

## COVID-19 Notifications

*A Guide for Academic Programs, Supervisors, Administrative Managers, HR Partners, and Principal Investigators*

The University has established a working protocol for notifications of positive cases on the USC campuses; this process is a partnership between several offices and departments (Student Health, Environmental Health and Safety, General Counsel, Risk Management, Student Affairs, Human Resources) in cooperation with supervisors, administrative managers, HR partners, and other leaders of working units at USC. This brief guide outlines the process for notifications on campus, and how each partner can help prepare information, and participate in case reviews when necessary, to ensure that accurate and timely information is relayed to our campus community.

### Process for Positive Case Information

1. **Positive cases:** As positive cases on campus are reported, the contact tracing team at USC Student Health reaches out to the effected positive individual. These reports maybe from lab results through USC Student Health's Pop Testing or PCR testing programs, or may be reported in through the COVID-19 hotline, 213-740-6291 (if tested through an outside service).
2. **Contact Tracing:** Care providers pay special attention to protecting the privacy and well-being of the individual. These trained interviewers conduct a case interview to find out relevant details of contact that may lead to transmission to others on campus.
3. **Case review meetings:** The interviewer prepares case notes, de-identifying the individual, and shares case notes with a **notifications working group** comprised of medical providers, environmental health and safety experts, legal counsel, and human resources. This group **meets daily at 11 am** to review positive cases from the previous evening's/early morning's lab results. These meetings take place 7 days a week, any time there is a positive case notification that is required.
4. **Supervisors and/or administrative managers** for the relevant departments may be invited to the 11 a.m. case meetings (including weekends and holidays) to help understand the nature of the work environment, potential interactions, shared spaces/equipment, or other information that may help accurately identify risk to others. In the event of case surge, meetings may be replaced by time-sensitive email and phone requests—**lists of close contacts** (including email addresses), times/dates/locations of activities involving the effected individual, should be prepared as completely and quickly as possible. A worksheet is attached for information and planning purposes.
5. **USC Environmental Health and Safety** does a risk assessment of the environmental conditions of indoor interactions to help determine the safest presumption of level of risk.

## Notification Types

**HIGH RISK** notifications may be made by phone, secure message, and email. Unvaccinated individuals (and not fully vaccinated individuals) are instructed to self-quarantine for 14 days. **Vaccinated individuals are strongly recommended to test but are not required to quarantine if they do not have any symptoms** but should follow the **modified quarantine** process as outlined below:

### Instructions for modified quarantine:

**For students:** As long as you have been vaccinated and do not have nor develop any symptoms, you may continue to enter campus and attend classes with the following modified quarantine:

1. At 3-5 days after exposure you should test for COVID-19.
2. You may attend class and other academic activities. You must comply with wearing a mask correctly and consistently.
3. You cannot attend any sporting events, sports-related practices or games, gym, or on-campus/off-campus social events until you receive a negative test result.
4. You should not go to any indoor settings such as bars, restaurants or markets, nor any indoor or outdoor gatherings, until you receive a negative test result.

Once you receive a negative COVID test from a specimen collected 3-5 days after exposure then you are released from the above modified quarantine. After the negative test you should continue to monitor for any symptoms of COVID for 14 days after exposure and if you develop any symptoms you should isolate and contact USC Student Health.

**For Employees:** If you have been vaccinated and do not have any symptoms, you may continue to enter campus. You should get tested 3-5 days after your exposure, even if you don't have symptoms. You should also wear a mask indoors and as directed. You should isolate for 10 days if your test result is positive.

From the case interview, the description of details indicate that the individuals in this category appear to have had close contact exposure (exposure defined as an interaction of a total of fifteen minutes or longer within a 24 hour period), a higher risk interaction — such as sharing meals, not wearing face coverings, spending an extended time together, particularly in enclosed space where physical distancing is not really possible (breakroom, small indoor space, vehicle).

**LOW RISK** notifications are made by email and instructions on how to test are provided. Individuals may continue to work/continue with regular activities. From the case interview, the description of details indicate that the individuals in this category had a confirmed interaction with the positive person, but very brief and with appropriate precautions, such as mask-wearing and distancing.

**GENERAL** notifications inform the community about positive cases on the USC campuses and provide specifics of location and date so members of the community can assess if they were

present and may have had a brief interaction. Beginning August 9, these notifications will be summarized in a daily digest that is shared with the campus community.

**NOTE:** In the event that a positive case is in a location open to the general public, a printed notice will be posted to that physical location.

## **VALUABLE INSIGHT AND INFORMATION**

As partners in the notification process, all supervisors, administrative managers, HR partners, and principal investigators can provide valuable insight and information that can keep our campuses safe. This includes **maintaining accurate lists to send notifications to**, and an accurate accounting of **individuals who are on premise (with email addresses)** for notification purposes.

Classes may proceed as planned for in-person instruction, and facilities, including labs and offices, do not need to be closed unless a higher level of risk is determined by Environmental Health and Safety. The university is currently operating on an elevated cleaning schedule for campus facilities, so closures are not required.

We appreciate your taking the time to become familiar with this process, and if necessary, provide team-centered cooperation in helping curb the transmission of COVID-19 in our campus communities. Please send any questions to the COVID-19 hotline, 213-740-6291, or [covid19@usc.edu](mailto:covid19@usc.edu).

Thank you.