

COVID-19 Death Case Definitions

6/4/2021

COVID-19 Death Case Definition of Confirmed Cases

1. Decedent has a positive laboratory SARS-CoV-2 RNA PCR test, AND
2. Meets at least ONE of the following criteria:
 - a. Death certificate mentions COVID-19 (or equivalent term) in Part 1 or Part 2 of the death certificate.**
 - b. Clinical history or autopsy findings and epidemiologic evidence that death is related to SARS-CoV-2 infection, i.e.:
 - Signs or symptoms consistent with COVID-19 OR autopsy findings consistent with acute respiratory distress syndrome OR pneumonia without an alternative cause and decedent did not have a complete recovery back to baseline state of health
OR
 - Death occurred \leq 30 days from specimen collection date of positive SARS-CoV-2 test, AND decedent did not have a fully explanatory alternative cause of death that was causally unrelated to SARS-CoV-2 infection (e.g. accident, homicide, drowning, etc.)

COVID-19 Death Case Definition of Probable Cases

1. Decedent does not have a positive laboratory confirmed SARS-CoV-2 RNA PCR test but has a positive antigen test, AND
2. Meets at least ONE of the following criteria:
 - a. Death certificate mentions COVID-19 (or equivalent term) in Part 1 or Part 2 of the death certificate.**
 - b. Clinical history or autopsy findings and epidemiologic evidence that death is related to SARS-CoV-2, i.e.:
 - Signs or symptoms consistent with COVID-19 OR autopsy findings consistent with acute respiratory distress syndrome OR pneumonia without an alternative cause and decedent did not have a complete recovery back to baseline state of health
OR

- Death occurred < 30 days from specimen collection date of positive antigen test, AND decedent did not have a fully explanatory alternative cause of death that was causally unrelated to SARS-CoV-2 infection (e.g., accident, homicide, drowning, etc.)

COVID-19 Death Case Definition of Death Certificate Only Cases

1. Decedent does NOT have a positive laboratory confirmed SARS-CoV-2 RNA PCR OR a positive antigen test#, AND
2. Death certificate mentions COVID-19 (or equivalent term) in Part 1 or Part 2 of the death certificate.**

COVID-19 Case Definition

- [CDC: NNDSS Surveillance Case Definitions: Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(https://ndc.services.cdc.gov/conditions/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/\)](https://ndc.services.cdc.gov/conditions/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/)

NOTE: Death investigations involve receiving and reviewing information from multiple sources, including but not limited to death certificates, medical records, case report forms, laboratory reports, and autopsy reports before a case classification can be made. Deaths are considered current and not part of any backlog if it is < 6 months between the date of death and the date the death is reported out.

** For death certificates that list COVID-19 or equivalent in Part 1 or 2 of the death certificate and the death has been >30 days from positive test and/or the decedent returned to baseline state of health, MDH Infectious Disease Epidemiology, Prevention, and Control staff will notify the MDH Office of Vital Records staff and request that the medical certifier review the death certificate for accuracy.

For death certificates that list COVID-19 or equivalent in Part 1 or Part 2 of the death certificate and the death occurred ≤7 days from a negative test, MDH Infectious Disease Epidemiology, Prevention, and Control staff will notify the MDH Office of Vital Records staff and request that the medical certifier review the death certificate for accuracy.



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Contact health.communications@state.mn.us to request an alternate format.