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Contact Tracer COVID-19 Response Job Description Template

Introduction:

Case investigation and contact tracing is the process of working with a person (patient) who has been diagnosed with an infectious disease to identify and provide support to people (contacts) who may have been infected through close contact with the patient. This process is a core disease control measure that has been employed by health department personnel for decades and is a key strategy for preventing the spread of COVID-19. Depending on the agency or jurisdiction, the case investigation and contact tracing roles may be carried out by separate cadres of personnel. **The Contact Tracer position focuses on activities involving people who may have been exposed to the virus, through close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19.**

Position Summary:

A Contact Tracer is a non-licensed public health professional providing support to a health department in the fight against COVID-19. The contact tracer is responsible for reaching out to people (contacts) who have been exposed to COVID-19 and providing health education and guidance to interrupt ongoing disease transmission. Dialogue with contacts will be guided by standard protocols to obtain any symptom history and other relevant health information, provide instructions for self-quarantine, and make appropriate referrals to testing, clinical services, and other essential support services. This position will require prioritization, prompt action, and attention to detail in documentation and data management as multiple investigations will be conducted simultaneously. Contact tracers are required to follow all designated scripts and comply with policies and procedures provided by the health department regarding confidentiality and data security for the handling of sensitive client information and protected health information.

Essential Functions:

- Initiate prompt communication with people exposed to COVID-19 (contacts) through text, phone calls, email, and other communication platforms as necessary. Every effort should be made to communicate with the contact telephone or video conference instead of in-person. For in-person interviews, guidance on recommended infection prevention and control practices at a home or non-home residential setting can be found on [CDC's Interim Infection Control Guidance for Public Health Personnel](#).
- Employ dynamic communication and interpersonal skills, cultural competency/sensitivity, tactful language, and empathetic interviewing skills to build rapport and maintain trust with patients of varied backgrounds.
- Verify the contact's identity during initial communications and prior to disclosing confidential information. Assure confidentiality and carry out efforts to locate and communicate with clients in a manner that preserves the confidentiality and privacy of all involved.
- Notify the contact of their exposure to COVID-19, following a script or guidance to provide COVID-19 health education. Conduct notification of exposure in a manner that maintains the confidentiality of the patient (or person who was diagnosed with COVID-19) and ensures that the identity of the patient is NOT disclosed.



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- Obtain and document relevant information, including contact demographics, underlying medical conditions, and other risk factors.
- Provide approved information and guidance on quarantine procedures and what to do if symptoms develop. Coordinate referrals for testing, healthcare, and other supportive services, as needed, per local protocols.
- Assess contact's ability to safely and effectively quarantine at home, with adequate water, food, and other necessities. Identify barriers to necessary interventions and facilitate appropriate referrals, per local protocols. Collaborate with key service providers to transfer client information and ensure expedited initiation of appropriate medical or social support services, per local protocols.
- Conduct daily check-ins to assess signs/symptoms via locally designated method. Facilitate referrals for testing and medical evaluation for clients who become symptomatic.
- Utilize a computer, tablet, and/or cell phone with appropriate access to required applications, databases, and/or web-based platforms, daily. Document pertinent information in COVID-19 contact tracing forms, and conduct data entry into health department data/surveillance systems while adhering to protocols for completeness, timeliness, and frequency.
- Collaborate and coordinate with a team of public health professionals (e.g., case investigators, surveillance coordinators, surveillance triage staff, care resource coordinators, epidemiologists) to efficiently complete contact notification and monitoring assignments. Inform the team and supervisor when attempts to communicate with a contact are unsuccessful. Elevate complex situations to supervisor for further guidance.

- Participate in requisite trainings, regular program meetings and quality monitoring improvement activities in order to ensure and enhance the quality of contact notification activities and program outcomes.
- Maintain patient confidentiality and ensure that all information is collected in concordance with local data privacy and confidentiality standards.

Work Environment and Physical Requirements

The position will require responding to public health emergencies with rapid turnaround times for communication, initiation and completion of assignments. The position will require daily use of a computer, telephone or cell phone, and access to a secure internet connection. This position may require moderate physical effort including lifting materials and equipment of less than 50 pounds and involves viewing a computer screen 50 to 75 percent of the time. The position may require both onsite and telework activities, while complying with all requirements for client confidentiality, records, and data security. The position may require working non-standard hours (i.e., evenings, weekends). The position may require some travel and occasional participation in off-site functions.

Required Qualifications:

- Strong verbal and written communication skills, including active listening, emotional intelligence
- Ability to interact in a non-judgmental manner with culturally diverse populations and persons experiencing a wide range of social conditions
- Critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and the ability to use sound judgment in responding to client issues and concerns
- Ability to read and write in English
- Ability to adapt to changing environments and receive constructive feedback

- Ability to use discretion, maintain confidentiality and ethical conduct
- Ability to work effectively with all levels of staff, establishing and maintaining collaborative professional relationships
- Strong time management skills (organization, prioritization, multitasking)
- Ability to work independently and as part of a multidisciplinary team
- Proficiency with use of computers (desktop, laptop, tablet)
- Proficiency with MS Office 365 (i.e., Outlook, Word)
- Proficiency with use of mobile devices (smartphones, mobile apps)

Preferred Qualifications:

- Experience conducting telephone-based or in-person interview, data collection and data entry are preferred
- Experience with health education, community outreach, linkage to care, social services, or other public health services.
- Bilingual skills —fluency in the primary language(s) of the geographic area and communities assigned to support

Minimum Educational Qualifications

- High school diploma or General Education Development (GED) equivalent with up to two years of applicable community experience.

Preferred Educational Qualifications

- Associate degree or equivalent with up to one year of applicable community experience
- Bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited college or university, with no experience.