

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

CITY OF LOWELL

In City Council

ORDINANCE

An Ordinance creating one (1) new position and salary of Contact Tracer at the Health and Human Services Department.

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The City Council, by virtue of the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 43, Section 105, has the authority to create and/or delete positions.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LOWELL, as follows:

The Code of Ordinances City of Lowell, Massachusetts, hereinafter called the "Code" adopted by the City Council on December 23, 2008, as amended, is hereby further amended as follows:

1. The following position and salary is created at the Health and Human Services Department:

One (1) Full Time, Contact Tracer  
Ordinance, Non-Union  
Salary - \$48,325.16 (min) to \$56,654.00 (max)  
(35 hours/wk.)

The above position and salary created by this Ordinance shall be filled only when the necessary grant funds for said position have been appropriated and said position and salary shall be eliminated when said grant funds are no longer available.

2. All provisions of the Code of the City of Lowell, as amended, which are not inconsistent with this Ordinance shall continue in effect, but all provisions of said Code inconsistent herewith are repealed.

3. This Ordinance shall take effect upon its passage in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 43 and 40A of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christine P. O'Connor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "C" and "O".

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Christine P. O'Connor  
City Solicitor

## CITY OF LOWELL

### Job Description

**Post Date:**

**Deadline:**

### Health and Human Services Department

### Contact Tracer

**Job Title:** Contact Tracer  
**Department:** Health and Human Services – Health Department  
**Reports To:** Director of Health and Human Services  
**Union:** Ordinance  
**FLSA Status:** Non-Exempt  
**Salary:** \$48,325.16 (min) to \$56,654.00 (max) DH07 annually; 35 hours/week;  
Grant Funded (COVID-19 Case Investigation/Contact Tracing Grant);  
Funding for position starts September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021;  
Grant runs for two years with three options for two-year renewals

#### **SUMMARY:**

A Contact Tracer is a non-licensed public health professional providing support to a health department and is responsible for reaching out to people (contacts) who have been exposed to COVID-19 (or other communicable diseases) and providing health education and guidance to interrupt ongoing disease transmission. Dialogue with contacts will be guided by standard protocols to obtain any symptom history and other relevant health information, provide instructions for self-quarantine, and make appropriate referrals to testing, clinical services, and other essential support services. This position will require prioritization, prompt action, and attention to detail in documentation and data management as multiple investigations will be conducted simultaneously. Contract tracers are required to follow all designated scripts and comply with policies and procedures provided by the health department regarding confidentiality and data security for the handling of sensitive client information and protected health information.

**ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES** include the following. Other related duties may be assigned.

- Initiate prompt communication with people (contacts) exposed to COVID-19, or other communicable diseases, through text, phone calls, email, and other communication platforms as necessary.
- Employ dynamic communication and interpersonal skills, cultural competency/sensitivity, tactful language, and empathetic interviewing skills to build rapport and maintain trust with patients of varied backgrounds.
- Verify the contact's identity during initial communications and prior to disclosing confidential information. Assure confidentiality and carry out efforts to locate and communicate with clients in a manner that preserves the confidentiality and privacy of all involved.
- Notify the contact of their exposure, following a script or guidance to provide relevant health education. Conduct notification of exposure in a manner that maintains the confidentiality of the patient, and ensures that the identity of the patient is NOT disclosed.
- Obtain and document relevant information, including contact demographics, underlying medical conditions, and other risk factors

- Provide approved information and guidance on quarantine procedures and what to do if symptoms develop. Coordinate referrals for testing, healthcare, and other supportive services, as needed, per local protocols.
- Assess contact's ability to safely and effectively quarantine at home, with adequate water, food, and other necessities. Identify barriers to necessary interventions and facilitate appropriate referrals, per local protocols. Collaborate with key service providers to transfer client information and ensure expedited initiation of appropriate medical or social support services, per local protocols.
- Conduct daily check-ins to assess signs/symptoms via locally designated method. Facilitate referrals for testing and medical evaluation for clients who become symptomatic.
- Collaborate and coordinate with a team of public health professionals (e.g., case investigators, surveillance coordinators, surveillance triage staff, care resource coordinators, epidemiologists) to efficiently complete contact notification and monitoring assignments. Inform the team and supervisor when attempts to communicate with a contact are unsuccessful. Elevate complex situations to supervisor for further guidance.
- Participate in requisite trainings, regular program meetings and quality monitoring improvement activities in order to ensure and enhance the quality of contact notification activities and program outcomes.
- Maintain patient confidentiality and ensure that all information is collected in concordance with local data privacy and confidentiality standards.
- Other duties may be assigned as needed.

## **SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES**

None

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

To perform this job successfully, an individual must possess strong verbal and written communication skills, including active listening, and emotional intelligence. Ability to interact in a non-judgmental manner with culturally diverse populations and persons experiencing a wide range of social conditions. Critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and the ability to use sound judgment in responding to client issues and concerns. Ability to adapt to changing environments and receive constructive feedback. Ability to use discretion, maintain confidentiality and ethical conduct. Ability to work effectively with all levels of staff, establishing and maintaining collaborative professional relationships. Ability to work independently and as part of a multidisciplinary team.

## **EDUCATION and/or EXPERIENCE**

Either: (a) Associate degree or equivalent with up to one year of applicable community experience; or (b) a Bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited college or university, with no experience; or (c) Satisfactory equivalent combination of the foregoing education, training, and experience with health education, community outreach, linkage to care, social services, or other public health services.. Bilingual skills are a plus.

## **LANGUAGE SKILLS**

Ability to read and interpret documents such as safety rules, operating and maintenance instructions, and procedure manuals. Ability to write routine reports and business correspondence. Ability to speak effectively before individuals or employees of an organization.

## **MATHEMATICAL SKILLS**

Ability to add, subtract, multiply, and divide in all units of measure, using whole numbers, common fractions, and decimals. Ability to compute rate, ratio, and percent and to draw and interpret bar graphs.

## **REASONING ABILITY**

Ability to apply common sense understanding to carry out instructions furnished in written, oral, or diagram form. Ability to deal with problems involving several concrete variables in standardized situations.

## **PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

The duties of this job involves viewing a computer screen 50 to 75 percent of the time. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is frequently required to sit; use hands to finger, handle, or feel; reach with hands and arms; and talk or hear. The employee is occasionally required to stand; and walk; Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and ability to adjust focus.

## **WORK ENVIRONMENT**

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

The position will require responding to public health emergencies with rapid turnaround times for communication, initiation and completion of assignments. The position will require daily use of a computer, telephone or cell phone, and access to a secure internet connection. The position may require both onsite and telework activities, while complying with all requirements for client confidentiality, records, and data security. The position may require working non-standard hours (i.e., evenings, weekends). The position may require some travel and occasional participation in off-site functions.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is occasionally exposed to moving mechanical parts and risk of electrical shock (electrical outlets). The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate.

The City of Lowell is a smoke and drug free employer and requires a physical with drug screen and CORI check post offer.

***Qualified individuals may send application, resume, and cover letter to the Human Relations Office, Mary Callery, HR Director, 375 Merrimack Street, Room 19, Lowell, MA 01852. Applicants can also submit to fax 978-446-7102 or email to [cityjobs@lowellma.gov](mailto:cityjobs@lowellma.gov)***

Valid MA driver's license and vehicle required.

Brendan Flynn  
*Acting Director of Health & Human Services*  
978.674.1051

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Eileen Donoghue, City Manager  
FROM: Brendan Flynn, Acting Director, Health and Human Services  
DATE: September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021  
SUBJECT: Creation of Contact Tracer Position

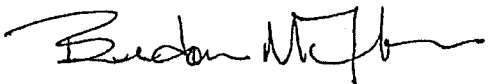
The Lowell Health Department received funding via the 2021 Local Health Support for COVID-19 Case Investigation and Contact Tracing grant through the State of Massachusetts, effective July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021. This grant is intended to build capacity in local health departments to be able to fully assume COVID-19 case and cluster investigation, contact tracing, isolation and quarantine support, and associated public health reporting responsibilities, within the City of Lowell, starting December 1<sup>st</sup> 2021. Grant funding is being provided to specifically hire Contact Tracers, as well as additional epidemiological staff, that will be required to effectively assume all contact tracing needs within the City. Contact Tracers will be housed within Public Health Nursing division within the Health Department, and will report to the Public Health Nurse Manager.

The State is currently winding down the reach and scope of the Contact Tracing Collaborative (CTC) across the Commonwealth, and anticipates closure of the CTC to coincide with the December 1<sup>st</sup> date mentioned above.

The Contact Tracer position is a new position within the City, and is meant to alleviate most (if not all) of the COVID-19 tracing burden from the Public Health Nursing staff.

We are respectfully requesting approval to move forward with the creation of the Contact Tracer position and the subsequent hiring of the most qualified candidate. This position is a 35 hours/week with a salary range of \$48,325.16 (min) to \$56,654.00 (max) annually.

Thank you,



Brendan Flynn  
Acting Director, Health and Human Services