

COVID-19 Protocol

Isolation, Exclusion and Return to School

The phrase “COVID-19 symptoms” in this protocol refers to the new onset of one or more of the following symptoms that is not attributed to allergies or a pre-existing condition: fever of at least 100.4 degrees, new cough, shortness of breath, fatigue from an unknown cause, muscle or body aches from an unknown cause, new onset of moderate to severe headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, vomiting, diarrhea. Because these are symptoms of many other conditions, it should be considered whether a symptom is new or if it is part of an existing condition.

According to the IDPH, a “close contact” is an individual not up to date with COVID-19 vaccination or who has not completed the primary series of COVID-19 vaccine of age 5-17 and who was within six feet of an infected person (confirmed or probable case) for a cumulative total of fifteen minutes or more over a 24-hour period (regardless of whether the individuals were wearing masks) starting from 2 days before symptom onset or a positive test if asymptomatic. For students in the classroom setting, contacts who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected (confirmed or probable) student do not require quarantine if both the case and contact were consistently masked. If they were not consistently masked, then close contacts are classroom students who were within six feet of the infected (confirmed or probable) student for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. For individuals on school transportation, an individual within 3 to 6 feet of an infected (confirmed or probable) case do not require quarantine if both the case and the exposed individual were consistently and correctly masked and windows were opened (front, middle, and back, or overhead) to allow for good ventilation or HEPA filters were in use during transit. In general, individuals who are solely exposed to a confirmed case while outdoors will not be considered close contacts. Individuals ages 18 years or older who are “up to date” with COVID-19 vaccination (i.e. received all recommended doses in their primary series of COVID-19 vaccine and a booster dose when eligible) and students ages 5-17 who have completed the primary series of a COVID-19 vaccine who remain asymptomatic and those with documented COVID-19 infection within the past 90 days are excluded from quarantine.

Report of COVID-19 Symptoms Before or After School

Exclusion

If a parent/guardian (on behalf of a student) or staff member reports experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 before or after school or during a screening process, they should not enter the school building and should contact a healthcare provider. Pending test results, household members of the symptomatic student or staff member can remain in school with consistent use of well-fitting masks both indoors and outdoors.

Return to School

A symptomatic student or staff member (or household member) cannot return to school until:

If NOT tested for COVID-19:

- For those who can mask upon return, at least 5 days have passed since the onset of symptoms, AND they have been fever-free (without medication) for 24 hours, and vomiting and diarrhea have ceased for 24 hours, AND the symptoms have improved (AND, if for a student, they submit a note from a parent/guardian documenting that the ill student and/or household contacts are fever-free (without medication), and symptoms have improved) AND they consistently mask upon return through day 10.

OR

- For those unable to mask upon return, at least 10 days have passed.

If tested for COVID-19:

- They have a negative COVID-19 test (result valid only for the date on which the individual submitted to testing, ideally when testing is performed 48 hours before or after symptom onset, but no more than 72 hours) result, AND they are fever-free (without medication), AND the symptoms have improved, AND they submit documentation of a negative COVID-19 test result **or** a health care provider's note indicating the negative test result.
- Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 should refer to the return to school procedures under the Diagnosis of COVID-19 Section in this document.

Report of COVID-19 Symptoms During the School Day

Isolation/Exclusion

If a student or staff member develops COVID-19 symptoms during the school day, the student or staff member must be immediately separated from the rest of the school population and evaluated.

Return to School

A symptomatic student or staff member (or household member) cannot return to school until:

If NOT tested for COVID-19:

- For those who can mask upon return, at least 5 days have passed since the onset of symptoms, AND they have been fever-free (without medication) for 24 hours, and vomiting and diarrhea have ceased for 24 hours, AND the symptoms have improved (AND, if for a student, they submit a note from a parent/guardian documenting that the ill student and/or household contacts are fever free (without medication), and symptoms have improved) AND they consistently mask upon return through day 10.

OR

- For those who can not mask upon return, at least 10 days have passed.

If tested for COVID-19:

- They have a negative COVID-19 test (result valid only for the date on which individual submitted to testing, when testing ideally performed 48 hours before or after symptom onset but no more than 72 hours) result AND they are fever free (without medication), AND the symptoms have improved, AND they submit documentation of a negative COVID-19 test result or a health care provider's note indicating the negative test result.
- Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 should refer to the return to school procedures under the Diagnosis of COVID-19 Section in this document

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