

LENOWISCO and Cumberland Plateau Health Districts Change COVID-19 Case Investigation and Follow-up Process

(WISE, Va.) – Due to the ongoing surge of COVID-19 cases, all health departments located within both the LENOWISCO and Cumberland Plateau Health Districts will no longer be providing individuals with clearance letters to return to work or school following COVID-19 infection or exposure. The health departments will also stop providing written communications that exclude people from work or school due to illness or exposure.

“Unfortunately due to the increasing number of cases related to COVID-19, our health departments no longer have the capacity to provide these letters to individuals in the community. With case numbers exceeding our resources, both the LENOWISCO and Cumberland Plateau Health Districts will be temporarily prioritizing case investigation and contact tracing until levels decrease,” said Allie Phillips, population health manager. “However, we are urging individuals to be mindful and considerate about seeking out clearance letters from other health care providers in the community. As we all know, these providers are also experiencing an increased demand for their clinical services given the current surge in COVID-19 cases and are likely to be just as overwhelmed as we are.”

Employers and school administrators are asked to follow isolation and quarantine guidelines from the CDC ([CDC Quarantine & Isolation Guidelines](#)) in determining when employees or students are able to return instead of requiring a clearance letter. Individuals may also refer to this guidance and consult with their employer, school system, or childcare provider on its return policy.

It is important to keep in mind that due to this surge in COVID-19 cases, not everyone will be able to be contacted if positive or exposed. This makes it extremely important to follow the CDC’s updated Quarantine and Isolation Guidelines:

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Quarantine Guidelines	Isolation Guidelines
<p>If exposed to a positive COVID-19 case:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully vaccinated and boosted individuals should commit to a 10-day period of strict mask usage around others. • Unvaccinated and unboosted individuals should quarantine for 5 days, followed by another 5 days of strict mask usage. • All individuals, regardless of vaccination status, are recommended to get tested 5 days after the initial exposure. 	<p>If tested positive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asymptomatic individuals or those individuals with mild symptoms that resolve within 5 days may end isolation on day 5, followed by another 5-day period of strict mask usage. • Symptomatic individuals, including those with fever or any other symptoms that have NOT resolved by day 5, should remain in isolation until symptoms have improved.

(MORE)

For specific information regarding COVID-19 vaccination and guidelines in the LENOWISCO Health District or the Cumberland Plateau Health District you can visit www.vdh.virginia.gov/lenowisco/ or www.vdh.virginia.gov/cumberland-plateau/. For

general information about COVID-19 vaccinations, you can visit www.vdh.virginia.gov/covid-19-vaccine.