



## Public Health Administration

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#### **Public Health to Prioritize Case Investigation and Contact Tracing as COVID Cases Spike** *Probable cases to be added to the dashboard*

BUTTE COUNTY, Calif. – The number of COVID-19 cases reported over the weekend for Butte County through the California Reportable Disease Information Exchange (CalREDIE) system is too large for Butte County Public Health (BCPH) staff to fully verify all cases in time for today's dashboard report.

Over the weekend, BCPH pulls COVID case data from CalREDIE and goes through the laborious process of verifying cases and initiating case investigation before adding them to Monday's dashboard update. This is necessary to avoid counting cases that may appear in the report as duplicates, belonging to another county or confirming cases from other sources.

At this time, during the significant increase, there are several hundred cases in the system that need to be verified. BCPH will verify these cases in the coming days and provide an update as soon as possible.

BCPH is working to bring on additional staff to meet the needs of increasing cases.

Additionally, due to an increase use of "rapid" antigen tests, BCPH will now be reporting antigen positive cases as probable cases on the dashboard. Antigen tests detect proteins on the surface of the virus, in contrast to a PCR test that detects viral genetic material, and are considered probable if the test result is positive. Only positive PCR tests are considered confirmed cases by the California Department of Public Health and used for COVID-19 metrics and dashboards. Both confirmed and probable cases are reportable.

BCPH conducts case investigation and contact tracing on both probable and confirmed cases, which leads to a higher workload than what the current dashboard (only confirmed cases) reflects.

Due to the recent increase in cases, if an individual tests positive or have had close contact with a positive case, you may not be contacted by BCPH. Contact tracing efforts must be prioritized to break chains of transmission, stop outbreaks and respond to cases among those most at risk for COVID complications. BCPH also coordinates outbreak management for congregate living facilities and schools. Contact tracing priority will be given to:

- Older adults
- Healthcare workers
- People at increased risk for complications
- High risk facilities

**Exposed to COVID:**

Residents who have tested positive for COVID-19 should follow the instructions to safely isolate during their infection. Per CDC guidelines, isolation can end 10 days after the onset of symptoms (or after the specimen collection date in people without symptoms), as long as the person has been fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication and symptoms are resolving.

- [Instructions for Persons in Isolation](https://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dlqd/publications/default.aspx) ([tinyurl.com/InstructionsforIsolation](https://tinyurl.com/InstructionsforIsolation))
- [Returning to work/school following a COVID-19 Diagnosis](#)

**If you have been exposed to COVID:**

Residents who may have been exposed (close contact) to someone with COVID-19 should follow the instructions to self-quarantine. Close contact means that a person has been within six feet of a person confirmed with COVID-19 for 15 minutes or more.

- Stay home for 14 days *from last day of exposure*
- Avoid contact with others
- Don't share household items
- Wear a mask if you are in contact with others, including household members

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