

NEWS

September 28, 2021

Central District Health urges community members to use COVID-19 tools to help ease the burden on health systems & public health

*New COVID-19 Isolation and Quarantine Calculator;
New School Exposure and COVID-19 Contact Tracing form*

CENTRAL DISTRICT HEALTH, IDAHO — The combination of increasing COVID-19 positive cases, limited staffing, and resource constraints have created a significant backlog in COVID-19 case investigations. Central District Health (CDH) is currently processing up to 1,000 labs per day, with about 6,300 labs, from up to 10 days ago, waiting to be processed in the queue - a significant increase from the number of labs seen in the last surge. New labs received via email and fax, waiting to be processed, are not all new cases due to receiving duplicates and negative results.

With the number of cases, CDH is prioritizing contact tracing in schools, with vulnerable populations, and congregate living facilities (such as correctional facilities & homeless shelters), Long Term Care Facilities, and those unable to receive the vaccine. "With transmission occurring at this level, CDH is often unable to determine the source of infection due to the number of possible exposures. Our case investigation and contact tracing efforts are only reaching a small percentage of those individuals testing positive due to the level of infection in our community" stated Lindsay Haskell, CDH's Communicable Disease Control Manager. "We are asking the community to take precautions to keep themselves and others healthy. We are asking them to use the tools on our website to help notify their close contacts, and to isolate and quarantine when indicated."

New tools to aid in COVID-19 investigations:

- **COVID-19 Isolation & Quarantine Calculator:** These calculators and resources help determine isolation, quarantine, and testing timeframes when indicated. Along with resources on how to notify and talk to close contacts, what type of test to get, and how to care for someone who is ill.
 - Link: <https://www.cdh.idaho.gov/covid-calculator.php>.
- **COVID-19 School Exposure Form:** The school exposure form is for school administrators, nurses, and school points of contact to submit known school exposures. *This form is **not** for parents or guardians to submit when their child has been exposed in an instructional school setting.*
 - Direct Link:
https://na3.documents.adobe.com/public/esignWidget?wid=CBFCIBAA3AAABLblqZhDVBmTNoFEG7Opb0XTC6xkdFwrC-asKq9gBQqP3N1i7EPniMGUWs7wOa8Q_ajBguf0*.

COVID-19 Contact Tracing Form

CDH will be sending individuals with a positive SARS-CoV-2 test a secure online form to share their COVID-19 experience. This form will be sent via e-mail or text message. The form asks the same questions disease investigators/contact tracers would go through, but due to the current situation, are unable to contact every new case in a timely manner. This tool will allow CDH to communicate important information about COVID-19 and to collect essential information, which provides crucial information about the severity of illness among specific populations (e.g., age group, occupation, ethnicity, etc.), exposure, vaccination breakthrough, and hospitalization.

- **COVID-19 Contact Tracing Form:** The form is **available** on CDH's COVID-19 Isolation & Quarantine page. CDH encourages the public to fill out the form if they, or their child, receives a positive COVID-19 test result. Individuals can access the form from our website or complete via the link sent directly from CDH. *The Spanish version is forthcoming. The form was developed with Adobe Document Signing to preserve HIPAA compliance in completing and sending.*
 - Direct Link:
https://na3.documents.adobe.com/public/esignWidget?wid=CBFCIBAA3AAABLbLqZhDiYp uUF3T0sK2Ae-dnEvfMJ2EMChZ VMFa5GSvF9ycxrCbR1nLapGONow8 Z2FQbs*.

CDH encourages residents who have tested positive with COVID-19 to notify those they have been in close contact with up to two days prior to developing symptoms or testing positive. In August 2021, CDH averaged 239 new cases per day. The number has increased to over 450 new cases per day in September and is expected to increase as data is processed and the amount of new daily laboratory reports are received. Due to the number of new cases being reported each day, and the length of time from date of test to date of report, CDH is unable to make timely contact and notification to close contacts. Close contacts should isolate at home for 14 days to help reduce the spread of the virus in our community. Additional instructions on [how to notify contacts](#) and when to quarantine can be found on the Isolation & Quarantine Calculator webpage under the tabs section at the bottom of the page.

"We're at a concerning place and are working to help alleviate the strain on hospital systems, urgent care, and other primary care facilities. Central District Health is making every effort to provide timely and accurate information to our community." stated Russ Duke, CDH's Director. "You can be exposed and become infected anywhere in the community. Whether it is at work, grocery shopping, dining out, visiting friends, or attending an event. We ask our community members to help by choosing to get vaccinated, staying home when sick, wearing a mask in indoor public places and in crowded outdoor spaces, and to seek appropriate healthcare services if needed."

CDH's COVID-19 Tableau Dashboard

CDH will be updating the data published to the [Latest Information & Data page](#) and [Tableau Dashboard](#) on Thursdays by 12 pm, starting September 30, 2021, instead of posting COVID-19 case counts Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and updating the dashboard on Mondays and Thursdays. The new Tableau dashboard update will include the week of report information for the district, limited county/city level data, and case characteristics. It will also include syndromic surveillance and hospitalizations, as CDH is required to report this information. CDH will be publishing information that isn't easily accessible on the [Department of Health and Welfare's \(DHW\) Tableau](#) Dashboard to avoid duplicating information that is already published.

CDH encourages community members and partners to visit DHW's Dashboard to find statewide data, along with vaccine information and case counts. State-level case, laboratory, and hospital data are updated daily by 5:00 p.m. MT, excluding holidays on DHW's Dashboard.

CDH's Call Center

Please call CDH's COVID-19 Call Center at (208) 321-2222 for questions about quarantine, isolation, self-care, and symptoms. The Call Center is available Monday through Friday 10 am to 2 pm (MDT) - *may be closed or operate with modified hours on holidays*. Community members are encouraged to visit CDH's [COVID-19 Directory](#) for more information and resources.

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Information Resources

- CDH Directory:
<https://www.cdh.idaho.gov/covid.php>
- CDH COVID-19 Isolation & Quarantine Calculator:
<https://www.cdh.idaho.gov/covid-calculator.php>
- CDH Schools Exposure Form:
https://na3.documents.adobe.com/public/esignWidget?wid=CBFCIBAA3AAABLblqZhDVBmTNoFEG7Opb0XTC6xkdFwrC-asKq9gBQqP3N1i7EPniMGUWs7wOa8Q_ajBguf0*
- CDH Contact Tracing/Investigation Form:
https://na3.documents.adobe.com/public/esignWidget?wid=CBFCIBAA3AAABLblqZhDiYpuUF3T0sK2Ae-dnEvfMJ2EMChZ_VMFa5GSvF9ycxrCbR1nLapGONow8_Z2FQbs*
- CDH Call Center | Monday – Friday, 10 am to 2 pm, (208) 321-2222

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