

COVID-19 School Decision Tree

This guidance is based on CDC and DCPH guidelines and serves to help staff and school nurses understand various situations that may occur in the school setting. All reports of students, staff, and faculty with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 should be reported to DCPH. Everyone two years or older not fully vaccinated, and those who are immunocompromised, should wear a mask in indoor public places. If fully vaccinated, to maximize protection and prevent possibly spreading COVID-19 to others, wear a mask indoors in public if in an area of substantial or high transmission.

Confirmed or Sick 1



Isolate at Home

- Stay home and isolate for at least 5 days since symptoms appeared AND
- Fever free for at least 24 hours without fever reducing medication

 AND
 - Improvement in symptoms
- If asymptomatic, isolate for 5 days from test date



Return to School

...when the above can be met

 Continue wearing a well-fitting mask in all indoor settings and monitor for symptoms for 5 additional days

Close Contact/Exposure²

If Unvaccinated OR

Vaccinated over 6 months ago with Pfizer/Moderna and NOT boosted OR

Vaccinated over 2 months ago with J&J and NOT boosted



Quarantine, Mask, and Test

- Quarantine at home for at least 5 days, with date of exposure being day 0.
 - Get tested 5 days after exposure, if possible
- If positive, follow criteria under "Confirmed or Sick"
- If negative, follow return to school guidance below
- If symptoms develop following negative test, isolate from others and test again for COVID-19
- If the close contact lives with someone who has COVID-19 and cannot avoid continued close contact, quarantine starts after the person who has COVID-19 meets the criteria to end home isolation



Return to School

...when the above can be met AND

• Continue wearing a well-fitting mask in all indoor settings and monitor for symptoms for 5 additional days

If Boosted OR

Vaccinated in last 6 months with Pfizer/Moderna

OR

Vaccinated in last 2 months with J&J

OR

Tested positive for COVID-19 in last 90 days



Mask and Test

Boosted or recently vaccinated individuals do not need to quarantine. They should:

- Wear a well-fitting mask around others for 10 days and monitor for symptoms
 - Get tested 5 days after exposure, if possible
 - If positive, follow criteria under "Confirmed or Sick"
- If negative, continue wearing a well-fitting mask in all indoor settings and monitor for symptoms for 5 additional days
- If symptoms develop following negative test, isolate from others and test again for COVID-19
- 1. If an individual has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to school before completing stay at home period, the individual must either (a) obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis or (b) obtain a negative molecular (PCR) or antigen test conducted by a healthcare provider.
- 2. Close contact is defined as:
 - a. being directly exposed to infectious secretions (e.g., being coughed on); or
 - b. being within 6 feet for a cumulative duration of 15 minutes over a 24-hour period;
- 3. Either (a) or (b) in footnote 2 above defines close contact if it occurred during the infectious period of the lab-confirmed case, defined as two days prior to symptom onset to 5 days after symptom onset. In the case of asymptomatic individuals who are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, the infectious period is defined as two days prior to the confirming lab test and continuing for 5 days following the confirming lab test.
- 4. Exception to (b): In the K-12 indoor classroom setting, the close contact definition excludes student who within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student if both the infected student and the exposed student(s) correctly and consistently wore well-fitting masks the entire time.