

Supplement to Protocol for COVID-19 Exposure Management Plan in Institutes of Higher Education: Management of Outbreaks of COVID-19

A targeted public health response to contain COVID-19 exposures at a community-level can help maximize the impact of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (DPH) COVID-19 response.

As trusted community partners, Institutes of Higher Education (IHE) that are experiencing outbreaks can help DPH improve the timeliness and impact of the Public Health response by implementing outbreak control measures that can help to contain an outbreak and prevent further spread of COVID-19.

Educational activities offered by Institutes of Higher Education must be carried out in compliance with all provisions for safe opening of IHEs detailed in the DPH [Reopening Protocols for Institutes of Higher Education](#). The DPH [COVID-19 Protocol for Exposure Management in Institutes of Higher Education](#) outlines additional recommended and required steps for managing exposures to 1, 2, and 3 or more COVID-19 cases at IHE campuses. Further, if an IHE is experiencing an outbreak of COVID-19, it must implement the measures that are described below in this Supplement. This Supplement includes core activities that are recommended to prevent further spread of COVID-19. Additional measures may be recommended or required for sites that are experiencing outbreaks.

An outbreak is defined as follows:

IHE Non-residential Setting: At least 3 laboratory-confirmed cases with symptomatic or asymptomatic COVID-19 infection within a 14-day period in a group* with members who are epidemiologically linked, do not share a household, and are not a close contact of each other outside of the campus.

- * IHE groups include persons that share a common membership (e.g., Greek or other social organization, athletic teams, sports and recreation clubs, academic cohort, workplace on campus). Epidemiological links require the infected persons to have been present at some point in the same setting during the same time period while one or more persons were infectious.

IHE Residential Setting:* At least 3 laboratory-confirmed cases with symptomatic or asymptomatic COVID-19 infection within a 14-day period within the same or multiple dwellings that share a common area.

- * IHE Residential Settings include on- and off-campus residential housing facilities where groups of IHE students and/or employees congregate and/or reside (e.g., on-campus residences, on- or off-campus Greek housing).

This document may be updated as new information and resources become available. Please visit the Public Health COVID-19 website, <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus>, regularly to check for updates and additional resources.

Outbreak Management Measures at IHE

If there is an outbreak of COVID-19 at an IHE, a DPH Outbreak Field Response Team will coordinate with the IHE to develop and implement an outbreak response plan. An Outbreak Investigator will be assigned as a liaison to the IHE and provide guidance, technical assistance, and resources to support the IHE in implementation of the following and any other recommended outbreak response measures. These measures can help to contain the outbreak and protect students, faculty, and staff from COVID-19.

Outbreak Response Planning

- Required:* The IHE must designate a COVID-19 Compliance Task Force that is responsible for establishing and enforcing all COVID-19 safety protocols and ensuring that faculty, staff, and students receive education about COVID-19.
- Required:* The IHE must designate a COVID-19 Compliance Officer to serve as a liaison to DPH until the IHE has been notified that the outbreak has ended.
- Required:* The IHE must ensure that an adequate supply of IHE housing is available to allow students and faculty to safely isolate or quarantine when needed.
- Required:* The IHE must plan for all students and employees who have symptoms consistent with COVID-19 infection or are quarantined because of exposure to cases(s) affiliated with the IHE to have access to testing or to be tested for COVID-19 infection.

Identification of COVID-19 Cases and Close Contacts

- Required:* The IHE must submit to the DPH Outbreak Investigator who is assigned to the IHE, the following Line Lists within 24 hours and submit updates as directed:
 - A Line List that provides information on all individuals who were identified as COVID-19 cases at the IHE Site(s).
 - A Potentially Exposed Line List that provides information on all individuals who could have been potentially exposed (Close Contacts) to COVID-19 cases at the IHE Site(s).

If the Line Lists cannot be submitted within the specified timeline, the IHE must communicate immediately with the DPH Outbreak Investigator regarding a plan for submission. The IHE must submit this information via the [COVID-19 Case and Contact Line List for the Educational Sector](#). An exception to use a locally formatted line list may be permitted if all required data elements are included and approved for use by the DPH Outbreak Field Response Team.

Notifications and Exclusions

- Required:* The IHE must instruct COVID-19 cases that they must follow the Los Angeles County Public Health [Emergency Isolation Order](#) and [Home Isolation Instructions for COVID-19](#).
- Required:* The IHE must notify all individuals who are identified as close contacts to a COVID-19 case of their possible exposure to COVID-19 at the IHE Site(s) and instruct them to follow the Los Angeles County Public Health [Emergency Quarantine Order](#) and [Home Quarantine Instructions for COVID-19](#).

An Exposure Notification letter template is available at: [COVID-19 Template Notification Letters for Education Settings](#). The notification of exposure should include the following messages:

- Students and employees with an exposure to an IHE-affiliated case should be tested for COVID-19, whether or not they have symptoms, and inform the IHE of test results. Results from testing will determine the extent of disease spread associated with the IHE and serve as a basis for further control measures. Testing resources include: Employee Health Services or Occupational Health Services, Student Health Center, Personal Healthcare Providers, and Community Testing Sites: covid19.lacounty.gov/testing. Individuals who need assistance finding a medical provider can call the LA County Information line 2-1-1, which is available 24/7.
 - Exposed students and employees should quarantine for 14 days since the date of last exposure to the case while infectious, even if they receive a negative test result during their quarantine period. A person who tests negative may subsequently develop disease, with or without symptoms, if tested during the incubation period (i.e. time period between exposure and disease onset). See [Home Quarantine Guidance for COVID-19](#).
 - The IHE will assist with identifying housing for students and faculty to safely isolate or quarantine when needed.
 - DPH will contact cases and exposed students and employees directly through the DPH Case and Contact Investigation Program to collect additional information and issue the Los Angeles County Public Health [Emergency Isolation Order](#) or [Emergency Quarantine Order](#) as appropriate.
- Required:* The IHE will determine whether additional notification is needed to inform the wider campus community about the exposure and precautions being taken to prevent spread of COVID-19. A general notification letter template is available at [COVID-19 Template Notification Letters for Education Settings](#). If identities of close contacts are not known or close contacts cannot be reached, the IHE must work with DPH to develop and release a public notification. Outbreak counts and locations will also be publicly posted without personal identifiers on the [DPH website](#) until the outbreak is resolved.
- Required:* The IHE must exclude cases and close contacts to cases from working, receiving services, or participating in any activities at the IHE-affiliated Site(s), with the exception of individuals who live in on-campus or off-campus housing operated by the IHE, and are self-isolated or self-quarantined onsite, until they meet the criteria for release from [self-isolation](#) or [self-quarantine](#), respectively.
- Required:* The IHE must work with DPH to develop a plan to support rapid diagnostic testing of individuals exposed at the IHE Site(s) and provide referrals to available resources for testing (e.g., as applicable, Employee/Occupational Health, Student Health Services, personal healthcare provider, commercial testing services, and/or community testing sites: covid19.lacounty.gov/testing).
- Required:* If the IHE is aware of any COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths among individuals who could have been potentially exposed at the IHE-affiliated Site(s), the IHE must report them to the DPH Outbreak Investigator who is assigned to the IHE.

Additional Outbreak Control Measures

- Required:* The IHE must follow Public Health cleaning and disinfection guidance, which includes providing a thorough cleaning and disinfection of equipment, the educational/work environment, and frequently touched surfaces and objects following a possible COVID-19

exposure and increasing routine cleaning and disinfection with an approved cleaning agent, listed on the [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)-approved list “N”](#), per product instructions. When EPA-approved disinfectants are not available, alternative disinfectants can be used (for example, 1/3 cup of bleach added to 1 gallon of water, or 70% alcohol solutions). Do not mix bleach or other cleaning and disinfection products together – this causes toxic fumes that may be very dangerous to breathe.

- ☑ *Required:* The IHE must provide all employees who have contact with students, clients, the public or other employees at the IHE-affiliated Site(s), at no cost, a cloth face covering to be worn at the Site(s) unless not recommended due to age or underlying cognitive or medical conditions. The IHE must provide a medical grade mask to any employee who cares for sick students or who has close contact with any student with a medical condition that precludes the student’s use of a cloth face covering.
- ☑ *Required:* The IHE must follow source control recommendations described in [Guidance for Face Coverings](#) and [Protocols for Institutes of Higher Education](#). To address asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic transmission, the IHE must require all individuals entering and within the IHE-affiliated Site(s) to wear a cloth face covering over both their nose and mouth upon entry to and when in shared areas, walkways, or where people may congregate, unless not recommended due to age or underlying cognitive or medical conditions.
- ☑ *Required:* The IHE must institute all social (physical) distancing measures in the current County of Los Angeles [Protocols for Institutes of Higher Education](#). This includes adherence to required social (physical) distancing in instances in which a cloth face covering is not required (e.g., when eating or drinking).
- ☑ *Required:* The IHE must conduct Entry Screenings, per the DPH [Entry Screening Guide](#). Checks must include questions concerning [symptoms consistent with COVID-19](#) and whether the individual has had contact with a COVID-19 case in the last 14 days. A temperature check should also be done prior to entering the Site. These checks can be done remotely or in-person upon the individual’s arrival. Visitors and staff with COVID-19 symptoms or who screen positive, as defined in the [Entry Screening Guide](#) may not enter the Site. Emergency Medical Services workers responding to an urgent medical need are exempt from screening.
- ☑ *Required:* Visitors to the IHE-affiliated Site(s) are prohibited, except for those that are essential to the IHE’s mission. Law Enforcement Personnel (Sheriff and Police), Fire, Medical, Emergency, or government employees who are responding to, working at, or inspecting the facility can access the Site(s). Entry screening and cloth face coverings are required for essential visitors.
- ☑ *Required:* The IHE must discontinue all non-essential in-person group activities at the IHE-affiliated Site(s) during the outbreak.

Additional Outbreak Control Measures for Congregate Housing Facilities Operated by the IHE

- ☑ *Required:* If the IHE operates on-campus or off-campus congregate housing, it must establish an area to isolate and quarantine students and personnel who reside in IHE-affiliated housing and cannot safely isolate or quarantine in this housing or at another site. A private room with a private bathroom that is physically separate from other students and personnel must be available to quarantine and isolate these individuals.
- ☑ *Required:* If directed by Public Health, the IHE must close the congregate housing site that is

experiencing an outbreak to new admissions.

- ☑ *Required:* The IHE must prohibit all visitors to the congregate housing site that is experiencing an outbreak, except for essential visitors such as personal care attendants for residents with disabilities or when legally required or for compassionate care situations (e.g., end of life). The IHE must conduct entry screening for essential visitors to this site, require them to wear a cloth face covering or mask, and limit their access to only the resident's room or a designated location.
- ☑ *Required:* Entry screenings must be conducted before employees, students, and others may enter the congregate housing site that is experiencing an outbreak. Checks must include questions concerning [symptoms consistent with COVID-19](#) and whether the individual has had contact with a COVID-19 case in the last 14 days. A temperature check should also be done prior to entering the Site. These checks can be done remotely or in-person upon the individual's arrival. Visitors and staff with COVID-19 symptoms or who screen positive, as defined in the [Entry Screening Guide](#) may not enter the Site. Emergency Medical Services workers responding to an urgent medical need are exempt from screening.
- ☑ *Required:* The IHE must follow source control recommendations described in [Guidance for Face Coverings](#) and [Protocols for Institutes of Higher Education](#) at congregate housing sites experiencing an outbreak. To address asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic transmission, the IHE must require all individuals entering and within the congregate housing site to wear a cloth face covering over both their nose and mouth upon entry to and when in shared areas, walkways, or where people may congregate, unless not recommended due to age or underlying cognitive or medical conditions. Residents are not required wear this face covering when in their own personal living space.
- ☑ *Required:* The IHE must follow Public Health cleaning and disinfection guidance for the congregate housing site experiencing the outbreak, which includes providing a thorough cleaning and disinfection of restrooms, common spaces, frequently touched surfaces and objects, and sleeping areas, following a possible COVID-19 exposure and increasing routine cleaning and disinfection of these spaces with an approved cleaning agent, listed on the [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)-approved list "N"](#), per product instructions. When EPA-approved disinfectants are not available, alternative disinfectants can be used (for example, 1/3 cup of bleach added to 1 gallon of water, or 70% alcohol solutions). Do not mix bleach or other cleaning and disinfection products together – this causes toxic fumes that may be very dangerous to breathe.
- ☑ *Required:* The IHE must discontinue all non-essential in-person group activities at the congregate housing site experiencing an outbreak.
- ☑ *Required:* The IHE must prohibit social gatherings of people who are not part of a single household or living unit at the congregate housing site experiencing an outbreak.

For additional COVID-19 resources for Institutes of Higher Education, please visit:
<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/reopening-la.htm#highereducation>