

## COVID-19

# Contact Tracing

### What is contact tracing?

Lambton Public Health and other health services use contact tracing to find people who may have been exposed to an infectious disease.

Currently, Lambton Public Health is using the contact tracing process to understand and monitor how COVID-19 is spreading.

There are two types of 'contacts':

- close contacts
- transient contacts

Lambton Public Health (LPH) offers advice to both of these contact types on what they need to do.

### How does it work?

The identification of a lab confirmed case of COVID-19 triggers an investigation by Public Health in order to assess potential exposures prior to symptom onset, identify close contacts, and to evaluate potential transmission among close contacts.

The contract tracing process begins by identifying people who may have been in close contact with a person infected with COVID-19.

- Close contacts are notified by Lambton Public Health.
- They explain to the contact that they may have been exposed to COVID 19 because of contact with a confirmed infected individual.
- This person is informed to **self-isolate** to reduce further spread.

All close contacts of a positive COVID-19 case are advised to immediately self-isolate for a period of 14 days from last exposure to the case. They are informed of how to contact our office if they develop symptoms or have other questions.

The purpose of self-isolation is to prevent the risk of spread in the event a contact becomes infected and prior to recognizing they are infectious.

### Why do it?

The results of the investigation assist in preventing further transmission and improve knowledge about the epidemiology of COVID-19 in the community.

Contact tracing also supports active monitoring of the situation as part of a co-ordinated strategy for infectious disease management.

### Lambton Public Health's Role

Confirmed and suspected cases of COVID-19 are now reportable to LPH under [Ontario's Health Protection and Promotion Act \(HPPA\)](#).

- LPH is notified when lab results confirm a Lambton County resident has the COVID-19 infection.
- Each health unit performs contact tracing for individuals in their own region.

The process takes:

- time
- patience; and
- may need multiple rounds of inquiry

Lambton Public Health directly notifies identified contacts, whenever possible.

### Why doesn't LPH publically disclose all details about cases and contacts?

- Personal health information laws protect an individual's privacy.

LPH does not disclose personal health information of individuals, including their demographic details. We will only discuss investigations in overall terms using de-identified information.