

Responding to Positive COVID-19 Cases in a School

Point of Contact and Reporting of Positive Cases

To promote the continuation of last year's successful communication strategy, all districts will continue to identify a Point of Contact (POC) who will initiate the contact tracing process when positive cases are reported at school and notify the ADH of positive cases as they occur.

If an individual who has been in a school has tested positive for COVID-19, districts are still required to continue to follow the established ADH reporting processes and requirements for isolation and quarantine. There are some conditions that could exempt an exposed individual / close contact to the quarantine/isolation requirements that are discussed below. School nurses can help verify the status of a potential close contact to help POCs and school officials determine responses.

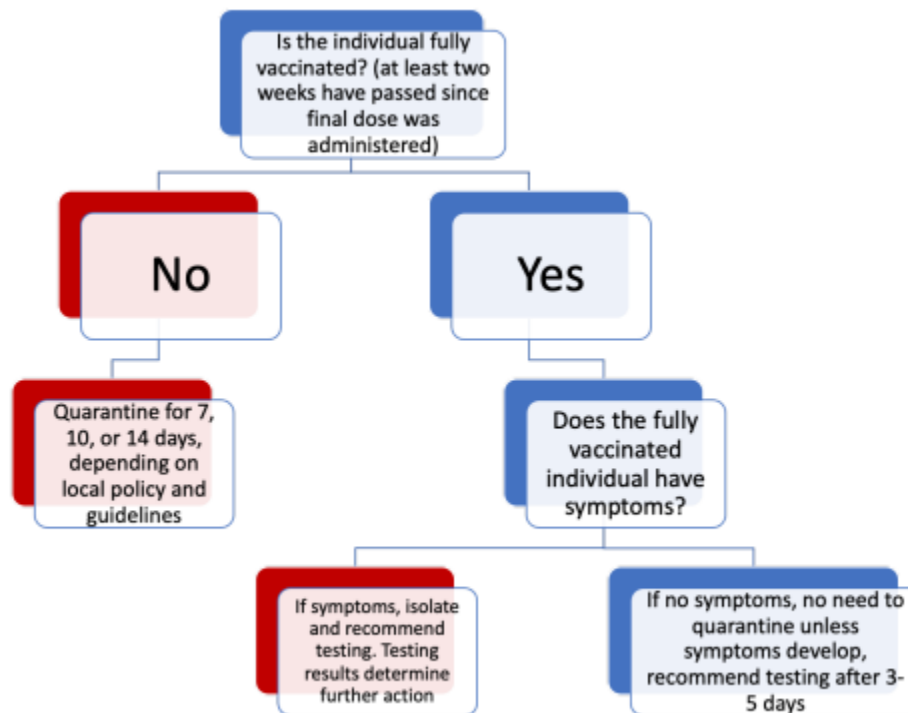
Close Contact Determination and Responses

The CDC defines a close contact as an individual confirmed to have been within six feet for 15 cumulative minutes or longer within a 24-hour period during the infectious period of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19.

1. Individuals who have previously tested positive for COVID-19 and recovered and who are subsequently exposed to someone with COVID-19 within three months of their original diagnosis do not have to stay at home or get tested again, as long as they do not develop new symptoms. Individuals who develop symptoms again within three months of their first instance of COVID-19 should see their physician as they may need to be tested again if there is no other cause identified for their symptoms.

2. Individuals exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19 will not need to be quarantined if they have no symptoms and both the infected and exposed individual consistently and correctly were wearing a mask.

3. Individuals who are fully vaccinated may not have to quarantine. To help determine whether a fully vaccinated individual should quarantine, refer to the following chart:



School officials should review with POCs the local process for identifying close contacts and the process for communicating with parents, staff, and students whether an individual will need to stay home and/or be tested.

Quarantine of those exposed to someone with COVID-19

As of December 2, 2020, the CDC amended its guidance to allow two shorter options for the quarantine period. Based on current CDC guidance, the quarantine period can end for individuals experiencing no symptoms according to the following guidelines:

1. After 10 full 24-hour periods since close contact exposure without testing, or
2. After seven full 24-hour periods since close contact exposure and after receiving a negative test result (sample taken no earlier than five 24-hour periods after exposure).

If individuals return to school from these shorter quarantine windows, they should regularly monitor themselves for symptoms to ensure they remain symptom-free and take appropriate precautions (e.g., consistent mask usage) for the duration of the 14-day incubation period.