

How to Identify and Report an Outbreak of COVID-19

Pursuant to Section [32.1-37](#) of the *Code of Virginia*, schools, services or facilities licensed or operated by an agency of the Commonwealth, and summer camps as defined in Section 35.1-1 are required to report disease outbreaks to their local health department immediately.

An [outbreak of COVID-19](#) is defined as **three or more COVID-19 cases within 14 days**, who are epidemiologically linked, do not share a household. Schools and daycares should also report any clusters of cases comprising greater than 10% of a larger exposure group (e.g. entire school or grade).

Best practices for identifying an outbreak:

- I. Request that families report positive tests or diagnoses of COVID-19 to a designated point person at the school or daycare.
- II. Document case information using the provided template line lists, including specific symptoms.
- III. Maintain the line list for 14 days following the first exposure onsite. Note: People with COVID-19 are infectious beginning: a) 48 hours prior to symptom onset (if symptomatic), OR b) 48 hours prior to their first positive COVID-19 test (if asymptomatic).
- IV. **If** three or more associated cases are reported within a 14-day period, follow these steps:
 - a. Report the outbreak to AHD using the [COVID-19 Outbreak Reporting Form](#).
 - b. Provide an email address after you submit the online form to receive a confirmation email. Keep the confirmation email and line list for your internal records.
 - c. If additional cases are reported, add them to the same line list and report the additions to AHD.

In response to an outbreak report, AHD may respond with the following:

1. Investigation measures including interview(s) with a designated point person at the facility regarding prevention measures, enrollment and staffing, testing, reported symptoms, and illness timelines.
2. Site visit(s) to evaluate prevention and mitigation strategies at the facility.
3. Public health testing to confirm the presence of an outbreak of COVID-19.
4. Reporting outbreaks to Virginia Department of Health.
5. Recommending event-specific mitigation measures, especially in the case of uncontrolled spread.