

The Health Department works closely with colleges and universities that have COVID-19 concerns. If a case of COVID-19 is confirmed in a student or staff member at a college, the Health Department will partner with college and university leadership and medical staff to provide detailed guidance and information as needed, perform contact tracing, and address specific needs related to COVID-19. Below is a general list of what to expect and actions to take if someone develops COVID-19 symptoms while on campus or when there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 on campus.

## What to do when a student or staff member becomes symptomatic on campus:

- Many of the symptoms of COVID-19 are also [common in other illnesses](#) like the common cold, the flu, or seasonal allergies. Follow your protocols for suspected cases of flu, norovirus and other infections. Taking [everyday actions](#) to reduce the spread of these infections will also help reduce the potential spread of COVID-19.
- If a student or staff member develops a fever or any of the [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, they should immediately put on a mask, if they are not already wearing one.
- If a student or staff member develops symptoms during the day, they should go home immediately. They should contact college or university health services or their primary care provider to discuss next steps and if testing is warranted.
- Anyone with symptoms should isolate away from other people until their test result comes back. People waiting for test results **should not** be housed in isolation housing for people with COVID-19 until they are confirmed to be positive.
- Clean and disinfect all high-touch areas potentially used by the person with symptoms of COVID-19, including desks, chairs, door handles, etc., once the person has left the area. Wait at least an hour (preferably 24 hours) or as long as possible before cleaning.
- Ensure [safe and correct use](#) and storage of [cleaning and disinfection products](#).
- If possible, increase ventilation in the areas used by the person by opening outside doors and windows or using ventilation fans to increase air circulation.

## What to do when someone with confirmed COVID-19 was on campus while infectious:

- The higher education institution will be informed by the Health Department about an individual with COVID-19 if the person was on campus while infectious. If someone tests positive for COVID-19 but was **not** on campus or in contact with people from the college while they were infectious, there are no additional steps necessary.
  - The infectious period is when someone with COVID-19 can spread the virus to others. It starts two days before symptoms begin – or for people with COVID-19 who don't have symptoms, two days before they got tested – and continues [until they have recovered](#).
- There may be misinformation circulating and concerns about getting COVID-19. Remember to treat staff and students with respect and confidentiality.
- You may be notified of a case of COVID-19 in the following ways:
  - The Health Department may contact you.
  - The lab will report the result back to the ordering health care provider.

- A student or a staff member may share their positive test result. All results will be verified by the Health Department prior to beginning contact tracing.
- Ensure that the person with COVID-19 is in [isolation](#). If the individual lives on campus, they should be moved to isolation housing. If they live off-campus, offer them isolation housing if they are unable to isolate at home.
- Close off areas where the person with COVID-19 spent more than 15 minutes until [cleaning and disinfecting the areas](#). Wait at least one hour, but preferably 24 hours, after the person with COVID-19 was in the area before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait for as long as possible.
- Begin collecting information to build a [line list](#). A “line list” is a document that lists all people who had close contact with the sick person while they were infectious. This list will be helpful for the Health Department to conduct contact tracing.
  - This list can be built by using any of the following:
    - Seating charts,
    - Class schedules,
    - Staff movement, including faculty and staff members, custodial staff, contractors, and others
    - Attendance records,
    - Sports teams or activities that the person participates in,
    - Participation in fraternities or sororities,
    - Activity or event participation records, etc.
- People who had [close contact](#) with someone with COVID-19 while they were infectious [should quarantine](#), or be moved to quarantine housing if they live on campus.
- If you have not already been contacted by the Health Department, someone from the health center or the appointed COVID-19 Coordinator should call 802-863-7240, option 3 (or option 7 after hours or on weekends) to review the situation and determine next steps.
- During the response, college and university administrators and staff should work with the Health Department to answer questions about the possibility of spread within the school and make decisions about next steps. Administrators and staff may include:
  - College/University Health Directors
  - College Administrators
  - College/University Contact Tracing liaisons
  - Other informed parties who can help answer the questions listed below.

### **Information and questions that the Health Department will review with you:**

- Basic information about the case
  - What is the name, age, and demographics of the person with COVID-19?
  - Are they/were they infectious while on campus?
  - When was the last time they were on campus?
  - Do they have a previously known COVID-19 status from their state of residence if other than Vermont?
- Where did the person with COVID-19 spend longer than 15 minutes? This could include classrooms, bathrooms, offices, gym, cafeteria, etc. Facility maps or layout drawings are helpful.

- Do you have a [line list](#) of people who had [close contact](#) with the individual? This could include classmates, teachers, other staff, lab instructors, contractors, etc. The Health Department will assist you in compiling a complete line list.
  - What is the contact information for people who had close contact with someone with COVID-19?
  - Have any of the people with close contact had symptoms?

## Next Steps

- Consider notifying students and staff that a person with COVID-19 has been identified at the school. Encourage them to answer calls from the Health Department and participate in contact tracing.
- Students and staff who have positive test results for COVID-19 [should isolate](#) at home or in on-campus isolation housing until
  - At least 10 days have passed since symptom onset – or if no symptoms, date of test collection – **and**
  - At least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
  - Other symptoms have improved.
- Students and staff who were in close contact with a person with COVID-19 [should quarantine](#) and stay home or in on-campus quarantine housing for 14 days since the last day they had close contact with the person with COVID-19. There are additional options to test-out of quarantine at day 7 in certain situations. More information on quarantine can be found [here](#).

## Resources

- [Safe and Healthy Return to Campus: Mandatory Guidance for College and University Campus Learning](#) (Agency of Commerce and Community Development)
- [Information on accessing testing](#) (Health Department)
- [Information on contact tracing](#) (Health Department)
- [Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting](#) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- [Vermont Health Department Resources for Colleges and Universities](#) (Health Department)

For more information, visit  
[healthvermont.gov/COVID19](https://healthvermont.gov/COVID19)