



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Health and Human Services  
Department of Public Health  
250 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108-4619

CHARLES D. BAKER  
Governor

KARYN E. POLITO  
Lieutenant Governor

MARYLOU SUDDERS  
Secretary

MONICA BHAREL, MD, MPH  
Commissioner

Tel: 617-624-6000  
[www.mass.gov/dph](http://www.mass.gov/dph)

## Contact Tracing for Higher Education and Boarding Schools FAQs #1

This FAQ #1 is the first in a series to specifically address the important initial questions raised from higher education (colleges and universities) and boarding schools and Local Public Health (LPH) as school has begun and we collectively continue to address and mitigate COVID-19 with testing, case investigation, contact tracing, and isolation and quarantine monitoring.

**For questions or more information**, please contact:

[Sarah.C.Welch@mass.gov](mailto:Sarah.C.Welch@mass.gov)

### Test Reporting

#### **We are a school that will not be doing testing. How will Case Investigation and Contact Tracing work in this situation?**

If a school is not doing testing, then the process will be the same as it is now for any tests and subsequent contact tracing in the community. Laboratories must report all test results (positive and negative) to the Department of Public Health (DPH), where they are then accessible in the MAVEN database by the appropriate Local Public Health (LPH) jurisdiction based on the individual's local residential address on the test order. Positive cases will be investigated and managed through regular processes, whether by LPH or assigned to the Community Tracing Collaborative (CTC). Should case investigation reveal a relationship between a positive case and a school, the case will be linked in MAVEN to the relevant school for tracking and monitoring purposes. Where appropriate, the entity responsible for that school – LPH or CTC – would immediately alert the school of the positive case.

#### **Where a school is either the facility/provider ordering the test, or the lab performing the test, what is the obligation of the school to notify Local Public Health (LPH) and/or DPH of the results of the test?**

Institutions that are providing testing for their students, faculty or staff MUST ensure that every test result is reported to the Department of Public Health, regardless of test results, within 24 hours of test completion. They shall report directly to the Department within 24 hours, preferably through secure electronic laboratory reporting mechanisms. If an electronic reporting mechanism does not exist or cannot be implemented, an alternative reporting method can be used but must be approved by the Department. LPH is notified of positive test results on cases within their jurisdiction via MAVEN.

#### **What information does DPH require to ensure on-campus testing is accurately reported to DPH?**

Those schools where the school is the facility/provider ordering the test or the laboratory performing testing will be instructed to document on the test order that they are the ordering facility and to use the local address for students so the results will be sent to MAVEN. A laboratory contact must be included

with each report in addition to the test results, source of specimen, date of specimen collection, case's full name, date of birth, sex, race and ethnicity, occupation, disability status, preferred language, local address, telephone number, and name of the ordering health care provider. The lab test must include the individual's local address information (and not a school's PO box or main address for example), for accurate routing of school cases. This demographic information must be consistent every time a test is ordered to prevent duplicate persons being created in MAVEN. This will also ensure that the LPH of residence has full visibility into cases in their jurisdiction. All schools that are processing tests in their own labs must provide DPH with their lab's CLIA number.

**Do all Broad Institute test results go to DPH?**

All laboratories, including the Broad Institute, performing testing must send test results to both the ordering provider and to DPH via MAVEN.

**Do colleges and universities need to send separate reports of cases and contacts to LPH and DPH? Will reporting to LPH suffice?**

All individual school communication related to COVID-19 should be with their LPH, with the exception of those schools for whom the CTC is prime, in which case communication will be directly with the CTC. The CTC provides regular reports both in the MAVEN system and directly to LPH. Higher Ed will either provide relevant information directly to LPH or will be granted access to MAVEN to manage cases and contacts as appropriate.

**Managing Across Jurisdictions**

**How are test results associated with the correct school and routed to the correct LPH and/or DPH?**

When the school is the facility/provider ordering the test or the laboratory performing testing, the school must document on the test order that they are the ordering facility and to use a local address for students so the results will be sent to MAVEN. This will enable the MAVEN events to be linked to the school and visible to the LPH in the jurisdiction where the individual resides. For tests that have not been ordered by the school, students must include their local address on the test order, to help accelerate the process of linking the result to the school and correctly triaging to the appropriate LPH. In the event that the student traveled to Massachusetts recently and may have exposed out of state contacts, official notification will be made via DPH and follow up response will be coordinated as appropriate.

**How are cases coordinated between MA jurisdictions and across state lines?**

Any tests that are ordered by a school case will be automatically linked to the school in MAVEN and investigated and managed by the entity assigned to that school (LPH for the jurisdiction corresponding to the address listed on the test order, the school, or the CTC). If the student is tested outside of a school program, their case will be managed by the jurisdiction based on the individual's address on the test order. Should case investigation reveal a relationship between a positive case and a school, the case will be linked to the relevant school. The entity responsible for that school – LPH or CTC – would immediately alert the school of the positive case, if appropriate. If a student returns home after case investigation has already begun, the entity responsible for monitoring the case through quarantine or isolation, as applicable, will communicate with the student's home jurisdiction and determine who will be responsible for ongoing monitoring. If the individual resides out of state, official notification will be made via DPH and follow up response will be coordinated as appropriate.

### **How will off-campus students and faculty/staff be managed? Which jurisdiction has responsibility for Case Investigation and Contact Tracing?**

In the event that the **CTC or the school is Prime**, all cases affiliated with a school (students, faculty, employees) will be investigated by the entity that is doing Case Investigation for the school (school or CTC), regardless of the case's residential address. School affiliation is determined based upon the ordering facility name on the test if the school is the ordering facility. Note that the existing process for LPH to request a case back from the CTC applies. Schools with MAVEN access can see all cases related to their school community in MAVEN, regardless of the local residential address of the individual.

In the event that **LPH is Prime**, all cases will be assigned to the LPH jurisdiction based on local residential address, regardless of university affiliation and manually linked to the university or college when that linkage is reported to public health or revealed via the contact tracing process. It is critical that the lab test includes the individual's complete demographic and local address information for accurate routing. This needs to be the same every time a test is ordered in order to prevent duplicate persons created in MAVEN. As necessary, the LPH will leverage the existing mechanism in MAVEN that allows events to be shared between jurisdictions. DPH is developing reports to give primary LPH jurisdictions visibility into overall activity at schools with campuses located in their jurisdiction.

## **CTC**

### **Will LPH be able to use the CTC for surge or weekend assistance if LPH is prime?**

Yes. The CTC will be available to provide support for case investigation and monitoring in the event of a surge this fall to all schools and LPH jurisdictions, regardless of the Model selected. **Note that the process to share higher ed cases with the CTC is different** from the process to share other cases, as follows:

- LPH will manually share the case in MAVEN with the CTC using the CTC-Case Investigators group
- Case will then appear in the CTC's MAVEN workflow queue
- CTC will do Case Investigation in MAVEN. CTC will then set "COVID Assistance Requested" variable to yes for ongoing monitoring in the CRM.

For additional information regarding using the CTC in a surge scenario, refer to [this summary](#) (on page 9). If a Model D school requires surge assistance, they should first be in touch with their LPH who may then request assistance from the CTC as appropriate.

### **What happens if LPH is prime but wants to switch to CTC prime given capacity challenges?**

In the event that a school needs to switch to CTC prime, we ask that the LPH contact Jill Finnerty ([jfinnerty@covid19.pih.org](mailto:jfinnerty@covid19.pih.org)) to initiate the transition.

### **How quickly does CTC typically reach out to the contacts of positive cases?**

The vast majority of cases and contacts are reached out to within 24 hours of receipt of a positive case, with typical response times within a few hours.

## **MAVEN**

### **Will schools be allowed to access MAVEN?**

Model D requires schools to have MAVEN access. MAVEN access is strongly encouraged for Model C schools conducting case investigation. In order to obtain access to MAVEN, the school's identified representative must complete the required trainings described below, execute the MAVEN user agreement, and be approved by LPH. Please note MODEL D and C schools will only have access to

MAVEN COVID events within their school's populations as such access is necessary to effectuate contact tracing and follow up.

**What training will be provided to schools?**

MAVEN training is required prior to school users receiving access to the tool. In addition, DPH has made available COVID-19-specific training appropriate for all schools, regardless of Model. Note that DPH trainings are specific to the Commonwealth; the Johns Hopkins online Contact Tracing course is not an acceptable substitute for this training. If any individuals were not able to attend the live classes provided by DPH in August (or those who would like to repeat the training), please refer to the **self-paced MAVEN training** [here](#). Please contact Sarah Welch for additional information (Sarah.C.Welch@mass.gov).

**How will schools not using MAVEN share case investigation and contact information with LPH or the CTC?**

MAVEN access is strongly encouraged if approved by LPH. Schools that will not have MAVEN access may provide information to the LPH or CTC via an electronic form; instructions and training for this alternate data entry tool will be provided upon request by DPH. Please contact Sarah Welch for additional information (Sarah.C.Welch@mass.gov).

**Isolation and Quarantine Supports**

**Will campuses not planning to reopen housing, with a limited on-campus presence, be expected to house students who test positive for COVID while isolating?**

It is the expectation that schools will provide isolation/quarantine facilities and supports for all residential students. Non-residential schools should reach out to their LPH to discuss options. The CTC, through its Care Resource Coordinator (CRC) program, may also be available to connect individuals with local resources.

**Our school is non-residential and most of our students live with roommates, and sometimes roommates are not affiliated with our school. What assistance will the state give to help students to isolate or quarantine if they live in off-campus, close-quarters housing?**

It is the expectation that schools will provide isolation/quarantine facilities and supports for all residential students. Non-residential schools should reach out to their LPH to discuss options. The CTC, through its Care Resource Coordinator (CRC) program, may also be available to connect individuals with local resources.

**What should a school do if they are aware of a community member who is a positive case or close contact and has violated isolation or quarantine protocols?**

In the event that a school becomes aware of a community member who is a positive case or close contact and has violated isolation or quarantine protocols, they should immediately notify LPH, which has the legal authority to issue and enforce isolation and quarantine orders.