



Press Release

Macon County Public Health's Most Frequently Asked Questions about COVID-19

Question 1- When does Macon County Public Health release the name of a workplace, educational, and other community settings?

Macon County Public Health will publicly report and name all clusters of COVID-19 cases identified at a workplace, educational, and community setting in Macon County to protect the public's health. NC DHHS defines clusters of COVID-19 cases in workplace, educational, and other community settings as:

- A minimum of 5 cases with illness onsets or initial positive results within a 14-day period AND
- Plausible linkage between cases;

where cases were present in the same setting during the same time-period (e.g., same shift, same classroom, same physical work area); that the timing fits with likely timing of exposure; and that there is no other more likely source of exposure for identified cases (e.g., household or close contact to a confirmed case in another setting).

Question 2 - What are considered a workplace, educational, or community setting?

- Occupational settings are as followed:
 - Food processing plants
 - Production facilities
 - Distributions facilities
 - Factories
 - Construction sites
 - Retail settings
 - Office buildings
- Educational settings are as followed:
 - Childcare facilities
 - Schools
 - Colleges or universities
- Other Community settings are as followed:
 - Religious gatherings
 - Camps
 - Other large gathering/events

Question 2- How do I get tested in Macon County?

Symptoms for COVID-19 are fever, cough, other lower respiratory illness (shortness of breath). If you believe that you may have COVID-19, please call the Health Department at 828-349-2517. The call center is open Monday through Friday from 8:00am – 5:00pm, until further notice.

Question 3- Does MCPH have antibody tests?

No. At this time MCPH does not offer this service due questionable reliability of currently available tests. The FDA states the antibody tests may not detect COVID-19 if it is in the early stages. Studies are still being conducted to better understand antibody tests. To learn more about the effectiveness of antibody tests, please visit: <https://www.fda.gov>.

Question 4- How will I know if I have been in close contact with a person with COVID-19?

Macon County Public Health is actively contact tracing all contacts of known COVID-19 cases. If Macon County Public Health believes that a person has likely been exposed with COVID-19, they will be contacted by our Communicable Disease staff to set up an appointment to get tested for the virus. In the event MCPH is not confident that all close contacts can be reached, a public announcement will be made.

Question 5- How can I prevent getting COVID-19?

Practice the 3 W's WEAR, WASH, WAIT. WEAR a face mask, WASH your hands or use hand sanitizer, and WAIT 6-feet apart. The entire state of North Carolina is under a "Safer at Home" executive order, currently under phase two. Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19; however, anyone of any age can become infected with this illness. The public can monitor the different phases of re-opening and learn more about the restrictions at <https://covid19.ncdhs.gov/guidance>.

MCPH regularly updates our Facebook page with accurate and current information regarding COVID-19; we encourage the public to check our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/MaconPublicHealth for up-to-date information which includes our press releases.

It is important to make sure the information you are getting about COVID-19 is coming directly from reliable sources. For more information, please visit the CDC's website at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus and NCDHHS' website at www.ncdhhs.gov/coronavirus, which also includes future positive COVID-19 test results in North Carolina.

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