in direct contact with someone who tests positive for COVID-19 to quarantine according to CDC guidance if mask are not worn by one or more parties during interaction with a positive COVID-19 case.
- Promote remote and tele-work practices for as long as possible.
- Stagger work stations/desk to socially distance. If unable to ensure social distancing, place physical barriers, such as Plexiglas dividers between individuals. Use flat barriers, such as tape on the floor, as a reminder to distance from others.
- Discourage use of communal items such as phones, desks, offices, or other work tools.
- Provide hand washing station or hand sanitizer at the entrance. If appropriate, provide sanitizing wipes for disinfection of carts and baskets.
- Increase regular housekeeping, including routine cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces, equipment, and surface cleaning.
- Provide elevated personal protective equipment for employees including masks or cloth covering, increased hand washing, and gloves (if appropriate). Gloves are only appropriate if handling food/ beverages, cleaning facilities, or trash disposal.
- Ensure that ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows and doors, using fans, etc.
- Frequently disinfect high traffic areas and high touch surfaces, such as credit card docks, carts/baskets, and restrooms.
- Limit cash transactions and encourage alternate payment options.
- Follow CDC Guidelines for Cleaning: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html>

More detailed information:

- [Click here](#) for Linn County Public Health guidance for schools.
- [Click here](#) for Linn County Public Health guidance for business.
- The CDC definition of a contact can be found in the CDC FAQ footnotes at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html> and <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/appendix.html#contact>.
- Additional information can be found on the [Iowa Department of Public Health](#) and [COVID-19 in Iowa](#) websites.