



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**

**ROY COOPER** • Governor  
**MANDY COHEN, MD, MPH** • Secretary  
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Division of Public Health

March 20, 2020

To: North Carolina Local Health Departments  
From: Zack Moore, MD, MPH, State Epidemiologist  
Re: Updated Guidance for COVID-19 Mitigation

As you are aware, there is now documented community transmission of covid-19 in North Carolina. Data from here and elsewhere in the U.S. indicate that we are moving into the acceleration phase of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We recognize that local public health departments will not be able to perform contact tracing and follow-up for each individual case and will have to prioritize other urgent work, including managing cases and outbreaks in high-risk settings like healthcare and congregate living facilities. This is consistent with a continued transition from containment to mitigation, as described previously.

In order to best protect the health of our residents and ensure the most efficient use of resources as we move into a period of widespread transmission, we are making the following changes to our guidance regarding investigations of confirmed cases:

- Identification and notification of close contacts to confirmed cases is no longer required. Health departments who are able to continue contact investigations and notifications for all cases can do so at their discretion. As noted previously, DPH is no longer requesting documentation of contact investigations, if conducted.
- DPH is no longer recommending that isolation orders be routinely issued for all confirmed cases. All persons with fever and respiratory symptoms (including those with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19) should isolate themselves until the below conditions are met:
  - At least 7 days since symptom onset

**and**

  - ≥72 hours after symptom resolution (absence of fever without the use of fever-reducing medication and improvement in respiratory symptoms)
- DPH is no longer recommending that quarantine orders be routinely issued for close contacts to confirmed cases. Persons who have had close contact with a person with respiratory illness are encouraged to stay home to the extent possible and monitor themselves for symptoms.

Thank you for your ongoing efforts in the face of this pandemic. Additional guidance is at [www.ncdhhs.gov/coronavirus](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/coronavirus).

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