



May 23, 2022

**RE: Changes to the COVID-19 Response in San Mateo County and SPOT Reporting**

Dear School/Child Care Administrator,

Schools and child care facilities remain at risk for COVID-19 outbreaks due to their congregate nature and the vulnerable/unvaccinated population they care for. As long as COVID-19 continues to circulate in the community, students/attendees and staff of schools and child care facilities remain at risk. However, as the pandemic has evolved with the availability of an effective vaccine, better access to testing, and improving treatments, the COVID-19 response strategy and resource direction are shifting. As a result of this evolution, fewer resources are available for case investigations and contact tracing.

Over the past couple of years, we have done our best to support your program, but we no longer have the staff to support you to the same degree related to COVID-19 as we have to date.

San Mateo County Health is making some changes that we'd like to bring to your attention. We are modifying our COVID-19 response as outlined below:

- Some COVID-19 dedicated resources, such as the hotel isolation program, COVID-19 swab team, and individual contact tracing will no longer be available.
- Available resources will be focused on prioritized response to outbreaks and case investigations in high-risk settings and promoting guidance and education related to management of COVID-19.
- Our guidance for COVID-19 exposures and outbreaks is entirely aligned with the California Department of Public Health's guidance. For specific guidance related to your program, please refer to the [State of California Safe Schools for All Hub](#).

Going forward, please remember to use [SPOT \[Shared Portal for Outbreak Tracking\]](#) to report COVID-19 outbreaks and exposures. SPOT is a reporting system that is used to report COVID-19 exposures and case details to San Mateo County. You should also send any questions or updates related to exposures or outbreaks that occur in your program through this portal. We recommend you review the [SPOT Intake Form Overview](#), [User Guide](#), and [Demo for](#)





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[Liaisons video](#) to learn more about SPOT. Our hope is these changes will make it easier for you to report new individual COVID-19 case and COVID-19 outbreaks while still allowing you to find the guidance you need. **While we were previously accepting COVID-19 reports via phone and email, due to the volume of cases and changes in our COVID-19 staffing, these are no longer viable reporting methods and will not be accepted. SPOT will allow for an easier flow of information and help us respond to the most urgent needs more quickly. Reporting requirements and communication pathways for other communicable disease cases, exposures, and outbreaks and for all urgent situations have not changed.**

Promptly identifying COVID-19 cases and having a robust COVID-19 testing program remains crucial. To find testing resources, please visit the [CA COVID Testing Task Force](#).

Thank you for partnering with us to protect the students/attendees and staff members of schools and child care facilities in San Mateo County.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Morrow MD". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Scott Morrow, MD, MPH, MBA  
San Mateo County Health Officer