



MEMO

TO: Employers in Waukesha County
FR: Benjamin Jones, Health Officer, Waukesha County Public Health
Waukesha County Department of Health & Human Services
DATE: November 19, 2020
RE: Contact Tracing Process Changes Will Affect Employers in Waukesha County

Waukesha County is proud of the long-standing partnership we have with our business community. Due to the exponential growth in positive COVID-19 cases in the past several weeks, we are asking for your continued collaboration in assisting in the contact tracing process. We will be making changes beginning November 19, 2020.

CURRENT IMPACT OF COVID-19 IN WAUKESHA COUNTY

Forty-two percent of all positive COVID-19 cases in Waukesha County came in the month of October. We are on pace to double that number in November. This is causing significant stress on critical services such as healthcare, long-term care, emergency services and first responders primarily due to staffing challenges caused by increasing numbers of employee exposures and the subsequent need to quarantine. We know businesses and schools are facing the same reality.

WAUKESHA COUNTY NEEDS HELP FROM EMPLOYERS TO SLOW THE SPREAD

Waukesha County Public Health has had to continuously make contact tracing process adjustments as the numbers of positive cases rapidly increase. Our public health goals have been to isolate the positive individual as soon as possible, quarantine household members, notify their employer or school, and notify their close contacts to decrease the spread of the disease. This public health process worked well for the first seven months of the pandemic. Now in the eighth month, Waukesha County Public Health must make process changes to redirect all contact tracing staff to focus on positive case notification. In making this change, public health will have to rely on positive cases, schools, and businesses to help slow the spread of this infectious disease by notifying close contacts.

NEW CONTACT TRACING PROCESS WILL PRIORITIZE AGE GROUPS

Beginning November 19, 2020, Waukesha County Public Health will continue to follow-up on all COVID-19 positive cases, but will prioritize follow-up focusing on positive individuals who are in the higher risk age categories of 22 years-old and younger, or 60 years-old and older. An abbreviated follow-up will be conducted with positive cases in people aged 23-59 years old. All positive cases will be notified of their positive test result, educated on the need to isolate, and the need to have their household members quarantine. The positive individual will be responsible for notifying their employer and child's school if applicable, as well as their close contacts.

EMPLOYERS WILL HELP IDENTIFY CLOSE CONTACTS BY CONTACT TRACING

Waukesha County has created a workflow for employers that diagrams the contact tracing process. In summary, an employee will notify their employer of their positive diagnosis. The employee will work with their employer to identify their colleagues who they were in close contact with during their infectious period. The employer will contact the close contacts to alert them to the exposure and provide them with resources on quarantining. This process is modeled after months of experience and adjustments made to working with schools to open and stay open safely.

WAUKESHA COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH PROCESSES THAT ARE SUSPENDED AS OF NOVEMBER 19, 2020

Employers of a positive case will no longer be notified by Waukesha County Public Health. Return-to-work letters will no longer be supplied to employers by Waukesha County Public Health. Employers will no longer need to supply Waukesha County Public Health with a line list of close contacts of the positive employee as the employers will identify the close contacts in their facilities and will supply information on their need to quarantine.

WAUKESHA COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH WITH CONTINUE TO SUPPORT EMPLOYERS

Waukesha County Public Health will still have a Business Team available to assist employers during this time of process transition. This public health team is able to assist employers in understanding current guidance and the steps to take to contact trace in their facility. This team is also available for guidance when multiple cases (or an outbreak) occurs in a facility. Positive employees will be contacted by Waukesha County Public Health and given instructions on their isolation period. Employers will receive resources from Waukesha County Public Health to help them understand when employees are eligible to return to work.

ADDITIONAL ACTIONS BY EMPLOYERS TO HELP SLOW THE SPREAD

Employees who are presenting symptoms and awaiting test results should not report to the workplace. Workplace Safety Committees can help in contact tracing efforts, social distancing monitoring, and communicating about the important role employees have in keeping themselves, their families and their colleagues safe.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Waukesha County Public Health is most appreciative of the business community ongoing willingness to step in and step up support the economy of Waukesha County. Waukesha County continuously monitors multiple data points during the pandemic and will reevaluate the need to sustain this new process at some point in the future. Thank you for your partnership. It is appreciated.

FIND RESOURCES ONLINE AT: www.waukeshacounty.gov/safeopen

- Steps employees take following a positive test result
- Definitions of infectious period, isolation, quarantine, and more
- Requirements during isolation and quarantine
- Symptoms of COVID-19
- Testing
- And more