

Pike County Health Department

David Iftner, PhD, President, Board of Health
Anita Address, RN, BSN, Administrator



606 W. Adams Street
Pittsfield, IL 62363-1308
Tel: (217) 285-4407
Fax: (217) 285-4639

HomeCare



Across Illinois

News Release – Contact Tracing Explained

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CONTACT: Nancy Halpin, RN
217-285-4407 x 124

Pike County, IL – What happens when someone is diagnosed with the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)? Depending on the severity of the illness, the person can usually recover at home on isolation precautions. Communicable Disease staff are notified by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) or private lab and contact tracing begins.

CONTACT TRACING:

Contact tracing is a critical tool for investigating disease or unusual outbreaks, such as COVID-19. When someone has a lab confirmed positive case, the health department contacts them. The person is then directed to self-isolate, usually at home depending on the severity of the illness, as well as any other persons in the home.

The patient provides the health department with a listing of close contacts, travels, movement in the community, and work-place interactions. The communicable disease team members at the health department manage the case; provide counseling and instruction; determine the risk to the public; and notify close contacts that they may have been exposed. Close contacts are directed to self-quarantine for a period of at least 14 days. Those in quarantine are asked to watch for symptoms of the illness (fever, cough, and shortness of breath) and notify the health department and their health care provider if they develop symptoms.

Confirmed cases and their close contacts are released from isolation and quarantine under the advisement of the local health department. The privacy and confidentiality of the COVID-19 case (as with all reportable disease cases) is of utmost concern for the local health department. In small communities such as ours, it is too easy to identify the individual when numerous details about the case are released. Typically, age and gender are all that are released.

Other persons with COVID-19 like illness may be directed to self-quarantine at home by their doctor. These persons are not under official quarantine by the health department and are not monitored by the department. Only lab confirmed cases and their close contacts are monitored by the local health department.

It is assumed that the COVID-19 illness is circulating in our community. When you take measures to protect yourself, you also protect your friends, family, neighbors, and community. Please take the directives and guidance from your provider and the health department seriously.

For general COVID-19 questions, Illinoisans can also call the Hotline 1-800-899-3931 twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week or email DPH.SICK@ILLINOIS.GOV.

If you are sick and have respiratory symptoms, such as fever, cough, and shortness of breath, stay home and call your medical provider. Blessing Hospital's COVID Hotline number is 217-277-3504. Quincy Medical Group has also established a hotline. Their number is 217-277-4001.

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