

Frequently Asked Questions

ISOLATION & QUARANTINE

What is the difference between isolation and quarantine?

[Isolation](#) is for people who are COVID positive. It separates people who are infected with the virus from people who are not infected. It usually lasts 10 days.

[Quarantine](#) is for people who are well but are exposed to someone who is COVID positive. It keeps someone who might have been infected with the virus away from others. It lasts 14 days since the last possible exposure.

How long must a teacher or staff person be out of school if they test positive for COVID-19?

A teacher or staff person that tests positive for COVID-19 should isolate at home. The teacher or staff person may return to school after 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared **and** 24 hours with no fever **and** symptoms have improved <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html>

If a teacher or staff person was in a classroom full of children, and that teacher later finds out that they have COVID-19 while they were in the classroom, must all the class be quarantined, or only those children who were within 6 feet of the teacher for 15 minutes or more?

The entire class must be quarantined and monitor for COVID-19-related symptoms.

If a teacher or staff member has a household member that tests positive but does not have symptoms, can the teacher or staff member come to work anyway and monitor for symptoms?

No, asymptomatic people who test positive can still spread the virus. A teacher or staff member that has a household member that tests positive and is considered a close contact must quarantine during the household member's isolation period and 14 days after the isolation period ends.

If the teacher was wearing a cloth mask in the classroom, and that teacher later finds out that they have COVID-19 while they were in the classroom, do the children still have to be quarantined?

Yes, the children who were in the classroom are still considered close contacts and must quarantine for 14 days and monitor for symptoms.

Does a sibling of a child in quarantine have to be quarantined?

No, if the sibling was not a direct contact of a person who tested positive for COVID-19, then they should monitor for symptoms and can continue attending school.

If a student changes classes and is with many different students during the day rather than just one classroom of students, and that student tests positive, do *all* those students have to quarantine?

Yes, this is one reason it is wise to keep students in small cohorts.

CLOSURES

Must we close a classroom if a person tests positive for COVID-19 attended class in that classroom? If so, for how long?

Yes, it is recommended to close off the area for at least 24 hours and then be cleaned and disinfected. Additional closure guidance will be provided after completion of the case investigation. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>.

How many children have to be sick with COVID-19 before a school closes?

The Health Department will work closely with School Administration recognizing there are many factors to be considered when closing a school.

COMMUNICATION

Does the school have to inform the families of students when a child is excluded from school because of COVID-19, or does the Health Department do that?

The school is responsible for communication to families of students. However, the Health Department will provide guidance as needed.

Does the school have to tell families which child tested positive for COVID-19? Isn't that a violation of HIPAA?

The identity of the child or teacher must be protected as much as possible. Close contacts will be contacted and only given information related to their exposure. The name of the COVID-19 student or teacher will be shared on a need to know basis only.

GENERAL COVID-19

How can we know when a person is no longer infectious?

10 days since symptoms first appeared and 24 hours with no fever without taking fever reducing medication and symptoms have improved.

TESTING

If a student has an illness that is not COVID-19, like a cold, does that child still have to be out of school until they are 72 hours fever free?

If the student is experiencing any COVID-19-related symptoms, they might have COVID-19 and they should not attend school. They should contact their regular medical provider and get

tested for COVID-19. If they test negative for COVID-19, then they can return with proof of negative result, provided symptoms have improved and fever resolved.

If a student teacher or staff are told they are a close contact of a positive case and they get a COVID-19 test that is negative are they released from quarantine?

No, a person can become COVID-19 positive any time during quarantine (the 14 days after the exposure).

Does a teacher, staff person, or student have to retest for COVID-19 after testing positive before they are allowed back to school?

No, the teacher, staff person or student who tested positive can return to school after 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared **and** 24 hours with no fever **and** symptoms have improved.

HIGH-RISK INDIVIDUALS

Will children who are at the highest risk for complications, such as children with severe respiratory problems, be required to stay out of the school classroom until this pandemic is over?

The decision to send a child to school or not will be made jointly by the parent and school with guidance from the child's medical provider.

TRAVEL

What if a staff member/student goes out of state?

There are no current restrictions for staff members or students who travel out of state. However, everyone should assume COVID-19 exposure and monitor for symptoms.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Can a teacher wear a face shield in place of a mask?

Per CDC, it is not known if face shields provide any benefit as source control to protect others from the spray of respiratory particles. CDC does not recommend use of face shields for normal everyday activities or as a substitute for cloth face coverings.

SCREENINGS

Are Oakland County Schools required to conduct temperature checks as part of the screening process?

Health screenings refer to symptom screening, temperature screening, or a combination of both. Although temperature screening for COVID-19 has become a widespread practice in a variety of business and community settings, its limited effectiveness may be outweighed by potential harms. With respect to COVID-19, the CDC acknowledges that "fever and symptom screening have proven to be relatively ineffective in identifying all infected individuals." This is because people with COVID-19 can infect others before they become ill (pre-symptomatic transmission), some people with COVID-19 never become ill but can still infect others (asymptomatic transmission), and fever may not be the first symptom to appear.

There are also several drawbacks and limitations to temperature screening including inaccurate results, potential risks to the personnel who are measuring temperatures, potential risks to screened populations, and significant logistical challenges and costs. Temperature screening may additionally lead to delays in the start of the school day and may also inadvertently increase risk of disease transmission if students congregate in long lines while waiting to be screened. For these reasons, Oakland County Health Division is not requiring schools to mandate temperature checks screening is not a requirement for schools.