

Morgan Frayser, Contact Tracing Manager for the Southern 7 County Health Departments, explains how the COVID Pandemic impacted the seven most southern Illinois Counties from March 2020 to July 2022. The interview looks at the challenges of contact tracing during this time period.

Abstract

Morgan Frayser, Southern 7 County Health Departments- *Tumultuous 2020*

Name of interviewee: Morgan Frayser Name of Project: Tumultuous 2020
Interview # T20-A-L-2022 053

Biographical Information Overview of Interview:

Morgan Frayser was born in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, in 1984. She grew up in east-central Illinois and graduated from East Richland High School in Olney in 2002, where she participated in softball and gymnastics. Morgan attended Olney Central College, focusing on Liberal Arts and Sciences, and then transferred to Southern Illinois University Carbondale, majoring in Administration of Justice and Psychology. She graduated from SIU-C in 2007.

Morgan's early work experience included roles in mental health and accounting. In 2020, she began working for the Southern 7 Health Departments, which serve the southernmost counties in Illinois: Johnson, Alexander, Hardin, Massac, Pope, Pulaski, and Union. She currently serves as the Contact Tracing Manager for these departments.

This interview explores the challenges posed by COVID-19 in these remote counties through the perspective of a Public Health Contact Tracing Manager. Topics covered include: 1) adding 18-20 temporary contact tracers in July 2020 to support nurses, 2) training and scripting for contact tracers, 3) reporting requirements for IDPH (demographics, symptoms, and close contacts), 4) transportation and internet challenges in rural areas, 5) addressing public inquiries, 6) adapting duties for mass testing and vaccination sites, 7) difficulties in July and December 2020, 8) collaborating with schools for in-person classes during 2020-2021, 9) changing quarantine requirements, and 10) the personal impact of the pandemic.

Headings/Key Words:

- 1) Description of the geographic area of the Southern 7 County Health Departments (7 counties, 2303 sq. miles the size of Delaware, & 62,000 people) bordering Kentucky, Missouri, and Indiana.
- 2) Early Assignment of Contact Tracing to the Nurses then hiring temporary contact tracers July 2020
- 3) Work of the Contact Tracers July 2020-July 2022
- 4) Months most difficult for the contact tracers over the past 2 ¼ years

- 5) Reporting requirements for the contact tracers
- 6) Training of the contact tracers and the types of questions asked to the public
- 7) Types of questions asked by residents during the contact tracing process.
- 8) Personal impact of COVID

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