



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Department of Health Offers Update On COVID-19 Investigations, Contact Tracing, Monitoring Efforts

Harrisburg, PA - The Department of Health (DOH) today shared a weekly update on Pennsylvania's COVID-19 case investigation and contact tracing data, encouraging Pennsylvanians to download the [COVID Alert PA app](#), as more than 857,000 have already done, to aid in contact tracing efforts.

"As we report thousands of cases each day, we continue to practice our proven public health practices such as case investigations and contact tracing," Acting Secretary of Health Alison Beam said.

Here's how the process works:

A person with a positive COVID-19 result is contacted by a case investigator – a public health professional – to gather information and offer guidance. For the week ending March 20, public health professionals completed 6,620 case investigations. This equates to 32 percent of positive cases reported for the week.

Contact tracers take the case investigator reports and reach out to contacts identified in the reports. A total of 200 contact tracers reached out to individuals to perform digital case investigations through the [Connect & Protect Form](#). During this reporting week, there were 6,118 calls to reach 65 percent, or 3,995 individuals, successfully. Of the 3,312 that were sent forms, 44 percent, or 1,446 were returned.

Since the implementation of the Connect & Protect form on December 21, 2020 through March 20, the department has received 16,986 completed forms.

With the close contacts collected during the case investigation, 1,538 contact tracers worked to perform contact tracing. Between March 14 and March 20 there were:

- 6,001 contacts have been processed for areas where PA DOH has jurisdiction;
- 4,012, people, or 67 percent of the total contacts identified, have been effectively reached to communicate their quarantine status and offer ongoing symptom monitoring;
- 1,251 people, or about 21 percent of the total contacts, were not reached; and
- 158 were still in the process of being contacted.

How you can help:

- **Answer the call, then fill out the Connect & Protect form.** A call from a case investigator will come in from a caller named, “PA Dept. of Health,” so don’t be afraid to answer the call. The caller is a health profession who will provide you with valuable information and help you keep someone else from also contracting COVID-19.
- **Download the COVID-19 app.** Since the Department of Health launched [COVID Alert PA](#) on September 22, the department has made updates to allow 13- through 17-year-old residents with parental consent to download the app and four new languages. This app is interoperable with [22 other states](#) that also utilize the same notification exposure app technology.

You can find more information on the state’s contact tracing efforts at the Department of Health’s website [here](#).

While vaccine supply from the federal government remains limited, the Department of Health is working to ensure the vaccine is provided in a way that is ethical, equitable and efficient.

- The [Your Turn](#) tool provides a way to register to be alerted when it’s your turn to be vaccinated.
- A [commonwealth COVID-19 vaccination guide](#) explains the current process for getting one. Pennsylvanians with questions about the vaccination process can call the Department of Health hotline at 1-877-724-3258.
- [Vaccine provider map](#) to find a COVID-19 vaccine provider near you.
- All of the locations that received vaccine and how much they have received can be found on the [COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution webpage](#).
- [Vaccine dashboard data](#) can also be found on the website to find more information on the doses administered and showcase demographic information.
- Pennsylvanians can provide feedback on the [Pennsylvania COVID-19 Interim Vaccination Plan](#) by clicking on the Plan Feedback Form square under Popular Vaccine Topics [here](#).

Frequently asked questions can be found [here](#).