

Protocols for School Staff in K-12 School Settings

K-12 Guidance 2021-2022 School Year (ca.gov)

This protocol aligns with CDPH School Guidance [K-12 Guidance 2021-22 School Year \(ca.gov\)](#). For details on frequently asked questions including the requirement for masking in K-12 public and private schools see K-12 School Guidance 2021-2022 Q&A. [K-12 Schools Guidance 2021-2022 Questions & Answers \(ca.gov\)](#). For more information on isolation and quarantine, please refer to the following CDPH guidance. [Guidance on Isolation and Quarantine for COVID-19 Contact Tracing \(ca.gov\)](#)

GUIDANCE FOR STAFF

POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST – REGARDLESS OF VACCINATION STATUS

Confirmed COVID-19 Test symptomatic:

- Positive staff member to remain in home isolation for at least 5 days.
- Isolation can end after day 5 if symptoms are not present or are resolving AND a diagnostic specimen** is collected on day 5 or later and the test is negative.
- If fever is present, isolation should be continued until fever resolves.
- If symptoms, other than fever, are not resolving continue to isolate until symptoms are resolving or until after day 10.

Confirmed COVID-19 Test asymptomatic or the onset of symptoms is unknown:

- Positive staff members to remain in home isolation for at least 5 days.
- Isolation can end after day 5 if symptoms are not present or are resolving AND a diagnostic specimen** is collected on day 5 or later and the test is negative.
- If isolation is discontinued after day 5, staff must continue to wear a well-fitting mask around others for a total of 10 days, especially in indoor settings.
- If staff develop symptoms during isolation, staff must remain in isolation until after day 10.

NOTE: If staff is unable to test or choose not to test, and symptoms are not present or are resolving, staff must remain in isolation until after day 10.

**Antigen Test Preferred

NO KNOWN EXPOSURE – SYMPTOMATIC – REGARDLESS OF VACCINATION STATUS

Testing can be completed at the onset of symptoms but please note that subsequent testing may be required on day 5 or later. While test is pending continue home isolation.

Send home, instruct to isolate for at least 5 days, and recommend testing on day 5.

Notify School Health Office immediately and share test results.

- While staff COVID-19 test is pending, they must continue home isolation.
- **If staff test is positive:** staff must continue isolation and follow protocol for **POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST - REGARDLESS OF VACCINATION STATUS**.
- **If staff test is negative and symptoms are not present or are resolving:** staff may be released from isolation and return to work if: staff tested on day 5 or later, received a negative test, symptoms are not present or are resolving AND is afebrile for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.
- **If staff test is negative but still symptomatic:** Ensure staff was tested on day 5 or later from symptom onset. If test was completed before day 5 from symptom onset, recommend retest on day 5 or later from symptom onset. If test was completed on day 5 or later from symptom onset, an individualized assessment for other potential diagnosis (e.g., flu) is recommended; OR a healthcare provider has provided documentation that the symptoms are typical of their underlying chronic condition; OR a healthcare provider has confirmed an alternative diagnosis; OR at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset.

If staff refuse to test, staff must remain on home isolation through Day-10 and can return on Day 11 if 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and symptoms are not present or are resolving.

EXPOSED TO COVID-19 – UNVACCINATED OR VACCINATED W/NO BOOSTER

ASYMPTOMATIC - Vaccinated W/No Booster

- Staff does not need to quarantine if they remain asymptomatic and test negative on day 5 or later after last exposure to positive COVID-19 case.
- Employee must wear a well-fitted mask around others for a total of 10 days.
- Highly encourage to complete booster.
- If symptoms develop, staff must follow **SYMPTOMATIC – UNVACCINATED OR VACCINATED W/NO BOOSTER** guidance below.

ASYMPTOMATIC - Unvaccinated

Exposed to Confirmed Positive Case

Send home, instruct to quarantine for at least 5 days, and recommend testing on day 5.

- While exposed staff COVID-19 test is pending, exposed staff must continue home quarantine.
- **If exposed staff test is positive:** exposed staff must continue isolation and follow protocol for **POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST – REGARDLESS OF VACCINATION STATUS.**
- **If exposed staff test is negative:** exposed staff can follow one of the following quarantine options below in this section.

QUARANTINE OPTIONS

1. Quarantine can end after Day 5 from the date of last exposure if: staff remain asymptomatic, test on day 5 or later and test negative.
2. If staff are unable to test or choosing not to test, and staff remain asymptomatic, quarantine can end after day 10 from last exposure date.

Exposed to Presumed Positive Case (PPC)

Send home, instruct to quarantine for at least 5 days, and recommend testing on day 5.

- While PPC test result is pending, exposed staff must continue home quarantine.
- **If PPC test is positive,** exposed staff must follow **“EXPOSED TO COVID-19 – UNVACCINATED OR VACCINATED W/NO BOOSTER GUIDANCE FOR ASYMPTOMATIC” individuals** in this section.
- **If PPC test is negative:** An exposed staff member may discontinue quarantine and be cleared to work if staff member continues to be asymptomatic and is afebrile for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.

Staff must continue to mask (surgical mask recommended) while indoors in K-12 schools, continue daily self-monitoring for symptoms, and adhere to other non-pharmaceutical interventions through day 10 from last known exposure.

SYMPTOMATIC - Unvaccinated OR Vaccinated W/No Booster

Testing can be completed at the onset of symptoms but please note that subsequent testing may be required on day 5 or later. While test is pending continue home isolation.

Exposed to Confirmed Positive COVID-19 Case

Send home, instruct to isolate for at least 5 days, and recommend testing on day 5.

- While exposed staff COVID-19 test is pending, exposed staff must continue home isolation.
- **If exposed staff test is positive:** exposed staff must continue isolation and follow protocol for **POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST – REGARDLESS OF VACCINATION STATUS.**
- **If exposed staff test is negative:** exposed staff can follow one of the following quarantine options below in this section.

- Notify School Health Office immediately and share test results.

QUARANTINE OPTIONS:

1. Quarantine can end after Day 5 from the date of last exposure if: staff symptoms are not present or are resolving, test on day 5 or later and test negative.
2. If staff are unable to test or choosing not to test, and symptoms are no longer present, quarantine can end after day 10 from last exposure date.
3. If symptoms, other than fever, are not resolving continue to isolate until symptoms are resolving or until after day 10.

Exposed to Presumed Positive Case (PPC)

Send home, instruct to isolate for at least 5 days, and recommend testing on day 5.

- While PPC test result is pending, exposed staff must continue home isolation.
- **If PPC test is positive, exposed staff must:** follow **EXPOSED TO CONFIRMED POSITIVE COVID-19 CASE** in the section above.
- **If PPC test is negative and exposed staff member’s symptoms either resolve or are resolving** they may be released from isolation and return to work if symptoms are resolving and is afebrile for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.
- **If PPC test is negative and exposed staff continue to be symptomatic with symptom(s) not resolving,** they must continue to be excluded from work for 5 days. A exposed staff member may be released from isolation and return to work if: COVID-19 test result is negative, and staff symptoms have improved AND is afebrile for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications; OR a healthcare provider has provided documentation that the symptoms are typical of their underlying chronic condition; OR a healthcare provider has confirmed an alternative diagnosis; OR at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset.

Staff must continue to mask (surgical mask recommended) while indoors in K-12 schools, continue daily self-monitoring for symptoms, and adhere to other non-pharmaceutical interventions through day 14 from last known exposure.

EXPOSED TO COVID-19 – VACCINATED W/BOOSTER OR VACCINATED BUT NOT YET BOOSTER ELIGIBLE

ASYMPTOMATIC – Vaccinated W/BOOSTER OR Vaccinated BUT NOT YET BOOSTER ELIGIBLE

Exposed, fully vaccinated w/booster OR vaccinated, but not yet booster-eligible, staff may continue going to work so long as they remain asymptomatic. Staff must continue to mask (surgical mask recommended) while indoors on K-12 settings and adhere to other non-pharmaceutical interventions (e.g., handwashing, optimize ventilation).

- Exposed asymptomatic staff should test on day 5 from exposure date.
- If exposed staff becomes symptomatic, exclude from work, isolate, and recommend testing. Testing can be completed at the onset of symptoms. If test is positive, staff must follow protocol for **POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST – REGARDLESS OF VACCINATION STATUS** found in this document.

SYMPTOMATIC – Vaccinated W/BOOSTER OR Vaccinated BUT NOT YET BOOSTER ELIGIBLE

Testing can be completed at the onset of symptoms but please note that subsequent testing may be required on day 5 or later. While test is pending continue home isolation.

Exposed to Confirmed Positive COVID-19 Case

Send home, instruct to isolate for at least 5 days, and recommend testing on day 5.

- While exposed staff COVID-19 test is pending, exposed staff must continue home isolation.
- **If exposed staff test is positive:** exposed staff must continue isolation and follow protocol for **POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST – REGARDLESS OF VACCINATION STATUS.**
- **If exposed staff test is negative:** exposed staff can follow one of the following isolation options below in this section.
- Notify School Health Office immediately and share test results.

ISOLATION OPTIONS:

4. Isolation can end after Day 5 from the date of last exposure if: staff symptoms are not present or are resolving, test on day 5 or later and test negative.
5. If staff are unable to test or choosing not to test, and symptoms are no longer present, isolation can end after day 10 from last exposure date.
6. If fever is present, isolation should be continued until fever resolves.
7. If symptoms, other than fever, are not resolving continue to isolate until symptoms are resolving or until after day 10.

NOTE: If exposed staff member has tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days, they do not need to isolate unless new symptoms develop. If it has been more than 90 days since a previous positive test and staff remain symptomatic, staff should follow isolation options in this section. If a school/district does not elect a shortened isolation (test on day 5 and return on day 6 7) a 10-day isolation **must be completed**.

Exposed to Presumed Positive Case (PPC)

Send home, instruct to isolate for at least 5 days, and recommend testing on day 5.

- While PPC test result is pending, exposed staff must continue home isolation.
- **If PPC test is positive, exposed staff must:** follow **EXPOSED TO CONFIRMED POSITIVE COVID-19 CASE** in the section above.
- **If PPC test is negative and exposed staff member's symptoms either resolve or are resolving** they may be released from isolation and return to work if symptoms are resolving and is afebrile for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.
- **If PPC test is negative and exposed staff continue to be symptomatic with symptom(s) not resolving,** they must continue to be excluded from work for 5 days. A exposed staff member may be released from isolation and return to work if: COVID-19 test result is negative, and staff symptoms have improved AND is afebrile for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications; OR a healthcare provider has provided documentation that the symptoms are typical of their underlying chronic condition; OR a healthcare provider has confirmed an alternative diagnosis; OR at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset.

Staff must continue to mask (surgical mask recommended) while indoors in K-12 schools, continue daily self-monitoring for symptoms, and adhere to other non-pharmaceutical interventions through day 14 from last known exposure.

DEFINITIONS

Positive Case: a person who has tested positive for COVID-19.

Presumptive Positive Case (PPC): a person who has tested for COVID-19 due to an exposure or symptom(s) present.

Close Contact: within 6 feet for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period

Exposed: an individual that has had close contact with a Positive Case.

Isolation: If you have tested POSITIVE for COVID-19, you will need to self-isolate. This means that you will need to stay in a separate room, with no personal contact with others for 10 days.

Quarantine: If you have been EXPOSED to someone with COVID-19, you will need to self-quarantine. This means you will need to stay at home for 10 days while avoiding contact with other people.

Shortened Quarantine: staff can return to work after Day 5 if a negative diagnostic specimen is collected on Day 5 or after from date of last exposure and staff remains asymptomatic.

VACCINATED

Fully Vaccinated (2 doses/ 1 dose for J&J) and Booster

Fully Vaccinated (2 doses/ 1 dose for J&J) and not yet Booster Eligible or fully vaccinated (2 doses/ 1 for J&J) and less than 18 years old.

UNVACCINATED

Not vaccinated

Partially vaccinated

Fully Vaccinated (2 doses/ 1 for J&J) and Booster Eligible but not yet Boosted.

Acceptable Testing for Schools: this includes Antigen diagnostic tests*, PCR diagnostic tests, and pooled PCR tests**. Diagnostic PCR tests are preferred, but not required.

* Antigen Test Preferred

**If pooled PCR testing is being used, additional testing procedures must be in place to provide subsequent testing should a positive result be detected. Please reference CDPH's School Testing [Resources](#) and [Considerations](#) for more information on pooled testing.

GENERAL INFORMATION

State of California Safe Schools For All Hub: [CA Covid-19 School Readiness Hub](#)

Order of the State Public Health Officer Vaccine Verification for Workers in School – October 15th deadline: [Order of the State Public Health Officer Vaccine Verification for Workers in Schools](#)

CDPH school testing resources information: [School Testing | California Coronavirus Testing Task Force](#)