



## COVID-19 Reporting to DHS

### Clients

**If you have already reported the client illness or exposure through another process, such as the incident reporting form for changes in operations, you do not also need to report through this process.**

For client illnesses or exposures that have not been reported through another mechanism, please follow the process below.

- If a client you serve has tested positive for COVID-19, including presumptive positive, or has been exposed to a confirmed case, notify DHS by emailing [DHS-PrivacyOfficer@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:DHS-PrivacyOfficer@alleghenycounty.us) (preferred method).
  - o Alternatively, you may report via phone to Brian Bell, Allegheny County Privacy Officer, at 412-350-2887.
  - o “Presumptive positive” is when a patient has tested positive by a public health laboratory, but results are pending confirmation by the CDC.
- Your report should indicate your provider name, the service you provide, and the name of the affected client(s) to facilitate identification of other individuals who may have had close contact with the affected client.
  - o HIPAA permits the disclosure of the individual’s name and diagnosis to DHS to prevent the spread of the disease
  - o Consistent with HIPAA’s minimum necessary disclosure rule, DHS will share the client’s name internally only as needed for identification of contacts (in most cases, DHS staff will not need to know the client’s name, only that they may have had contact with a client who tested positive).
- There is not an explicit need or obligation for providers to report ill clients to the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD). Where a client has tested positive, ACHD will have been notified by the healthcare provider and/or lab.
- DHS will work with ACHD as appropriate to identify any DHS staff, staff from other providers, and other clients who may have had contact with the affected client.

**Please note:** this document only covers reporting an ill client to DHS so that DHS can work to identify others who may have had contact with the client. In addition to reporting the incident to DHS, please be sure to follow all appropriate guidance from public health authorities regarding provision of services.

**ACHD Guidance for Specific Groups:**

[www.alleghenycounty.us/Health-Department/Resources/COVID-19/Information-for-Specific-Groups/Information-for-Specific-Groups.aspx](http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Health-Department/Resources/COVID-19/Information-for-Specific-Groups/Information-for-Specific-Groups.aspx)