



## Interim Guidance for 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) Investigations

The following guidelines provide a brief overview of the steps for a 2019-nCoV investigation. For more information about coronavirus investigations, please refer to the NC CD Manual here:

[https://epi.dph.ncdhhs.gov/cd/lhds/manuals/cd/reportable\\_diseases.html](https://epi.dph.ncdhhs.gov/cd/lhds/manuals/cd/reportable_diseases.html)

All investigations should be discussed with the Communicable Disease Branch (CDB) epidemiologists. As this is a rapidly evolving situation, please refer to the links below to ensure that you are using the most current case definition and following current CDC and NC DPH recommendations.

### 2019-nCoV Investigation Steps

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| 1. Ensure isolation and implement control measures to prevent disease and additional exposures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure that patients being evaluated for 2019-nCoV are immediately isolated and masked. If possible, they should be placed in a negative pressure (airborne isolation, or AIIR) room. If an AIIR is not available, place them in a private room with the door closed.</li><li>• Anyone entering the isolation room should use standard, contact, and airborne precautions AND eye protection.</li><li>• Refer to the CDC website to determine current guidelines for control measures, available here: <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/infection-control.html">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/infection-control.html</a></li></ul> |
| 2. Apply PUI definition  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use the current PUI definition to determine if the clinical and epidemiologic evidence meet the PUI criteria</li><li>• You can find the most current PUI criteria here: <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/clinical-criteria.html">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/clinical-criteria.html</a></li></ul>  |
| 3. Notify CDB  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Call 919-733-3419 as soon as you have a patient with clinical and exposure history that may meet the PUI definition.</li><li>• Please have the following information on hand when you call: travel and exposure history, patient symptoms, and whether or not they are being admitted to the hospital.</li></ul>   |
| 4. Collect specimens   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If instructed by CDB, contact the patient's healthcare provider for further 2019-nCoV testing (NP, OP and sputum if patient has a productive cough). See specimen collection information: <a href="https://slph.ncpublichealth.com/bioterrorism/2019-ncov.asp">https://slph.ncpublichealth.com/bioterrorism/2019-ncov.asp</a>.</li></ul>   |
| 5. Fill out PUI form   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Complete the PUI form and fax to the CDB secure fax at 919-733-0490.</li></ul>   |
| 6. Update NC EDSS  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create a new event in NC EDSS, or update the existing event if already entered.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Be sure to include the date of symptom onset and fill out as much of the clinical and risk history packages as possible.</li></ul></li><li>• Assign the event to State Disease Registrar when case investigation complete.</li></ul>  |



## 7. Contact tracing

- If patient is positive for 2019-nCoV, please work in conjunction with CDB to conduct contact tracing using the contact tracing toolkit available in the CD Manual.
- You may refer symptomatic contacts to their healthcare provider for evaluation – remember that all suspect cases should call ahead before visiting any healthcare facility so that appropriate precautions can be taken. If contacts become symptomatic please inform CDB if they are being evaluated for 2019-nCoV.
- Monitor asymptomatic contacts for 14 days after last exposure. Ensure that all contacts perform self-monitoring for symptoms for 14 days following last contact with person confirmed to have 2019-nCoV infection.

## Special Considerations

Personal protective measures/  
Personal protective equipment

- Always use appropriate PPE when interacting with suspected or confirmed 2019-nCoV patients. See the latest CDC recommendations here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/infection-control.html>

Risk/Public communication

- Any suspect or confirmed case of 2019-nCoV will draw intense media interest. Information on suspect cases should not be released to the media. Continual communication between local, state, and federal health officials will be necessary.
- Protect patient confidentiality and carefully consider whether public notification is necessary.
- NC DHHS Public Information Office is available at 818-855-4840 to assist local health departments as needed.

February 14, 2020