



CA Notify Questions & Answers



Q: How does CA Notify work?

CA Notify uses Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) technology to exchange random codes with the phones of others who have opted in without revealing any information about the users. If another CA Notify user you've been near in the last two weeks tests positive for COVID-19 and adds their unique, anonymous verification code to the app, you'll get an anonymous notification that you have potentially been exposed. You will be referred to COVID-19 resources so you can quickly get the testing and care you need to prevent exposing others in your community.

Q: How is my privacy protected?

The system never collects or shares any location data or personal information with Google, Apple, California Health and Human Services (CHHS), or other users. Participation is entirely voluntary. Users can opt in or out at any time. CA Notify is designed to protect user privacy and security – it does not collect device location to detect exposures and does not share your identity to other users. The random keys are exchanged using Bluetooth and are not linked to your identity or location. The keys will change every fifteen minutes to protect you.

The identifiers exchanged with other phones and the keys shared with the system when you are positive are randomly generated numbers that don't contain any personally identifiable information. The identifiers exchanged with other phones are stored securely on your phone by the operating system in a way that no other software application can access them, nor do they ever leave the phone.

Q: How can I join?

Starting December 10, Android users can download CA Notify through the Google Play store and follow the prompts to activate.

iPhone users can enable notifications directly in their settings:

iPhone users can enable Exposure Notification directly from Settings. Open the Setting App>Exposure Notifications>Turn On>Select United States / California and complete the onboarding.

Q: How will CA Notify help reduce transmission?

Quickly becoming aware of COVID-19 exposure is key to stopping the spread. CA Notify complements other prevention measures including masking, physical distancing reduced mixing, and hand washing. By alerting individuals of possible exposure to the virus, they can make decisions around isolating to reduce the spread and keep themselves and others safe. This information is especially helpful for asymptomatic people who may not have symptoms but can still spread the virus. Reports from the UC system pilot show that using the CA Notify technology reduces infections. Just like wearing masks, physical distancing, handwashing and avoiding gatherings, CA Notify is another tool to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.





Q: If I test positive, will my identity be shared with others?

No. If you test positive, you will receive a verification code from the California Department of Public Health that allows you to activate the notification process. The code allows your phone to transmit your random keys to other CA Notify users. When you choose to activate this function, any phones that you were within 6 feet of for 15 minutes or more during your infectious period can receive a notice of a possible exposure. The notification will tell the other users the date of their exposure, but does not include information about location, time, or identity.

Q: Has this approach been used before?

Nearly 20 states and territories have launched apps based on Google and Apple's Exposure Notification technology. In California, CA Notify has been piloted at seven different University of California campuses. Just like wearing masks, physical distancing, handwashing and avoiding gatherings, CA Notify is another tool to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Q: Is Google, Apple or the State collecting personal information?

No, the service does not use or store personally identifiable information and is designed to protect your privacy. The technology does not record your location or use your GPS. It uses the Bluetooth feature of your phone to exchange randomly generated random "keys" (example: ABC123DGG67) that are not associated with your phone number, your name, your location, or your IP address. These random keys change approximately every 15 minutes to protect your identity. The system uses a secure, decentralized design to determine if you have been in contact with a positive individual. Keys are only stored on a user's devices, until such time a user who tests positive decides to share those keys with other users. After 14 days, or once an alert is triggered, the keys are permanently erased from the user's device.

Q: What languages will CA Notify be available in?

CA Notify will be available in 15 different languages – Arabic, Cambodian, Chinese, English, Farsi, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Pashto, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Thai, Vietnamese and Western Armenian.

Q: How long does CA Notify take to inform other users?

An exposure notification will be sent to your phone after your phone detects an exposure event based on a key/token match with someone who has reported positive in CA Notify. It takes less than a day to be notified if someone you've been exposed to submits their positive result in CA Notify. You can be notified of any exposure that happened within the last 14 days.

Q: How many notifications will I get?

It depends on how many people you interact with, how many individuals use Exposure Notifications on their phones, and how many of them have a positive diagnosis,



Q: What happens when I get a notification?

If your phone has exchanged the randomly generated keys with the phone of someone who has reported a positive diagnosis, you will receive notification of possible exposure. This notification will include instructions on self-isolation and testing.

Q: How will I receive a verification code if I test positive?

You will receive the code via text message from CDPH. The text from CDPH will come from 1-855-976-8462.

Q: What phones can support CA Notify?

All iPhones released starting in 2015 support iOS 13.7: iPhone 12, 12 Mini, 12 Pro, 12 Pro Max, 11, 11 Pro, 11 Pro Max, XR, XS, XS Max, X, SE (2nd generation), 8, 8 Plus, 7, 7 Plus, 6s, 6s Plus, SE (1st generation).

Android users can use CA Notify if their phone supports Bluetooth Low Energy, Android Version 6 (API 23) or above, and can access the Google Play Store. For further questions concerning Exposure Notifications, please visit www.google.com/covid19/exposurenotifications

Q: Will exposure notifications affect my battery life or data plan?

The service was designed to use Bluetooth and data minimally and should not have a noticeable impact on battery life or data usage.

Q: Do I need to keep Bluetooth turned on for CA Notify to work?

CA Notify uses Bluetooth Low Energy, so Bluetooth must always be active for the system to exchange keys with other users nearby.

Q: Is CA Notify a contact tracing app?

No. CA Notify is not a contact tracing app. Contact tracing identifies the close contacts of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, and contact tracers reach those individuals by phone, email and text. CA Notify does not track or trace information about the people you are in contact with and the app doesn't collect or exchange any personal information, so it isn't possible for any entity to know who you have been in contact with. CA Notify augments the contact tracing process by issuing exposure notifications to people you may not even know.

Q: Do I have to pay for CA Notify?

No, CA Notify is a free tool and available to all Californians who choose to use it.

Q: Do I have to be 18+ to use CA Notify?

CA Notify is not intended for children under the age of 13. Users between the ages of 13 and 17 can only use the system after the parent or legal guardian has reviewed and provided consent.