

Officials look for possible Ebola patient contact

5 October 2014, by Nomaan Merchant

Authorities in Dallas are searching for a homeless person who might have had contact with the lone Ebola patient diagnosed in the United States, officials said Sunday.

The person is not considered to be one of the 10 people who definitely had contact with Thomas Eric Duncan, who is in critical condition at a Dallas hospital after traveling to the U.S. from his native Liberia, one of the West African countries hit hardest by the Ebola outbreak. The homeless man is part of a larger group of 38 people who may have been around Duncan when he was showing symptoms of the disease, officials said.

Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins called the man a "low-risk individual." Authorities had monitored him a day earlier but want to take his temperature regularly to make sure he doesn't have a fever, a possible symptom of Ebola infection.

"We are working to locate the individual and get him to a comfortable, compassionate place where we can monitor him and care for his every need," Jenkins said, adding that the search for the man was precautionary.

The group of 10 people is composed of seven [health care workers](#) and three family members or community contacts, said Dr. Tom Frieden, director of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

About 800 calls and emails are coming in daily to the CDC on Ebola, up from about 50 to 100 before Duncan was diagnosed on Tuesday, Frieden said.

Frieden said he is scheduled to brief President Barack Obama on Monday.

Duncan has been hospitalized for one week and was listed Saturday in [critical condition](#). Frieden said Sunday that he was aware that Duncan's health had "taken a turn for the worse," but he

declined to say what signs of poor health Duncan had shown.

Four members of a family who hosted Duncan in their northeast Dallas apartment are under isolation, though they have not shown symptoms of infection.

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