

COVID-19 Contact Tracing Procedure

(Updated 8/16/21 - Replaces all previous versions)

UA System Office policy¹ requires that each university:

- Systematically collect information regarding the presence in UA facilities of persons with COVID-19 or under investigation for COVID-19, regardless of source,
- Inquire of employees, students, and third parties who are or recently were present in UA facilities regarding COVID-19 symptoms/investigation/confirmation,
- Take CDC recommended action such as cleaning facilities and warning affected students/employees and, where significant numbers of people are affected, transmit that information to public health.

The procedure that follows is intended to fulfill the above requirements, and is subject to change in response to changing conditions, policies, and experience.

Information Collection

When a COVID-19 case occurs on campus, it is important that we identify and contact those who may have been in close contact with that individual. In order to gather that information, those who are COVID-positive, a close contact of a COVID-positive person, or are COVID-symptomatic are asked to complete the Employee & Contractor Illness Report Form or the Student Illness Report Form, as applicable. In order to have as much information as possible, each unit or operation should use one or more of the following means to collect information for the purpose of contact tracing.

Public facing and customer service operations (libraries, computer labs, food services, bookstore, Athletics, Outdoor Adventures, Wood Center, etc.)

- Maintain a register of customers, visitors, or patrons including name, email, and phone number; and/or
- Use of a sales management or records management system; and/or
- Require Polar Express key card entry for collecting access information.

Face-to-face academic classes & labs

- Take attendance
- Record students' seating/work position; and/or
- Use assigned seating/work stations.

¹ [2020-04-14 University of Alaska COVID-19 policy guidance Tracking and response](#)

General administration and workplace

- Maintain employee schedule and work records

Reporting COVID-19 status

All UAF affiliates - students, faculty, staff, residents of UAF housing and contractors - who have been in a UAF facility within the last 48 hours are required to report to the UAF contact tracer via an online reporting form if they:

- Are COVID-19-positive
- Have fever, shortness of breath, unexplained or unusual cough that cannot be attributed to something else (such as allergies), shortness of breath, or other symptoms indicative of COVID-19
- Are a close contact of a confirmed COVID-positive person (regardless of vaccination status)
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[Employees and contractors should report COVID-like illness here.](#)

[Students should report COVID-like illness here.](#)

The information gathered will be handled in a responsible manner in order to provide a measure of privacy to employees and students, as is only visible to two people at UAF. The form asks for the following information:

- Nature of COVID-19-related status (positive, close contact, symptomatic);
- Date of first symptoms;
- Last date in a UA facility, and specific movements;
- Last travel on UA business; and
- Close contacts in the 48 hours preceding COVID-19 symptoms with UA affiliates or others while on UA business.

In addition, employees who have been in UAF facilities in the last 48 hours must report to their supervisor if they are COVID-19-positive; have fever, cough, or shortness of breath; or are a close contact who is not fully vaccinated. Supervisors are expected to take immediate action to exclude such employees from the facility.

If a supervisor becomes aware that a contractor or visitor is COVID-19-positive; has COVID-like symptoms (fever, unexplained cough, shortness of breath, etc.); or is a close contact who is not fully vaccinated, they must also be excluded from the facility. Contractors or visitors should report their illness using the [UAF Employee and Contractor COVID Illness Report form](#).

Contact Tracing

We assume that:

- Despite precautions and restrictions, there WILL be asymptomatic COVID-positive people on campus
- There will be local surges of symptomatic cases.

When a case of COVID-like illness or of COVID-19 is confirmed, and contact tracing is necessary, a UAF contact tracer will promptly notify public health² to ascertain if they can respond quickly. If not, UAF will begin contact tracing. The UAF contact tracer may do some preliminary information gathering while waiting for confirmation.

UAF has two contact tracers for all campuses. Contact tracers monitor the online reporting forms and employee tracker for indications of COVID cases. Information collected will be treated with utmost sensitivity and concern for privacy.

Contact tracers will take specific actions for the following groups of affiliates:

For student cases, the contact tracer will:

- Assess compliance with face mask policy and social/physical distancing
- Notify faculty members
- Ascertain close contacts and monitor the illness report form for their submission by close contacts
- Notify close contacts with instructions
- Notify relevant university departments (Residence Life, Athletics, etc.)

For employee cases (including student employees and research faculty), the contact tracer will:

- Determine work location(s)
- Determine compliance with face mask policy and social/physical distancing
- Ascertain close contacts
- Notify close contacts with instructions

For teaching faculty cases, the contact tracer will:

- Identify any in-person classes taught
- Determine compliance with face mask policy and social/physical distancing
- Ascertain close contacts
- Notify close contacts with instructions
- Notify appropriate dean

For contractor/visitor cases, the contact tracer will:

- Determine work location(s)
- Determine compliance with face mask policy and social/physical distancing
- Ascertain close contacts who are UAF personnel
- Notify any UAF close contacts with instructions

² Currently: Ken Jass, RN BSN, Fairbanks Public Health Team Lead (907) 451-1655.

Ascertaining Close Contacts

Contact tracers will ascertain whether any close contacts occurred based on the information provided on the illness reporting form. A close contact is defined as a person who was within six feet of a COVID-19-positive individual for 15 minutes within a 24 hour period. Fully vaccinated individuals can still be considered a close contact, but may have different requirements for quarantine and testing.

CDC Recommended Actions

If a contact tracer is unable to gather sufficient information from a reported case, it will be necessary to initiate public notification. Generally, UAF will not issue broad notifications of cases. Public notifications will be the exception, not the rule.

The lead tracer will make a determination as to warning measures as required to identify other potential close contacts in UAF facilities within the preceding 48 hours. Disinfection will be according to the UAF COVID-19 Cleaning Protocol.³

The lead tracer keep records of the data and compile statistics to be made available to the chancellor, SW, DHSS, etc. Any apparent clusters of cases will be reported to university leadership.

³ [COVID-19 cleaning protocol](#)