

## This is an official DHEC Health Update

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10467-DHU-06-26-2020-COVID-19

### Resources to provide to COVID-19 cases and close contacts

#### Summary

- Patients who are being tested for COVID-19 should be told they must isolate at home or some other setting where they will be separate from other individuals as much as possible while waiting on their test results.
- Patients who want [guidance on isolation](#) and [quarantine](#) prior to being contacted by DHEC should be directed to the resources available on the DHEC website.
- It is now recommended that asymptomatic close contacts of COVID-19 cases be tested. This should generally be done no sooner than seven (7) days into their quarantine period (seven (7) days after last contact with the case). Providers might consider special circumstances for testing sooner such as household contacts with prolonged contact to the case during their infectious period.

#### Background

Greater numbers of patients and their family members and close contacts are being tested. These individuals often want guidance before DHEC is able to contact them. Guidance regarding what to do while tests are pending or while patients await contact from DHEC after a positive test result are available on the DHEC COVID-19 website. Patients should be reminded to isolate until their test result is reported. They can review the guidance so they understand what to expect if told to isolate if their test is positive. They can begin identifying their close contacts (anyone with whom they were within six (6) feet for fifteen (15) minutes or more). Quarantine guidance is available for these individuals so they can also be prepared and begin prior to contact from DHEC.

Interim guidance on testing asymptomatic close contacts was provide in the DHEC [HAN](#) from June 19, 2020. Providers should generally not plan to test until at least seven (7) days into the contact's quarantine period. This is seven (7) days after last contact with the case. This is to prevent falsely negative results from a swab taken before the virus is detectable. Antibody testing is not appropriate for this. Patients must be reminded to **complete their fully quarantine period even if the results are negative**, as the virus may not have gotten to a detectable level. Patients with positive results must be instructed to complete the isolation criteria for a positive case. Providers should use clinical judgement as to when to test before the seven (7) day period has elapsed. This may include household contacts with prolonged exposure to the case or with similar exposures that may put them at risk for infection. Patients and providers must consider the possibility of a false negative from testing too early. As always, close contacts with symptoms should also be tested with a PCR test.

## **Recommendations**

- Important guidance is available on the DHEC website and should be shared with patients and their families/close contacts to ensure that consistent, evidence-based guidance is being followed.

## **Resources**

Guidance for confirmed COVID-19 case:

<https://scdhec.gov/infectious-diseases/viruses/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/covid-19-case-guidance>

Guidance for close contacts of a confirmed COVID-19 case:

<https://scdhec.gov/infectious-diseases/viruses/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/covid-19-contact-guidance>

DHEC plain language explanation of the different types of tests to educate patients:

<https://scdhec.gov/index.php/covid-19-testing-type-information>

## **DHEC contact information for reportable diseases and reporting requirements**

Reporting of COVID-19 cases and deaths is consistent with South Carolina Law requiring the reporting of diseases and conditions to your state or local public health department. (State Law # 44-29-10 and Regulation # 61-20) as per the DHEC 2020 List of Reportable Conditions available at:

<https://www.scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/Library/CR-009025.pdf>

Federal HIPAA legislation allows disclosure of protected health information, without consent of the individual, to public health authorities to collect and receive such information for the purpose of preventing or controlling disease. (HIPAA 45 CFR §164.512).

## Regional Public Health Offices – 2020

Mail or call reports to the Epidemiology Office in each Public Health Region

### MAIL TO:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Lowcountry</u></b> 4050 Bridge View Drive, Suite 600 N. Charleston, SC 29405 Fax: (843) 953-0051</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Midlands</u></b> 2000 Hampton Street Columbia, SC 29204 Fax: (803) 576-2993</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Pee Dee</u></b> 1931 Industrial Park Road Conway, SC 29526 Fax: (843) 915-6502 Fax2: (843) 915-6506</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Upstate</u></b> 200 University Ridge Greenville, SC 29602 Fax: (864) 282-4373</p>
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### CALL TO:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Lowcountry</u></b> Allendale, Bamberg, Beaufort, Berkeley, Calhoun, Charleston, Colleton, Dorchester, Hampton, Jasper, Orangeburg</p> <p>Office: (843) 441-1091 Nights/Weekends: (843) 441-1091</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Midlands</u></b> Aiken, Barnwell, Chester, Edgefield, Fairfield, Kershaw, Lancaster, Lexington, Newberry, Richland, Saluda, York</p> <p>Office: (888) 801-1046 Nights/Weekends: (888) 801-1046</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Pee Dee</u></b> Clarendon, Chesterfield, Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Georgetown, Horry, Lee, Marion, Marlboro, Sumter, Williamsburg</p> <p>Office: (843) 915-8886 Nights/Weekends: (843) 915-8845</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Upstate</u></b> Abbeville, Anderson, Cherokee, Greenville, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Oconee, Pickens, Spartanburg, Union</p> <p>Office: (864) 372-3133 Nights/Weekends: (864) 423-6648</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>For information on reportable conditions, see</b> <a href="https://www.scdhec.gov/ReportableConditions">https://www.scdhec.gov/ReportableConditions</a></p>	<p><b><u>DHEC Bureau of Communicable Disease Prevention &amp; Control</u></b> <b>Division of Acute Disease Epidemiology</b> 2100 Bull St • Columbia, SC 29201 Phone: (803) 898-0861 • Fax: (803) 898-0897 Nights / Weekends: 1-888-847-0902</p>
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Categories of Health Alert messages:

<b>Health Alert</b>	Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.
<b>Health Advisory</b>	Provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.
<b>Health Update</b>	Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.
<b>Info Service</b>	Provides general information that is not necessarily considered to be of an emergent nature.