

Protocol for Schools Assisting Public Health with Close Contact Identification for COVID-19

Student or staff with **POSITIVE TEST¹** for novel coronavirus or designated as a "Probable Case" by Public Health Immediately exclude positive student or staff from school for full isolation period. Exclude household contacts² for duration of quarantine as determined by public health.

Student or staff with positive¹ test will be instructed by public health to isolate at home. They may return to school after a 10-day isolation³ from symptom onset (or date of positive test, if no symptoms) **AND** no fever for ≥ 24 hours (without fever reducing medication) **AND** improved symptoms.

Individuals determined to be close contacts will be instructed by public health to quarantine at home. Exceptions include:

- those within 90 days of testing positive for COVID-19
- those who are fully vaccinated⁴ **and** without symptoms.
- instances where both students (the case and contact) were engaged in consistent correct use of well-fitting masks **and** other K-12 school prevention strategies (such as universal and correct mask use, physical distancing, increased ventilation) were in place in the school

Options for quarantine include:
10 days (return to school on day 11) from last contact with case if without symptoms (no testing required).

7 days (return to school on day 8) from last contact with case if without symptoms and test¹ obtained after day 5 is negative.

Mask use, physical distancing, and daily symptom monitoring is important through day 14.

See www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html

Public health staff will conduct contact tracing as with any reported case. Contact tracing within a school setting can be most efficient and effective with the partnership of school staff.

Work quickly to identify close contacts:
Students/staff within 6 feet of a case for a cumulative total of ≥ 15 minutes over a 24-hour period. Exposure period to consider is any time from 48 hours before through 10 days after symptom onset or positive test result if case is without symptoms.

Districts may assist by **immediately** notifying their local health department and providing a list of identified close contacts.

Schools MAY exclude students or staff at their discretion. The Health Department makes official decisions regarding which students or staff require isolation or quarantine. Districts may consider sending parents letters and handouts available on the [TDH Education Resource Page](https://www.tn.gov/health/cedep/ncov/educational-resources.html). www.tn.gov/health/cedep/ncov/educational-resources.html

CONSIDER

Classroom contacts within 6 feet in the front, side, and back of student

Lunch contacts within 6 feet for a cumulative total of ≥ 15 minutes over a 24hr period

Free period contacts within 6 feet for a cumulative total of ≥ 15 minutes over a 24hr period

Transportation contacts within 6 feet for a cumulative total of ≥ 15 minutes over a 24hr period

Sports team or extracurricular contacts within 6 feet in the front, side, and back of student

¹ **Test** refers to SARS-CoV-2 PCR or antigen test (NOT antibody).
² Quarantine for household contacts extends beyond last exposure to COVID case for duration of selected quarantine option.
³ Immunocompromised individuals or those with severe illness may require isolation of up to 20 days. CDC guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html>
⁴ Fully vaccinated = ≥ 2 weeks following receipt of either the second dose in a 2-dose series or receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine.