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CONTACT
GovernorsOffice@illinois.gov (mailto:GovernorsOffice@illinois.gov)

Governor Pritzker Announces the Illinois Contact Tracing Collaborative: A Locally-Driven Approach to Massively Scale Up Contact Tracing

Launches with Pilot Programs in St. Clair and Lake Counties; Partners in Health Providing Playbook After Implementing the "Massachusetts Model"

Chicago – Building on a robust, statewide effort to ensure Illinois can safely reopen, Governor Pritzker announced the Illinois Contact Tracing Collaborative, a locally-driven approach to scale up contact tracing in Illinois.

"With Illinois' daily availability of testing among the best in the nation, we want to grow our voluntary contact tracing so we can further control and reduce the rate of spread of COVID-19 and stop outbreaks in their tracks," **said Governor JB Pritzker.** "Knowing if you've been exposed to someone with COVID-19 gives everyday Illinoisans the ability to keep their families and co-workers and friends safe by helping them seek testing or self-isolate, and it helps us build a public health system that truly supports them if their exposure leads to actual infection."

The state is immediately engaging two local health departments to pilot this initiative: St. Clair County in the Metro East region and Lake County in the Northeast region. These local health departments were chosen for having significant needs in terms of case numbers in vulnerable populations, a robust capacity for tracing, and great existing collaborations of public health personnel, medical students and volunteers already on the ground.

Additionally, IDPH sent assessments to the state's 97 local health departments with half already sending back their initial assessments regarding their ability to expand and deploy their contact tracing capabilities. Beginning today, IDPH will be sending out asks for workplans and budgets from all of these departments – allowing Illinois to incorporate their plans into the state's overall plans and bringing them online in the coming weeks.

In every region and across the state, the curriculum, software, and technology will be IDPH-driven, and IDPH will support the funding for new hires at local health departments where needed through federal CARES money and Disaster Relief Act funding.

This will be a tech-based approach that will innovate and scale up existing systems. Illinois will be implementing a state-of-the-art project management and compre contact tracing for COVID-19 and providing forward- oughout the state. This personal contact management so latfo allow IDPH to operate with an aggregated, r

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IDPH has also brought on Partners in Health –a world-renowned organization for building strong community-based health systems. Partners in Health is behind what has become known as the “Massachusetts model” for what scaling up a contact tracing operation looks like. As one of the group’s earliest out-of-state collaborations, Illinois has learned what worked, what didn’t, and what challenges they continue to face as they design a community-based program in Massachusetts. Partners in Health will continue to advise IDPH on the state’s program design and how best to tailor it to all of Illinois’ communities.

All hires will be made locally, not through IDPH, and salaries will be determined by local health departments in accordance with salary rates in the region. Those interested in becoming a contact tracer can indicate their interest through IDPH, which will deliver names and resumes to local health departments. That interest form can be found on the IDPH website at **dph.illinois.gov/COVID19 (http://dph.illinois.gov/COVID19)**.

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