



FAQ on Safely and Successfully returning to School

Q. What is a contact? (contact of a contact of a contact) Am I a contact?

A. A close contact is someone who has been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. To be a close contact you would need to have been closer than 6 ft. to that person and spent over 15 cumulative minutes with this person.

Q. What does this letter mean I was potential exposed to a positive case in the school?

A. This letter means someone in your school has tested positive for COVID-19. This doesn't not mean you have been directly exposed. It means you should be self-aware of any symptoms you might develop during the dates indicated on the letter and follow the instructions on the letter.

Q. Who will be contacting me about this exposure?

A. If you are identified as a close contact, someone from the health department will reach out to you to ask you some questions and give you instructions on how to quarantine and when you can return to normal activities.

Q. I am quarantined, what does that mean and how long?

A. The usual quarantine time is 14 days from last day of exposure to the person who tested positive. This will be longer if you live in the same household as the person who tested positive. Then your quarantine will be completed 14 days after your household member is released from their isolation.

Q. I have children in multiple schools in the district, what do I do for my other children?

A. If your other children are not identified as close contacts to someone in the school then you do not need to keep them out of school. If your child is someone who has tested positive, then you will need to keep your other children home from school until they are released from quarantine by the health dept.

Q. I was wearing PPE when I had contact with the positive case? I am safe, right?

A. Wearing PPE reduces your risk of contracting COVID-19, but there is never zero risk. If you were wearing a mask, but still have close contact with someone who tested positive, you will still need to quarantine and self-monitor for 14 days.

Q. Do I need to tell a class that a student's parent tested positive and that the student is quarantined? How would I handle this situation?

A. No. This would be no different than a child being out for another illness. If the class has not been directly exposed, (which they would not have in this case) then there is no need to tell anyone in the class.

Q. How do you determine who gets tested? Are there specific symptoms that determine if you get a test?

A. At this time, only people with symptoms are being tested-but these symptoms could be very mild. Common symptoms in children are fever, runny nose, diarrhea, cough-all symptoms of many other childhood viruses.

Q. Are face shields appropriate replacement for face coverings?

A. Face shields are an added protection in addition to a face covering, not usually used INSTEAD of a face covering. Air can move around a face shield as where a mask catches the virus particles that may be in the air you breathe out.

Q. Who determines if a school should close?

A. The decision to close a school is not made solely by the health department. It is however, a decision made by the respective school or school district administration in consultation with the health department and other partners/stakeholders.

Q. If my child has to quarantine at home due to an exposure to Covid-19, will a negative test result allow them to come back to school before the end of the quarantine?

A. No. If they are tested during their quarantine and the results are negative, they still need to complete the full 14-day quarantine before going back to school or being around others. The reason for this is that the virus can take up to 14 days to be detected by a test, so if they were tested too early it will be negative.

Q. Are there any health risks associated with wearing a mask for a prolonged period of time?

A. No, wearing a mask or face covering for a prolonged period of time will not harm you. However, there may be groups of people who should not wear face coverings due to certain health conditions, which would be determined by their doctor.

Q. Does the use of Plexiglas barrier between students eliminate their exposure to a positive case?

A. No, similar to a mask or face covering a Plexiglas barrier reduces the risk of getting sick but does not eliminate the exposure so those students would still need to quarantine if exposed to a positive case.

Q. Should employees/faculty be tested before returning to work?

A. No. It can take up to 14 days for the virus to be detected on a test, so if someone is tested too early it would be negative and give a false sense of security. Testing is not recommended unless you have signs and symptoms of Covid-19 or have had in close contact with someone who tested positive for Covid19.

Q. I am a close contact/household contact, should I be tested for COVID-19?

A. Yes, the health department recommends testing of all household contacts and close contacts.

Q. Why do I need to complete my quarantine if my COVID test results said I was negative?

A. The virus can take up to 14 days to be detected by a test, so if you are tested too early it will be negative.

Q. Will the Health Department enact a mandate masks in the schools?

A. No, the Health Department will not be mandating masks in schools. However, the Health Department supports a schools or district's decision to mandate them. The use of face coverings are strongly encouraged and are effective to stop the spread of the virus.

Q. What documentation does the Health Department provide to persons who are positive for COVID or quarantined due to being a close contact to allow them to be out of work/school or return to work/school?

A. Each positive case will receive an order to isolate letter from the health department. Once we determine they are no longer infectious, they will receive a release from isolation letter. Close contacts will receive a verbal order to quarantine and will only receive a quarantine letter if the health department believes they will not comply.

Q. Where can I refer a student or staff to be tested for COVID-19?

A. A student or staff can discuss testing with their primary care provider or contact the COVID Clinic at 1-844-225-0147.