



DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH- Linda Beers, MPH

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***COVID-19 cases in Lake Placid area***

Three new cases of COVID-19 in the Lake Placid area have recently been reported to the Essex County Health Department (ECHD). All three cases work in the hotel/restaurant/tourism industry in the Lake Placid area and have identified several workplace, household, and/or personal contacts. ECHD has completed case investigation and contact tracing activities for all 3 cases, and issued Health Orders of Isolation for each. All contacts identified as a result of case investigations have been notified that they were exposed to someone who tested positive for COVID-19. These contacts have been asked to quarantine for 14 days from their date of last exposure and will receive Health Orders of Quarantine from the health department.

“We realize that this information is concerning to an area that attracts both local and out-of-state visitors year round,” stated Linda Beers, Director of Public Health for ECHD. “We want to assure our communities that those at risk of a known exposure are contacted directly by our health department. But, we want to be clear about what constitutes an exposure - and who would be considered a contact of a case,” Beers continued.

A contact is defined as someone who has either been within 6 feet of a known positive for longer than 10 minutes **or** someone who was in the same indoor room/area (greater than 6 feet away) of a known positive for an hour or more.

Anyone meeting this criteria is called by the health department, interviewed, and issued a quarantine order to remain at home for 14 days (or the duration of the order). These individuals are monitored daily to ensure health and compliance. Those who live with, or who were in close contact with anyone under quarantine are not considered at risk and do not need to quarantine from work, school, the public, etc. “If you were not the person in contact with the known positive, you were not exposed,” emphasized Beers.

“If at any time, someone on a quarantine order begins to develop symptoms, we convert them to a Person Under Investigation and ask that they seek a diagnostic test for COVID-19 if they have not already been tested,” Beers explained. The process described above (case investigation and contact tracing) begins again for any new case. “This really is the purpose of the quarantine – to monitor exposed individuals for the entire incubation period of the virus and isolate anyone who becomes ill as a result of their exposure. This is how we limit the spread of COVID-19 in the absence of vaccines or other effective medications”.

ECHD wants to remind everyone that the best way to reduce your risk of being exposed to COVID-19 is to continue to wear masks, practice social distancing, limit gatherings, and wash hands.