COVID-19 Case Investigations
Tools for LBOHs

August 31, 2021

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Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences
MA Department of Public Health
MDPH Conducts Weekly COVID-19 Case Investigation Webinars

- MDPH presents weekly on Tuesdays 11:00-12:15
  - Updates in Guidance
  - Troubleshooting MAVEN
  - How to conduct case investigations and contact tracing in different settings.
  - Target Audience: Health Agents, Contact Tracers, and Public Health Nurses doing this work.

MAVEN Help has Guidance Documents and Previous Webinars:

Webinars: Tuesdays @ 11am

MDPH Epi Program: 617-983-6800
MDPH MAVEN Help Desk: isishelp@mass.gov
MDPH ISIS Help Desk: 617-983-6801
MDPH ISIS Fax: 617-983-6813
DESE Rapid Response Help Center: (781) 338-3500
CTC Help Desk: 857-305-2828
CTC Local Health Help ctclocalhealthhelp@covide19.pih.org
CTC Supervisor Contact List
Higher Ed Contact List
Updates for today, Tuesday, 8/31/2021

- COVID-19 Case Definition Update – Gillian Haney
- Variants of Concern & Sequencing Overview – Andrew Lang and Meagan Burns
- LBOH Immediate Workflow – COVID-19 events only – please check your workflow TODAY and clear out the workflow
- LBOH & Higher Ed/Boarding Schools (Kate Hamdan) – email maventraining@mass.gov – training is underway for those users who have been approved and submitted their user request forms
- Communication Events – what are they and how do you access them?
- DESE Updates – Hillary Johnson
  - Updated Mask Requirements
  - Updated FAQs (explaining some key Test & Stay questions)
COVID-19 Case Definition Update

• New case definition, **effective September 1, 2021**
  • MAVEN implementation date for technical changes will forthcoming and will be communicated via email to all users
  • Not retroactive to **before September 1** but will impact case counting prospectively
  • Reminder that case definitions are used for surveillance not clinical purposes
Summary of Revisions

• Specifies criteria for enumerating new cases in persons previously classified as a probable or confirmed case (i.e., reinfections)
  • Individuals who test positive again more than 90 days after being a case of COVID-19, will be automatically counted as a new case

• Includes genomic sequencing in laboratory criteria

• Updates clinical criteria indicative of infection

• Updates epidemiologic linkage criteria and the definition of close contact

• Acknowledges testing performed in non-traditional settings such as work sites, temporary testing sites, and homes
Case Classification

• **Suspect**
  • Positive antibody test
  • Antigen tests via autopsy specimens
  • *PCR or antigen tests performed without CLIA oversight – i.e. at-home testing*

• **Probable**
  • Meets clinical criteria AND epidemiologic linkage without laboratory evidence
  • Positive antigen test
  • Meets vital records criteria

• **Confirmed**
  • Positive PCR positive or genomic sequencing result

**Note:** Suspect cases will not be included in official case counts
Example Event
COVID event with multiple cases

- Three COVID example events
  - 2020 – 5/19/2021 event date
  - 2021 – 6/1/2021 event date
  - 2021 – 9/3/2021 event date
- Green coinfection link will show for the three cases
- Click on the (View) link for each case to toggle between cases
- Click on the Name of the case to see all affiliated cases with the person in MAVEN.
SARS-CoV-2 Sequencing

**Lineage/Variant** – a coronavirus with a specific, characterized, set of genomic mutations.
- Not all lineages or variants are considered concerning

**Mutation** – a normal process by which a virus changes over time.
- Mutations happen! It’s the ones that confer increased pathogenicity that we are concerned with
- Increased pathogenicity generally refers to a virus that is more-readily transmitted from one person to another or results in more severe symptoms

**Variant Classifications**
- Variant of Interest – a coronavirus classified as a lineage/variant that has been deemed as “of interest” by the CDC
- Variant of Concern – a coronavirus classified as a lineage/variant that has been deemed as “of concern” by the CDC
- Variant of High Consequence – a coronavirus classified as a lineage/variant that has been deemed as “of high consequence” by the CDC. Currently, no lineages fall into this category.

**Variant vs. Lineage Example**
- WHO Label: Delta
- Pango Lineage: B.1.617.2, AY.1-AY.12
SARS-CoV-2 Variant Information Resources

CDC Variant Information

Global Initiative on Sharing Avian Influenza Data (GISAID)
www.gisaid.org (Also a repository for COVID-19 data!)

Pangolin Lineages
https://cov-lineages.org/

SARS-CoV-2 Sequencing for Public Health Emergency Response, Epidemiology, and Surveillance (SPHERES)
https://nextstrain.org/groups/spheres
Sequencing in Massachusetts

Where is genomic sequencing happening in Massachusetts?

- MASPRL
- National laboratories
  - Aegis
  - Helix
  - LabCorp
  - QuestDx
- Local laboratories
  - Broad Institute
  - MGH
  - National Emerging Infections Disease Laboratory
    - (Boston University, BMC & Tufts pending)
  - UMass Memorial Worcester
  - New England Biolabs
- Coordinating with additional labs for reporting and routinely receiving out-of-state notifications of COVID sequencing results

Some labs report via ELR, some flat file. We are working to transition larger labs to ELR.
MASPHL Sequencing

What cases are sequenced at MASPHL?
- Routine surveillance
- Vaccine breakthrough
- Variant of interest
- Cluster investigation

What is being reported?
- To ELR – “Sequencing Conducted”
- To MAVEN – lineage information, GISAID ID, reason for sequencing

How can I request sequencing?
- Reach out to Epidemiology Division at MA DPH (617-983-6800)
- Once specimens are approved for sequencing, populate all required fields in specimen submission form
- Follow instructions for shipping, as detailed on specimen submission instructions
  - Sample packaging is both a laboratory requirement, as well as essential to retain specimen integrity. Deviation from instructions may result in sample arriving in unsatisfactory condition for sequencing.
Where can I see sequencing results in MAVEN?

- Captured in the Lab Tab

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- Variants of Concern are noted in the Clinical Question #3 package:

Were any specimens sequenced for this individual indicative of a variant of concern?

Yes
Where can I see sequencing results in MAVEN? (cont.)

- Not all lineages are captured in the result field
  - May need to look in results value or lab notes field

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SARS-CoV-2 Variant MAVEN Report

Where can I see sequencing results in MAVEN? (cont.)

- You can pull the COVID Variant of Concern extract/report for cases in your jurisdiction
  - Based upon the clinical question package question “Were any specimens sequenced for this individual indicative of a variant of concern?”
  - Will only pull Variants of Concern

- Note: Sequencing results generally come in 2+ week lag from time of PCR result
Immediate Notification workflow (COVID-19 Only)

- **UPDATE:** COVID-19 Immediate Notification Workflow - 1,146 events in this workflow this morning
  - This will allow proper notification of all new COVID-19 events for your jurisdiction. *(Confirmed and Probable Cases)*
  - Please review all events/cases in this workflow and complete your **Step 1 - LBOH Notification to “Yes”** to clear out this workflow.
  - If you are retaining ownership then complete **Step 2** (Investigation Started) & **Step 3** (LBOH Investigator (name, lboh, phone number))
  - When you are done then complete Step 4 (Case Report Form Complete)
  - You can complete **Step 5** if you want – if not then leave blank
Action Needed – Higher Education MAVEN Approvals

- **Reminder sent to schools who have not yet submitted approval sheets 8/16**
- **Plan and Communication with IHE/Boarding Schools**
- **Email maventraining@mass.gov with questions**

Follow up: Higher Education MAVEN Approvals - Fall 2021

Dear Higher Education, Boarding School and Local Health Partners,

As a follow up to our request to add/approve Higher Education and Boarding School MAVEN users for the 2021-2022 school year – attached please find a list of schools whose Excel approval sheets we have not yet received. Local health departments must complete the attached approval spreadsheet as soon as possible and send it to maventraining@mass.gov. Instructions for completing this spreadsheet are below.

If we do not receive a submission we will assume that no institute of higher education users will need access to MAVEN for the upcoming school year and any higher ed users with current access will be removed on September 1st. The local board of health will be primarily responsible for case investigation and follow up for these schools at that time.

How to use the approval sheet:

- For schools using MAVEN – Use the ‘Approve Existing Users’ tab to review all existing MAVEN users and note (Yes/No) whether they are approved for continued MAVEN use for the 2021-2022 school year.
- For schools using MAVEN – Use the ‘Add Approved New Users’ tab to note any new users that will need access to MAVEN for the 2021-2022 school year. The MAVEN training team will review and follow up with the new users around training.
- For all schools regardless of MAVEN status – Use the ‘Plan for ‘21-22’ School Year tab to mark the primary entity responsible for case investigation and follow up this school year. Please also make any edits to the local board of health primary contact using this sheet.
- Please save your file with the following naming convention – IHE MAVEN User Approval Sheet_School_Date

Once submitted, DPH will reach out to new approved users with information to complete the User Request Form and begin their training process. If you have any questions, please email maventraining@mass.gov.

Thank you
Action Needed – Higher Education MAVEN Approvals Still Pending

- Amherst College
- Anna Maria College
- Babson College
- Becker College
- Berkshire Community College
- Bridgewater State University
- Bristol Community College
- Eastern Nazarene College
- Elms College
- FINE Mortuary College
- Gordon College
- Greenfield Community College
- Holyoke Community College
- Hult International Business School

- Holyoke Community College
- Hult International Business School
- Lasell University
- Lesley University
- Longy School of Music of Bard College
- Massachusetts Bay Community College
- Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA)
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- Massachusetts Maritime Academy
- Massachusetts School of Law
- Massasoit Community College
- Merrimack College
- Middlesex Community College
- Montserrat College of Art
- Mount Holyoke College
- Nichols College

- Northern Essex Community College
- Quincy College
- Signature Healthcare Brockton Hospital School of Nursing
- Thomas Aquinas College (aka Northfield College)
- Tufts - Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine
- University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth
- Wheaton College
- Williams College
What are **Communication Events** for LBOH

Communication Events **Video**

- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
  - Understanding Date Fields and Selecting Date Ranges, Ver 1.0, October 2020
  - Tasking Cases, Ver 1.0, October 2020
  - Cluster naming conventions, Ver 1.0, September 2020
  - How to add attachments?
  - What are **Communication Events** and how do I access/edit mine? (PDF / Video)
  - How to run a report?
  - How to search for an event?
  - How to share an event?
  - How to check and clear your workflows for routine diseases?
  - How to plan for back up coverage?
  - How to use a wizard?
  - How to Investigate Acute Hepatitis C Cases?
  - Follow up for Suspect Cases of Tickborne Disease
  - How to link two existing cases in MAVEN?
Finding/Reviewing/Updating Communication Events for LBOH

Once you select Communication event and enter a town/city name click on the Search button to see the Communication event for your own town/city or another one you need to contact.
Follow-up for Positive COVID-19 Cases and their Close Contacts

Tools for LBOHs

August 31, 2021

Hillary Johnson, MHS, Coordinator, Pandemic Response Team
Epidemiology Program | Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences
MA Department of Public Health
Get the Training Basics Here:

**Introduction to COVID-19 Follow-up Part 1 – May 11, 2021**
- Part 1 Intro Training Slides
- Part 1 Intro Training Recording

**Introduction to COVID-19 Follow-up Part 2 – May 18, 2021**
- Part 2 Intro Training Slides
- Part 2 Intro Training Recording

**COVID-19 Cluster Events Training – May 25, 2021**
- Cluster Training Slides
- Cluster Training Recording

- There are tools available for you to help collect information on close contacts and to calculate out their quarantine period (and potential quarantine options as applicable).
  - All tools, including the Interview Tool, are available on MAVEN Help.
    - You do NOT have to be in MAVEN or be a MAVEN user to access these tools. They are available online.

- Close Contact Form (1 Contact Extended Calculation Tool)
- Close Contact Form (2 Contacts)
Summary of Key Guidance & Tools

- **MA Testing Guidance: Updated June 14, 2021**
  - [https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-testing-guidance](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-testing-guidance)

- **MA Travel Information**
  - Return to normal travel recommendations for vaccinated people, and says to check CDC pages for the latest on domestic and international travel.

- **Isolation & Quarantine Guidance Documents**
    - Guidance states recently recovered (in first 90 days) and fully vaccinated people do not need to quarantine.

- **Date: March 8, 2021 – Occupational Exposure & Return to Work Guidance**
  - Now includes language about recently recovered and fully vaccinated people.

- **Pediatric Clinical Testing Advisory**
  - **11/25/2020 Advises Pediatricians to Test for COVID-19 in all patients with symptoms compatible with COVID, regardless of age**

- **Date: 10/21/2020 COVID-19 Testing Scenarios FAQ**
  - Describes different lab test results and what to do
  - Outlines discordant results and what they mean

- **05/06/2021 Updated COVID-19 Case Classification Manual**
Summary of Key Guidance & Tools

Date: 8/22/2020 - MDPH COVID-19 PCR and Antibody Testing Public Health Response Recommendations
• Table describes different Public Health Actions based upon different testing results.
• Big take home: PCR & Antigen positive patients should be treated like cases.
• Serology positive cases do not require public health follow-up.

Date 8/10/2020 - MDPH Follow-up Table for Positive Antigen Test Results
• Reminder that while Antigen Tests = Probable, we still treat like a case and isolate accordingly & do contact tracing.
• A PCR obtained at the same time (w/i 2 calendar days) will trump the antigen test result.

Date: 03/16/2021 - Updated CDC Guidance on Duration of Isolation & Precautions for Adults with COVID-19
• 10 Day Isolation Period now has more data supporting it.
• Ignore most additional PCR tests up to 3 months after initial illness onset.
• No need to quarantine up to 3 months after initial illness onset.
CDC Updated Pages

• CDC Vaccines Guidance Page:
  • “Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines Currently Authorized in the United States”
  • Everything you need to know regarding vaccination guidelines.

• Immunization Action Coalition (IAC)’s Ask the Experts page
  • https://www.immunize.org/askexperts/experts_cov.asp
  • Great resource for all your vaccine questions in a Q&A format.

• CDC guidance on VACCINATED PEOPLE:
  • Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People
  • Talks about what precautions are still needed for fully vaccinated people, etc.
  • Some recommendations are still under consideration here in MA.
Updates – A quick recap for August 30, 2021

We Last Met August 24, 2021:

A training for Institutes of Higher Ed (IHEs) and their LBOHs.

1. School Year 2021-2022: Overview
2. IHE Roles & Responsibilities
3. MAVEN
   • Individual Cases
   • Contacts
   • Clusters
4. Higher Ed Best Practices
5. Follow-up & Next Steps

MAVEN REQUEST PROCESS – HIGHER EDUCATION

- LBOH point of contacts to email maventraining@mass.gov with approval of access for new and existing users or account reactivations
  - New users MUST be conducting active case investigation and follow up
  - New users MUST have a school/college/university organizational email address

- MAVEN training team will reach out to send the new user the User Request Form and training materials. Training includes:
  - MAVEN training and proficiency test
  - Higher education specific training

**Please note this process can take 1-2 weeks**
## MAVEN COVID Events: Who Can View

### Education Institution Variable:

- **Automatically Completed:** This Variable is filled in upon the first positive lab from a specimen tested through university testing.
- **Manually Completed:** Can also be filled out manually
  - If you learn through interviewing a case about a school association, complete this variable.
- **This Variable is Repeatable:** If case is associated with multiple IHEs, add each one.
  - Users may also go into QP #5 and manually add to the drop down when cross institutional exposures are identified.

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This Variable is in Risk Question Package 5 and grants IHE MAVEN user access.
Higher Ed Cases in MAVEN: Example

Boston LBOH will see all their residents – some of which will be affiliated with an Institution of Higher Ed.

If they have the Education Institution Variable filled in, a Higher Ed MAVEN user can also see the case & conduct follow-up.

There is only one event in MAVEN for the case, so LBOH and IHEs should have clear expectations on who conducts follow-up for these higher ed cases.

What if a case doesn’t live in my town, but attends a school in my town?

- Please share events with relevant LBOH. For example, if you are interviewing your case and they attend school in another town, make sure the Education Institution Variable is filled in (so school has access) and share with the school town, so that LBOH has access to it as well.
- Higher Ed users can also share with your LBOH when applicable.
Control Strategies

If cases at your institution begin to increase, there are many strategies that can be employed to get cases/outbreaks under control (channel last year).

- **TESTING: Begin or increase testing**
  - Entry testing, one-time campus-wide testing, surveillance testing, close contact testing (testing vaccinated close contacts 3-5 days after exposure per CDC recommendation: [Quarantine and Isolation](#))

- **MASKING: Introduce or increase indoor masking**
  - For certain high-risk indoor activities, overall, for vaccinated close contacts (14 days after exposure or until negative test per CDC recommendation: [Quarantine and Isolation](#))

- **OTHER:**
  - Increase capacity for quicker isolation of confirmed cases
  - Symptom attestations
  - Physical distancing
  - Risk messaging to students
When to Notify LBOH & MDPH

- High percentage of confirmed cases during initial testing or repopulation
- Confirmed cases will soon overwhelm the system (isolation space or outreach/contact tracing capacity)
- Identification of large increases in breakthrough cases
- Electing to depopulate campus

Don’t wait – ask for help as soon as it’s needed!
Contacts

• **General Epidemiology Support:** 617-983-6800
• **MAVEN Support:** isishelp@mass.gov
• **MAVEN Access & Training Materials:** maventraining@mass.gov
• **MDPH IHE Subject Matter Experts:**
  • Alyssa Loskill (alyssa.loskill@mass.gov)
  • Geena Chiumento (geena.m.chiumento@mass.gov)
  • Alexandra DeJesus (alexandra.dejesus@mass.gov)
  • Julie Coco (julie.coco@mass.gov)
• **CTC Inbound Line:** 857-305-2728
Tip Sheets and Resources


MAVEN Online Help

Expand all  Collapse all

- COVID-19 Materials/Training
  - Case Follow-Up Tools
  - Community Tracing Collaborative (CTC)
  - Clusters/Outbreaks
  - Daycare/Childcare/K-12 School Resources/Sports
  - Guidance Documents & Resources
  - Higher Education/Boarding Schools
    - IHE Reports Tip Sheet Ver 1.0_Aug 24 2021
    - IHE Cluster Tip Sheet Ver 1.0_Aug 24 2021
    - August 24 MAVEN Tools for IHEs and LBOHs_Training Presentation
    - August 24 MAVEN Tools for IHEs and LBOHs_Training Recording
    - Higher Education and Boarding School Contact List 2021
    - Confidential Information Security Procedures - Higher Education_Sep2020
NEW DESE Masking Guidance – August 25th.

• **MASK Requirements Posted August 25th**

• DESE Board authorized the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education to **require masks for public school students (age 5 and above) and staff in all grades** through at least October 1, 2021

• Effective immediately, **public school students (age 5 and above) and staff in all grades are required to wear masks indoors in schools**, except as noted [in doc].
  • Masks are not required when outdoors.
  • All visitors are also expected to wear a mask in school buildings.
  • Normal medical and behavioral exemptions to wearing masks can apply.

• The mask requirement will be in place until at least October 1, 2021. The Commissioner will revisit the requirement in the near future to revise it as warranted by public health data.
NEW DESE Masking Guidance – August 25th.

• **MASK Requirements Posted August 25th**

  • Masks are *required for any sports-related activity for student-athletes and coaches when indoors*, in alignment with guidance provided by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA).

  • After October 1, 2021, *if a school demonstrates a vaccination rate of 80% or more of students and staff in the school*, then vaccinated individuals in that school would no longer be subject to the DESE mask requirement.

    • DESE will provide additional information to districts in the coming weeks in preparation for the October 1 date, including how to demonstrate the 80% vaccination rate threshold.
DESE (K-12 COVID-19 Response Protocol)

- **New Test and Stay Program** will allow asymptomatic close contacts to remain in school and participate in sports and extracurriculars so long as they:
  - take a rapid antigen test daily,
  - wear a mask, (now required for everyone)
  - and follow other guidelines as noted in the document (quarantine at home on weekends in that 7 days & conduct active monitoring for full 14 days).

- For close contacts participating in the Test and Stay program only:
  - It is recommended to maintain 3 feet of distance when masks cannot be worn (i.e. during meals).
  - This should not be construed as a broad physical distancing requirement or recommendation; it is only in place as part of this single, narrow protocol.

If districts do not have Test and Stay available, or an individual or family chooses not to participate:
- Close contact will need to quarantine at home for at least 7 days from the point of exposure (Normal home quarantine options)
• FAQ Aug 20, 2021 (Revised August 25th FAQ), 2021

• 8. Can individuals identified as a close contact while at home (i.e., non-school based close contact) return to school and participate in the Test and Stay program?

  • A. The Test and Stay program is intended for school-based close contacts, only. Individuals identified as a close contact of an individual outside of school should follow Protocol B-2 or B-3 in the SY22 DESE/DPH Protocols for Responding to COVID-19 Scenarios.

• So based upon this FAQ, kids exposed outside of school (at home, due to family, due to outside school activities) would not be eligible for the Test and Stay Program and must instead utilize the standard quarantine options.
• FAQ Aug 20, 2021 (Revised August 25th FAQ), 2021

• 9. Can an individual who is identified as a close contact still participate in sports and extracurricular activities?

  • A. Asymptomatic close contacts will follow Protocol B: Protocol for asymptomatic close contacts. For school-sponsored events and sports that take place on non-school days, testing is necessary on those days for close contacts to participate. If these close contacts do not consent to testing, or if testing is not available, individuals may not participate.
DESE FAQ on Protocols & Test & Stay

• FAQ Aug 20, 2021 (Revised August 25th FAQ), 2021

• 10. How many days will an individual be tested during the Test & Stay program?

  • A. The duration of the Test and Stay program is 7 days from the date of exposure. Some of these days could be non-school days (i.e., weekends or holidays). Testing is only required on school days, unless the individual participates in school-sponsored sports or extracurricular activities that fall on a non-school day (see question 8, above).

  • If the 7th day falls over a non-school day, the individual must be tested on the morning of their return to school. On the 8th day, a student will exit the Test and Stay protocol, assuming all tests were negative, and they remain asymptomatic.
Our Question: Can you do anything else during your 7 days of Test and Stay participation after an in-school exposure?

- “Individuals who are part of the Test and Stay protocols may be eligible to participate in school sports and extracurricular activities, provided that they are in compliance with the applicable protocol. For events and sports that take place on non-school days, testing will still be required on those days to participate.

- As part of Test and Stay, quarantine is still strongly recommended for individuals outside of school settings.”

- [Protocols Page 6](#)
Zora’s First Day of 1st Grade

“I want to be an epidemiologist that helps building companies.”

-Zora, first day of 1st Grade