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PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL

Guidance: Response to COVID-19 for Institutions of Higher Education

Note: this guidance is interim and may be updated as more is learned about the spread of COVID-19 in institutions of higher learning.

Inform the Orange County Health Care Agency when a confirmed case of COVID-19 is identified by school testing in either a student or staff member.

If two or more cases of COVID-19 are identified within 14 days in a classroom or other common work or social group, such as in a dorm or cafeteria, consideration may be given to broader testing or quarantine of all students and staff in the room or group. The school should call OCHCA immediately to review the situation.

The school will be responsible for assisting OCHCA in identifying close contacts of the case. In general, the school will be responsible for identification and follow up of close contacts that occurred on-campus as part of school or work activities. OCHCA will follow up with social contacts that are not campus-related.

Close contacts are defined as those who were within 6 feet for 15 minutes or more cumulatively in a 24 hour period, even if a non-medical face covering was worn.

Close contacts must be quarantined at home for at least 10 days after last exposure to the case.

The school may elect to test asymptomatic close contacts. If testing is performed, it could be performed approximately 7 and 14 days after last known exposure to the case. However, close contacts will need to be quarantined for 14 days regardless of results of this testing.

Confirmed cases who live in on-campus housing should stay in housing with an unshared bedroom and bathroom. Schools should identify beforehand appropriate potential housing options for those who live on-campus and do not already have this arrangement.

A school should send a general written and/or verbal communication to all staff and students who were present in a classroom or worksite where a confirmed case was present while infectious, including those who were not close contacts. The school may also send a schoolwide communication about the situation. While OCHCA does not mandate this communication, it often helps prevent the spread of misinformation. OCHCA can assist with developing any campus messaging.

A case is considered to be infectious from 2 days before their symptoms first appeared until at least 10 days after symptoms start. Cases are no longer required to be isolated when at least 10 days have passed since symptoms began AND they have not had a fever for at least 24 hours without the use of medicine that reduces fever AND other symptoms have improved.

A person with a positive COVID-19 test but no symptoms is considered to be infectious from 2 days before their test was taken until 10 days after their test.

For any questions, call 800-564-8448.