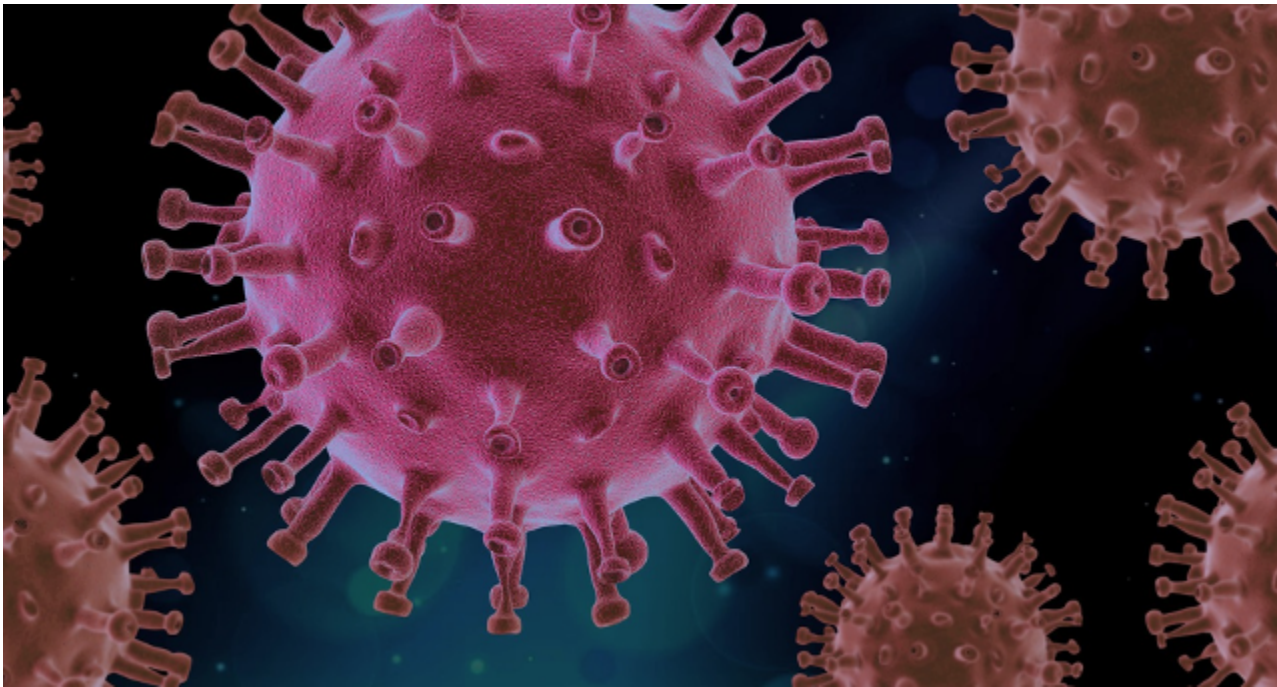


Begins June 1: Changeover from COVID-19 Individual Contact Tracing Calls to “Automated Case Notification”

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SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) today announced it is shifting its COVID-19 contact tracing efforts and individual case investigation telephone calls to focus on a more strategic approach of automated case notifications.

Starting June 1, 2022, IDPH will no longer make individual case investigation calls to persons positive with COVID-19, and instead those individuals will receive an automated message. IDPH notifications to COVID-19 cases had previously included a call-back option from contact tracers and individual case investigations of persons 65 years of age and older.

The new notification will be deployed via short message service (SMS) to all reported positive COVID-19 cases and a message will direct callers to resources through automated voice prompts in English, Polish, and Spanish. This new contact tracing process will not impact investigations of cases in congregate facilities, which remain a top priority for local health departments and IDPH.

The current contact tracing surge center - a contracted pool of virtual contact tracers implemented in spring 2020 - will cease operations on May 31.

Under the new system, positive COVID-19 cases reported in the Illinois National Electronic Disease Surveillance System (I-NEDSS) will receive an SMS message in English and Spanish which reads:

“IDPH has important info for you: Call 312-777-1999 or visit dph.illinois.gov/covidhelp?ch=sms Llame al 312-777-1999 o visite dph.illinois.gov/covidhelp?ch=sms”

The text message provides persons with positive COVID-19 cases the opportunity to call an automated information line or to click on the website link for additional guidance on isolation, close contact notification, and resource availability.

Universal contact tracing and individual COVID-19 case investigations were implemented as a tool to slow transmissions. However, the wide availability of COVID-19 vaccines, at home testing kits, and updated isolation and quarantine guidance has prompted a revised public health approach not unique to Illinois. Many states and localities have already scaled back or stopped universal case investigations and contact tracing in alignment with [CDC contact tracing recommendations](https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/s0601-covid-19-tracing.html).

In order to end the pandemic and keep themselves and their loved ones safe, Illinois residents are encouraged to get vaccinated and keep up to date with booster shots.

You can find additional information on the IDPH [Confirmed or Possible COVID-19 webpage](https://dph.illinois.gov/covidhelp?ch=sms).