

MAKING CONTACT:

A Training for COVID-19 Case
Investigators and Contact Tracers

UNIT 1 GLOSSARY

Antibody: A protein found in the blood that is produced in response to foreign substances (e.g., bacteria or viruses) invading the body. Antibodies protect the body from disease by binding to these organisms and destroying them.

Antibody test: This test detects a toxin or other foreign substance, like the COVID-19 virus, through the presence of antibodies. This type of test can tell you if there has been a *past* infection.

Asymptomatic: A person is said to be asymptomatic for an infectious disease when they have been exposed to a microorganism and symptoms of a disease are never present or apparent.

Basic reproduction number: A number that is used to measure the *potential* contagiousness of a disease.

Cluster: A group of cases of a disease, injury, or other health condition in a specific area during a specific period of time.

Community transmission: This occurs when an illness spreads in the community and the source is unknown.

Confirmed COVID-19 case: This occurs when a person has confirmed laboratory evidence for a COVID-19 diagnosis.

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19): An infectious disease caused by a specific coronavirus, also known as COVID-19.

Determinants of health: The factors that influence health.

Disease: The result when an infection does damage to the body, causing illness or sickness.

Effective reproduction number: A number that is used to measure the *actual* contagiousness of a disease within a population.

Endemic: The constant presence of a disease (or other health condition) in a specific area or population.

Epidemic: When the number of cases of disease (or other health condition) is greater than expected in a specific area or population.

Epidemiologist: A public health professional who analyzes patterns and causes of health conditions among populations to identify outbreaks and other important events.

Epidemiology: The study of the patterns and causes of health conditions among populations, and the use of that information to address health problems.

Equity: Refers to fairness and justice in the support, opportunities, and outcomes that people experience.

Exposure: Having contact with an infectious agent, such as a virus, that causes a particular health problem.

Health disparity: A difference in health outcomes between groups of people. These differences can occur by gender, race, ethnicity, age, location, income, disability status, and sexual orientation.

Health equity: This occurs when everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible.

Health inequity: A difference in health outcomes between groups of people due to systemic, avoidable, and unjust social and economic policies that can create barriers to achieving optimal health.

Immunocompromised: When a person's immune system does not work at full capacity. These people might be at a higher risk for an infection.

Incubation period: The period of time between when a person is exposed to a virus and when they start to show symptoms of the disease.

Index case: The first case or instance of a patient with a particular infection coming to the attention of health authorities.

Indirect transmission: Indirect transmission occurs when a person comes into contact with contaminated air particles or objects.

Inequity: A lack of justice or fairness.

Infection: The result when an infectious agent (such as viruses or bacteria) multiplies and invades the body or enters a part of the body where it is not usually found.

Infectious disease: An illness caused by an agent (e.g., viruses, bacteria, fungi, or parasites) that can spread from person to person.

Infectious period: The period of time when a disease can be spread to others. For COVID-19, people are thought to be contagious when they are asymptomatic (i.e., during the incubation period) *and* when they are symptomatic.

Inflammation: A bodily, local response to injury, mild or severe, that can include redness, heat, and pain.

Isolation: Used to separate people infected with the virus from people who are not infected, even at home.

Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C): A condition in children where different body parts become inflamed (i.e., red and swollen). While we do not yet know what causes it, many children with MIS-C have had the virus that causes COVID-19.



Nasopharynx: The upper part of the throat, behind the nose.

Pandemic: An epidemic that takes place over a large area (i.e., multiple countries or the world).

Personal protective equipment (PPE): Equipment used to protect individuals from COVID-19, such as face masks and gloves.

Presymptomatic: A person is said to be presymptomatic for an infectious disease when they have been exposed to a microorganism and symptoms of a disease are not yet present or apparent.

Priority populations: A group of persons whose risk for a particular disease, injury, or other health condition is greater than that of the rest of their community or population.

Probable COVID-19 case: When a person has symptoms of COVID-19 and has had contact with another person with COVID-19, but does not have a laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis.

Quarantine: The separation of individuals who might have been exposed to COVID-19 from others.

Reproduction number: Represents the average number of people who will be infected by one person with a disease (like COVID-19).

Respiratory system: The organs and other parts of your body involved in breathing.

Self-isolation: Also called home isolation, this term refers to isolation that takes place in the person's home.

Self-quarantine: Also called home quarantine, this term refers to quarantine that takes place in the person's home.

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2): The virus that causes COVID-19.

Social determinants of health: The conditions in places we live, learn, work, worship, and play that affect a wide range of health risks and outcomes.

Social distancing: Also called “physical distancing,” social distancing involves staying six feet away from people who are not in your household, both indoors and outdoors.

Symptom: Subjective evidence of a physical disorder (e.g., sore throat) that an individual feels or experiences.

Symptomatic: Displaying symptoms.

Systemic: Affecting an entire organization or country.

Transmission: The way infectious agents (such as viruses and bacteria) spread and infect another person's body.



Viral test: Also called a diagnostic test, this test can tell if there is a current infection by detecting the virus directly.

UNIT 2 GLOSSARY

Care Resource Manager (or similar role): Responsibilities of this role may include identifying the support services that people with COVID-19 and their contacts need to stay healthy while isolating or quarantining. A Care Resource Manager can provide tools, such as masks and thermometers, and also connect cases and their contacts to support services, such as housing, food banks, financial help, mental health services, and other community programs.

Case investigation: The process of identifying and supporting patients with confirmed or probable COVID-19.

Case Investigators (or similar role): Trained professionals who contact a person with probable or confirmed COVID-19 to support the person through self-isolation by monitoring and following up regularly and ensuring the person has access to needed resources. Case Investigators also collect information on any contacts who may have been exposed to COVID-19.

Close contact: Someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period, starting from 48 hours before illness onset until the time the patient is isolated. (*Note:* This definition does not include students who were within 3-6 feet of an infected student in a K–12 indoor classroom if both students were wearing masks and other prevention strategies were in place in the K–12 school setting.)

Confidentiality: Refers to the fact that a person's medical information cannot be shared with others unless the person agrees to share it.

Confirmed case: A person with COVID-19 who has had a lab test that confirms that they have an infection.

Contact elicitation: The process of working with a person with confirmed or probable COVID-19 to help them remember the people they have been in contact with while infectious who could have been exposed to the virus.

Contact Tracers (or similar role): Trained professionals who notify and monitor contacts of their exposure. They perform regular follow-up and monitoring activities and help ensure contacts' safe quarantine.

Contact tracing: The process of notifying, interviewing, and educating people, or "contacts," who have been exposed to a disease to prevent additional transmission.

Disease Intervention Specialist (DIS): DIS perform contact tracing, partner services, and emergency response. DIS have a long history of investigating cases of infectious diseases, including sexually transmitted infections. DIS have expertise in essential skills such as communication, contact tracing, interviewing, counseling, case analysis, and provider and community engagement.



Privacy: The right to keep personal information personal.

Probable case: A person who has not had a confirmatory lab test but shows other evidence for having COVID-19, including clinical evidence (i.e., has symptoms), or epidemiologic evidence (i.e., was in contact with someone who has COVID-19).

Public good: Something that benefits everyone.

UNIT 3 GLOSSARY

Active listening: A structured way of listening and responding to others that focuses attention on the person who is speaking.

Clarifying questions: Questions that Case Investigators and Contact Tracers can use to make sure they are understanding the respondent correctly.

Closed questions: Questions that can easily be answered with a “yes” or “no” response.

Cultural humility: A lifelong process of learning and self-reflection that allows us to consider our own cultural beliefs and identities, personal views, and biases to help us better understand the cultures and identities of others.

Cultural sensitivity: Recognizing that cultural differences and similarities between people exist and that differences don’t mean that any group is better or worse than another.

Culture: The learned and shared behavior of a community of people who interact with one another.

Discrimination: The unjust treatment of individuals based on factors like race, ethnicity, age, and sex.

Focused question: A type of probing question that may provide limits or boundaries (e.g., time, specified person, or location) to direct an answer.

Interpreter: Someone who explains the meaning of an issue, conceives of its significance, or translates information from one group or person to another. Interpreters can translate language or cultural meanings.

Leading questions: Questions that can encourage a specific answer, which may result in an answer that's not totally accurate or complete.

Motivational interviewing: A communication strategy that is tailored to the behaviors, circumstances, and needs of the person that is being interviewed. This strategy focuses on empathy and understanding, acceptance, respect, honesty, and caring. The goal is to help the person being interviewed explore and resolve any uncertainty they might be feeling in order to encourage them to follow appropriate public health advice.

Nonverbal communication: Refers to body language and other ways people can express themselves without using language.



Open-ended questions: Questions that are not easily answered by a “yes” or “no” response. They encourage respondents to provide more in-depth and insightful responses.

Probing questions: Questions that are used to encourage a respondent to provide more detail about the information they've shared.

Rapport: A relationship of trust between people, a feeling of sympathetic understanding, or having a mutual understanding.

Respondent: The person who is providing the answer to the interview question.

Risk communication: Providing and exchanging up-to-date information and advice to people facing a threat to their health. The purpose of risk communication is to enable people at risk of COVID-19 to make informed decisions to protect themselves and their families.

Stigma: Unfair blame toward individuals from an identifiable group of people, a place, or a nation.

Verbal communication: The use of sound and words to express oneself.

UNIT 4 GLOSSARY

Active monitoring: A type of case or contact monitoring where the health department or partner agency is responsible for establishing regular communication with the individual.

Affirmations: Words of encouragement that motivate the respondent to keep talking.

Crisis counseling: A type of communication that helps individuals to focus on the situation, identify immediate needs, and access resources and support. The goal is to empower the individual and provide the necessary resources to support them throughout the quarantine or isolation period.

Medical monitoring: The act of tracking a person’s symptoms or other health characteristics over time.

Nonverbal communication: Communication that happens through gestures, facial expressions, and tone of voice.

Paraphrasing: Restating what the respondent has said in different words.

Reflecting: Putting words to a respondent’s emotional reactions.

Self-monitoring: A type of case or contact monitoring in which the person with COVID-19 or contact monitors themselves. This may include checking for symptoms or taking their temperature each day.

Social support services: Also called “social supports,” these include the resources and services that go beyond COVID-19 health and medical care. These support services are important because they can help address a range of needs and provide individuals with resources to help them safely and successfully complete isolation or quarantine.



Transitional case management plan: This type of plan is made by a Case Investigator and their team, and includes information on how the case will maintain a safe isolation when moving from one setting to another.

Verbal communication: Communication that is spoken.

Visual communication: Communication that uses photographs, drawings, charts, and graphs to share information.

Written communication: Communication that uses paper or digital documents—like pamphlets, flyers, emails, and letters—to share information.

