Isolation and Quarantine Guidance for K-12 Schools
5-day Isolation and Quarantine

**Summary of Guidance Changes for K-12 Schools, updates as of July 15th, 2022**
- Individual case investigation, close contact identification, and quarantine of in-school exposures is **not** recommended for routine in-school exposures.
- Indoor masking should be strongly encouraged when COVID-19 Community Levels are at medium or high.
- Schools should provide masks to students who do not have a mask at school but want to use one.
- Universal indoor masking or targeted indoor masking (e.g., in a class or grade level) is strongly recommended in specific situations (e.g., high absenteeism, cluster of cases, outbreak).

**ISOLATION**

**Table 1. Isolation Protocol for all K-12 Settings.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Isolation</th>
<th>Actions</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| For students and staff who have tested positive for COVID-19 or who have COVID-19 symptoms, regardless of vaccination status **should isolate for 5 days.** | Students and staff can return to school when **all** the following conditions are met:  
  - 5 full days have passed since symptoms first appeared or, if asymptomatic, 5 days after the positive test was collected **and**  
  - 24 hours with no fever without use of fever-reducing medications; **and**  
  - Symptoms have improved; **also**  
  - Must wear a well-fitting mask around others indoors from day 6 to day 10 after completing home isolation. |

*Individuals unable or unwilling to wear a mask and have tested positive should remain in isolation for 10 days, regardless of vaccination status.*

**Additional Considerations for Participation in High Risk Extracurriculars:**
Participation in extracurricular activities that are high-risk for disease transmission and do not allow for mask usage (e.g., indoor or close-contact sports, singing, playing wind instruments, etc.).  

- Individuals who have tested positive, regardless of vaccination status, should remain out of high-risk extracurricular activities until 10-days have passed since symptom onset or test collection date, even if asymptomatic.
**QUARANTINE**

The quarantine of in-school exposures is no longer recommended for K-12 schools. See Comprehensive K-12 School Guidance for more information and guidance on notifying potentially exposed individuals in schools and what to do if a school is experiencing a cluster of cases or outbreak. Active clusters or outbreaks may necessitate a temporary return to targeted case investigation, close contact identification, and quarantine of in-school exposures to prevent ongoing transmission.

Quarantine is **not required** for in-school exposures. Individuals with in-school exposure may remain in school if asymptomatic and should:

- Get tested, if possible, at least 5 days after potential exposure to a person with COVID-19, even if not having symptoms.
- If symptoms develop, immediately self-isolate and get tested.
- Wear a well-fitting mask around others indoors for 10 days.

### Table 2. Quarantine protocol for individuals who are a household or other non-school related close contact of a person who has COVID-19.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quarantine for K-12 Schools</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Who needs to quarantine?</strong></td>
<td>Individuals should stay home for 5 days after last contact with the person with COVID-19*, AND:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- People who are NOT up to date on all COVID-19 vaccinations for their age group.</td>
<td>- Get tested, if possible, at least 5 days after last contact with the person with COVID-19, even if not having symptoms.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- If symptoms develop, immediately self-isolate and get tested.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Schools may consider requiring a negative test on or after day 5 prior to return to school as an additional mitigation measure to reduce transmission of COVID-19 on school campuses. Before implementing a required test to return policy, factors impacting feasibility of required testing should be weighed, including equitable access to and availability of testing and schools’ capacity to monitor and track results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Wear a well-fitting mask around others indoors from day 6 to day 10 after completing home quarantine.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Individuals who have ongoing close contact with a person with COVID-19 because they live in the same house must stay home in quarantine for 5 days after the person with COVID-19 is released from isolation (e.g., day 11).
Who does NOT need to quarantine?

- People who are up to date on all recommended COVID-19 vaccinations for their age group.
- People who have recovered from COVID-19 in the last 90 days

Individuals should:

- Get tested, if possible, at least 5 days after last contact with the person with COVID-19, even if not having symptoms.
- If symptoms develop, immediately self-isolate and get tested; and
- Wear a well-fitting mask around others indoors for 10 days following exposure.

\[1\] If individuals are unable or unwilling to wear a mask and are a household or non-school related close contact of a person with COVID-19, they should remain in quarantine for 10 days if they are not up to date on all recommended COVID-19 vaccinations for their age group.

APPENDIX:

Table A1. Return to school protocol for individuals with symptoms that have low clinical suspicion for COVID-19 and no known exposure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symptoms and No Known Exposure</th>
<th>Actions</th>
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| Illness with low clinical suspicion for COVID-19 or past medical history of other etiology (e.g., allergy, asthma) | • Get tested for COVID-19:  
  o If positive, follow Table 1 above.  
  o If negative, see below for return to school.  
  • Provider to use clinical judgement on a case-by-case basis  
  Individuals may return to school once:  
  • Symptoms have improved; and  
  • No fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications |

Close Contacts:

- A close contact is defined as within 6 feet of a person with COVID-19 infection for a combined total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (regardless of mask use).

Close Contacts in the School Setting:

- An adult close contact is defined as within 6 feet of a person with COVID-19 infection for 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (regardless of mask use).
- A student close contact in a K-12 indoor classroom, where everyone is wearing a mask correctly and consistently, is defined as within 3 feet of a person with COVID-19 infection for 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.
- In cafeterias or indoor rooms (e.g., breakroom, classroom) where people were eating and drinking or not wearing masks correctly and consistently, a close contact is any adult or student who was within 6 feet of a person with COVID-19 infection for 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.

Note: The Department of Health does not provide isolation “clearance” letters. Schools should not require a clinician’s note to return to school if the person has completed 5 days of isolation and meets the conditions above. Schools do not need to require a negative COVID-19 test if the person has completed 5 days of isolation and meets the conditions above.