

How to Respond to Positive COVID-19 Tests & Close Contacts in School Settings

What is the definition of a close contact in school settings?

Close Contacts: In schools, any student within 3 feet sustained for 15 minutes or more, or adult within 6 feet sustained for 15 minutes or more, regardless of mask use. Also, anyone between 3 and 6 feet sustained for 15 minutes or more without masks.

Not Close Contacts: Any student more than 3 feet from an infected student, only if both the infected student and exposed student correctly and consistently wore well-fitting masks the entire time. Also, anyone more than 6 feet from an infected student or adult.

TEST POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

ISOLATE – For 5 days, regardless of vaccination status

- Report positive case to school nurse/COVID coordinator.
- Provide information for any close contacts from the school environment.
- **With Symptoms:**
 - 1) You can end isolation **5 days after** symptoms first appeared
 - **IF:** 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications
 - **IF:** Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving (loss of taste/smell may last weeks and should not delay end of isolation)
 - **AND:** You must wear a well-fitting mask for the following 5 days when around others, both at home, and outside-of-the home.
- **Without Symptoms:**
 - **Isolate for 5 days** since your positive COVID-19 test. You must wear a well-fitting mask for the following 5 days when around others, both at home, and outside-of-the home.
- If you are unable to wear a mask, isolate for 10 days

CLOSE CONTACTS

IF YOU:

- Are 18+, fully vaccinated and boosted when eligible; or
- Are 5-17 and fully vaccinated (even without booster) ***starting 1/31 ages 5-17 who are not boosted when eligible are to quarantine for 5 days per CDC update.**
- You had a viral-test confirmed case of COVID-19 within the last 90 days.

THEN:

- **No quarantine** is required
- **Wear a well-fitting mask for 10 days** around others both at home, and when not at home
- Test on day 5 after your exposure if possible (not required if positive COVID—19 test in last 90 days)
- If symptoms develop, isolate at home immediately and get a test.

IF YOU:

- Are unvaccinated, or partially vaccinated
- You are 18 +, fully vaccinated but haven't gotten booster if eligible (five months after complete Pfizer/Moderna series, or two months after J&J vaccine).

THEN:

- Stay home (**quarantine**) for **5 days**.
- **Wear a well-fitting mask** around others at home and outside of home for **another 5 days**
- Test on day 5 after your exposure if possible
- If symptoms develop, isolate at home immediately and get a test.

Read Updated CDC Guidance on Isolation and Quarantine

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html#closecontact>

Social Distancing in Schools

CDC recommends **schools maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms, combined with indoor mask wearing** to reduce transmission risk. When it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of at least 3 feet, such as when schools cannot fully re-open while maintaining these distances, it is **especially important to layer multiple other prevention strategies**.