

## Contact Tracing Comes to Will County

The Will County Health Department has announced they have begun a process of 'Contact Tracing' in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This process is being conducted by members of the WCHD staff and entirely handled by phone.

### What is contact tracing?

Contact tracing is a process designed to halt the chain of transmission of an infectious disease — like the coronavirus — and slow community spread.

When someone tests positive for coronavirus they become a "case." Public health workers then reach out to the case, first of all to make sure they have what they need and that they are self-isolating, and then to figure out who they had contact with who may be at risk of infection, too.

### What can I expect?

If you test positive for the coronavirus, you can expect a call from WCHD staff. They will ask you where you have been and attempt to identify anyone you may have been in contact with who could be at risk. They will then try to find ways to contact each of those people to inform them.

If you have potentially been in contact with a known person who has coronavirus, you will likely get a call. The caller will give guidance on what they recommend based on your contact with the infected person. This guidance may vary depending on how high risk the contact was. If you were very close to a coughing person for an hour, you may be asked to self-quarantine for 14 days. If you were just in the same room as someone who was mildly symptomatic for 20 minutes, you might just be asked to self-monitor for symptoms.

### What should I look out for?

The call from health officials should be brief and to the point. They are concerned about your well-being and that of the community. When you receive a call from the Will County Health Department, it will likely come show Ella Ave on your caller ID. It may also come from another number as staff members may be working remotely will cell phones.

There should not be questions beyond what people you may have been in contact with or your general health and potential symptoms. Any invasive personal questions requesting unusually specific information (for example social security numbers or financial information) are not part of the contact tracing process.

### What should I do if I feel I'm being scammed?

Unfortunately, dishonest people will try to exploit anything they can. It is possible someone will try to contact you to get information from you that will allow them to commit crimes such as identity theft or fraud. Do not give out any information you are uncomfortable with. If you feel uneasy, try to ask for the caller's name and organization they are with. This will not only help you to identify if the person is an actual official, it may also help the Police in finding and stopping the person.

Remember, this is all being done by telephone. If anyone visits your home and identifies themselves as a member of the Will County Health Department and claims to be conducting contact tracing, do not allow them in. Contact the Police and report the person immediately.

If you wish, you can always take the caller's name and telephone number and call the Will County Health Department at 815727-8481 or 815-740-4427 to verify the validity of the caller.