



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
P. O. BOX 3378  
HONOLULU, HI 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:  
File:

July 29, 2020

Senate's Special Committee on COVID-19  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Committee Members:

Re: Contact Tracing

Please see the response of the Department of Health's (DOH)/Disease Outbreak Control Division (DOCD) to the questions posed by the Senate's Special Committee on COVID-19.

- The current number of Contact Tracers available to the DOH/DOCD.
  - An accounting of all active full-time, part-time, and reserve Contact Tracers.

**Response:** The State has 77 active contact tracers. This number includes eight tracers from the University of Hawaii/DOH collaboration who are currently volunteering via Medical Reserve Corps. This number does not include the persons conducting contact tracing for the Department of Defense (DOD) or the various medical institutions, namely the hospitals. DOH collaborates closely with both the DOD and hospitals in their contact tracing efforts. Also, DOH has the potential to increase the number of contract tracers from within the department to 196.

- A count of how many potential Contact Tracers have been offered positions to date.

**Response:** Pursuant to our contract with the Research Corporation of the University of Hawaii, 20 contract tracing jobs were recently posted as the initial phase.

- A count of how many Contact Tracers will be on board full-time by August 1, 2020.

**Response:** At least 100 contract tracers will be working full-time by August 1, 2020.

- Confirm whether or not the Department is utilizing Contact Tracers through other institutions or agencies such as Tripler Hospital, Hawaii Pacific University, or Department of Defense, etc.

**Response:** DOH is hiring those trained via the UH-DOH collaboration. As mentioned above, pursuant to DOH delegation and in collaboration with DOH, certain COVID-19 cases are investigated and contact traced by DOD colleagues. Also, when cases/clusters involve a healthcare worker in a hospital, DOH delegates authority to and works collaboratively with the facility to contact trace and monitor all contacts. In both instances, partners provide the DOH with pertinent information regarding contacts, especially if any become cases.

- Data on the number of individuals contacted by Tracers daily.

**Response:** See DOH's weekly summary at:

<https://health.hawaii.gov/coronavirusdisease2019/what-you-should-know/what-hdoh-is-doing/>

Please note that the numbers are constantly changing as new cases and contacts are identified.

- Information on who is responsible for testing when tracing yields a "close contact."

**Response:** Who is responsible for testing depends on the situation presented. If the situation is urgent (e.g., vulnerable persons for whom care must be determined), then DOH usually would arrange for the testing. If the situation is not urgent or persons/facilities have the means to seek/arrange for testing, then the persons/facilities would arrange for testing on their own.

- All pertinent information on the State's plan should we reach 100, 200, or 300 confirmed cases a day.

**Response:** Based upon the current case load and presuming these numbers will continue at the current reporting rate, I have recommended certain community mitigation measures, such as the closure of bars and reducing the number of persons gathering indoors from 50 to 10. I feel these measures are necessary to emphasize the need to distance and wear masks as appropriate. However, if these control mandates are put in place and we continue to see cases rising and reach 200 or even 300 per day, some form of shutdown will be necessary.

- Information on the Department's contingency plans should the State's case total exceed your Department's tracing capacity.

**Response:** Most states' pandemic plans, including Hawaii's, as well as guidance documents from government agencies or organizations who have dealt with pandemics, focus on the need for definitive and consistent community mitigation measures to control the pandemic.

Sincerely,



Sarah Y. Park, MD, FAAP  
State Epidemiologist