



Public Health

Wayne County Health Department

Nicholas V. Casarelli, PhD
Health Commissioner

Erle A. Smitka, MD
Medical Director

Dear Parents:

This letter is to advise you of the process of contact tracing and clarify concerns about it. Contact tracing has been in the news and many reports coming from this are not accurate. Contact tracing is not a new process that happened with COVID-19. Most importantly it is not a process where anyone is punished in any way.

Contact tracing is required by health departments under ORC. 3701-3-02 and has been carried out by communicable disease nurses as part of disease control in public health for many years. This process is comprehensive and reveals information not always known at the time of the disease report.

Anyone testing positive for COVID-19 and their contacts will be contacted by a nurse from the WCHD including individual families that may be at risk. This process begins after the positive report is received. The positive case is asked who they have been in contact with and in what setting i.e.; school, work, family and other information. As contact tracing continues all individuals, employers, co-workers or other people exposed are contacted if it deemed necessary based on the exposure situation.

The school district will cooperate with the WCHD for contact tracing to supply names and demographic information for students/families/staff that are identified as being at risk. However, due to privacy issues the school cannot release COVID-19 positive names or information to any other individual. Parents will receive a generalized letter from the school in the event of a COVID-19 positive in their building.

The length of time for isolation is determined by the individual case/circumstances. The nurse will also provide education, resources and needed follow-up to the positive COVID-19 client and their contacts. For non-COVID-19 illnesses schools will follow their current policy for students and staff that are ill.

During outbreaks such as COVID-19, our ability to reduce the spread of disease and help exposed and sick people it takes everyone to work together to provide the best care and information to the staff, students and citizens of Wayne county.

Respectfully,

Susan Varnes, RN

Director of Patient Care Services

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