

A Comparison Between Case Investigation and Contact Tracing/Monitoring

	Case investigation	Contact Tracing/Monitoring
Who does it	Conducted by state or local health department employees with a clinical background (primarily BCHS nurses for DOH)	Various partner organizations are engaged in the process, including organizations directly engaged by PADOH, healthcare facilities, and employers
Who do they engage with	Confirmed positive COVID cases who have a positive test result in NEDSS	Close contacts of cases who are identified during the case investigation process
What happens	<p>The investigator contacts a confirmed case and fills out a questionnaire to identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk factors and where the person may have been exposed • Demographic and clinical information about the disease status of the individual • Who were the close contacts of the case – this information is shared with the contact tracers <p>Provide isolation guidance and written isolation order (or verbal order) to ensure that positive cases do not expose others. The isolation order instructs the case to stay home for a minimum of 10 days.</p>	<p>The contact tracer receives close contact data from case investigators and calls them in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform the contact of their status and provide them with a quarantine letter (or verbal quarantine order) • Enroll them in a monitoring system, such as SaraAlert, which will automatically check in with individuals in quarantine to assess their status • Manually follow up with individual who decline enrollment in SaraAlert or other automated systems <p>Close contacts are instructed to quarantine for 14 days after their last exposure to the known case. If the case is a household member of the contact, then that quarantine period could be as long as 24 days or more.</p>
What systems are used	<p>Case investigators put all data into NEDSS, the state’s disease surveillance system; this is what allows the daily case information reports to be run</p> <p>Various data systems are used to provide contact investigators with the contact information collected during the case investigation</p>	<p>SaraAlert is used to automatically check in with individuals who are currently in quarantine.</p> <p>Various data systems are used to provide contact investigators with the contact information collected during the case investigation</p>
When does this happen	Case investigations typically happen within 24 hours of a positive test result being entered into NEDSS by a laboratory. It is typically a one-time conversation, although monitoring of isolation compliance may occur.	Contact tracing typically begins within 24 hours of identification of contacts. Contacts are typically followed up with over a 14-day period (since their time of exposure)

Case Investigation and Contact Tracing/Monitoring Process Diagram (Generic)

