



INFORMATION BULLETIN

For Immediate Release
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Received a COVID-19 test result? What to expect

The recent surge in lab-confirmed COVID 19 cases in the Northern Health region is putting pressure on public health case and contact management (contact tracing) resources.

The number of new people testing positive for the virus is impacting public health's ability to quickly contact people who have tested positive. There is currently a backlog of people who have tested positive for COVID-19, but have not yet been contacted by public health.

Northern Health is deploying additional staff to its case and contact management teams, and making other necessary changes to how cases are notified, monitored, and cleared from self-isolation, to clear the backlog and speed up the process in the weeks and months ahead.

Everyone who tests positive for COVID-19 will receive a call as soon as possible from Public Health – this will not change. Northern BC residents who receive a message with a COVID-19 positive test result, should [self-isolate immediately](#), along with those in their household; Public Health will be in contact with you. Rapid options for receiving COVID-19 test results (text or SMS) mean results may come well before a call from public health – which could take up to 4-5 days. We are working to reduce this time frame with additional staffing, and shifting the focus of detailed contact tracing.

Currently, contact tracing includes public health identifying and directly notifying all close contacts of every confirmed case. NH is shifting to gathering information on, and notifying, close contacts only in certain situations (including health care workers, including those in long-term care; cases related to industrial projects, and in First Nations communities, and; those that are part of a known cluster or outbreak). This will ensure public health can respond quickly to developing clusters of cases or potential outbreaks for those that are most vulnerable.

Rates of COVID-19 activity in the North during this second wave mean that all residents, whether or not they are known

Public health will be also be reducing the frequency of calls to people in self isolation after testing positive for COVID-19, and not all people who are self-isolating will receive daily monitoring calls. Individuals may instead receive regular calls from their primary care provider (family doctor or nurse practitioner), or get support by contacting the NH Online (Virtual) Clinic 1-844-645-7811. **Public Health will continue to call**