

# United States Senate

October 3, 2020

The Honorable Mark Meadows  
Chief of Staff, The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Meadows:

I am writing regarding the outbreak of COVID-19 at the White House. This outbreak shows how quickly the virus can spread, especially when public health guidelines are not followed.

The speed at which contact tracing and testing are conducted is critical to preventing further transmission of COVID-19. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that contact tracing should be conducted for close contacts (any individual within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes) of confirmed or probable COVID-19 patients. In addition, testing is recommended for all close contacts of confirmed or probable COVID-19 patients. For close contacts who test negative and are asymptomatic, the CDC guidance is for those contacts to self-quarantine for 14 days from their last exposure with the COVID-19 patient.

It does not appear that the White House is following these CDC guidelines and responding to its COVID-19 outbreak with the urgency and speed to keep safe all members of its staff and other individuals who work on the White House grounds or interact with White House staff. In particular, I am concerned about whether the White House is conducting the necessary contact tracing and testing for all White House residence staff – including valets, food service, housekeepers, and maintenance staff – the Secret Service, and other White House staff. I am also concerned by reports that individuals who have been in close contact with confirmed COVID-19 patients at the White House are not self-quarantining. This increases the risk of additional people becoming infected with the virus.

It is your responsibility to prioritize the health and safety of all individuals who work at the White House, regardless of their role, and to immediately take every step to prevent additional spread of COVID-19 among White House staff. I urge you to conduct all necessary contact tracing and testing at the White House without further delay.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

  
BRIAN SCHATZ  
United States Senator