

Protocols for School Students 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 STUDENTS

POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST – REGARDLESS OF VACCINATION STATUS

Confirmed COVID-19 Test symptomatic:

- Positive individual 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 individual 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, student must continue to wear a well-fitting mask around others for a total of 10 days, especially in indoor settings.
- If student develops symptoms during isolation, student must remain in isolation until after day 10.

NOTE: If student is unable to test or choose not to test, and symptoms are not present or are resolving, student 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, and recommend testing on day 5.

Notify School Health Office immediately and share test results.

- While student COVID-19 test is pending, they must continue home isolation.
- **If student test is positive:** student must continue isolation and follow protocol for **POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST - REGARDLESS OF VACCINATION STATUS.**
- **If student test is negative:** Student may be released from isolation and return to school if: COVID-19 test result is negative, and student's 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.
- **If test result is negative but still symptomatic:** Ensure student was tested on or after day 5 from symptom onset.
 - If test was completed before day 5 from symptom onset, recommend retest on or after day 5 from symptom onset.

- If test was completed on or after day 5 from symptom onset, an individualized assessment for other potential diagnosis (e.g., flu) is recommended.

If parent of student refuses to test, student 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 have improved.

EXPOSED TO COVID-19 - VACCINATED

Students between the ages of 5-17 that completed the primary series of COVID-19 vaccines do not need to quarantine unless symptoms develop at this time.

ASYMPTOMATIC – Vaccinated

Exposed, students who are vaccinated do not need to quarantine (including modified quarantine) and may continue going to school and participate in extra-curricular activities if they remain asymptomatic. Students must continue to mask while indoors and adhere to other non-pharmaceutical interventions (e.g., handwashing, optimize ventilation)

- If exposed student is asymptomatic and decides to test, testing is recommended on day 5 or later from date of last exposure.
- If exposed student becomes symptomatic, exclude from school, isolate, and recommend testing. Testing can be completed at the onset of symptoms. If test is positive, student must follow protocol for **POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST - REGARDLESS OF VACCINATION STATUS** in this document.

SYMPTOMATIC - Vaccinated

Exposed to Confirmed Positive COVID-19 Case

If new symptoms develop after exposure: send home, instruct to isolate, and recommend testing. Notify School Health Office immediately and share test results.

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

NOTE: If an exposed student is vaccinated and has remaining symptoms from a previous COVID-19 infection or an underlying health condition, an individualized assessment is needed to determine if exposed student must isolate.

QUARANTINE OPTIONS:

1. If student decides not to test quarantine can end after Day 10 from the date of last exposure if student symptoms improve AND is afebrile for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.
OR
2. Quarantine can end after Day 7 if a test is collected on or after Day 5 from the date of last exposure and the test is negative AND student symptoms improve and is afebrile for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.

NOTE: If a school/district does not elect a shortened quarantine (test on or after day 5 and return after day 7) OR if exposed student refuses to test, a 10-day quarantine must be completed.

Exposed to Presumed Positive Case (PPC)

If new symptoms develop after exposure: send home, instruct to isolate, and recommend testing.

- While PPC test result is pending, exposed student must continue home isolation.
- **If PPC test is positive, exposed student must:** follow **EXPOSED TO CONFIRMED POSITIVE COVID-19 CASE** in the section above.
- **If PPC test is negative and exposed student's symptoms improve** they may be released from isolation and return to school if symptoms improve and is afebrile for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.
- **If PPC test is negative and exposed student continue to be symptomatic with no symptom improvement,** they must continue to be excluded from school. An exposed student may be released from isolation and return to school if: COVID-19 test result is negative, and student 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.

Student must continue to mask while indoors, continue daily self-monitoring for symptoms, and adhere to other nonpharmaceutical interventions through day 14 from last known exposure.

EXPOSED TO COVID-19 - UNVACCINATED

ASYMPTOMATIC - Unvaccinated

Exposed to Confirmed Positive COVID-19 Case

Send home, instruct to isolate, and recommend testing.

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

QUARANTINE OPTIONS

1. If both persons (case and contact) were wearing a mask in a school setting (indoor, outdoor, and school buses), students may remain in in-person instruction and undergo **modified quarantine** if all conditions are met:
 - a. Continue to mask
 - b. Remain asymptomatic
 - c. Undergo testing at least twice weekly
 - i. PCR or Antigen testing should be done immediately upon notification of exposure. Note: the initial and subsequent tests should occur at least 3 days apart.
 - d. Student must be excluded from all extracurricular activities at school, including sports and any community activities.

Modified quarantine can end after Day 7 if test is collected on or after Day 5 from the date of last exposure and test is negative.

OR

2. Quarantine can end after Day 10 from the date of last exposure without testing,

OR

3. If close contacts were not wearing masks or the infected individual was not wearing a mask during the exposure, or if exposure occurred outside of a school setting, exposed students are not eligible for the modified quarantine option. Quarantine can end after day 7 with a negative test collected on or after day 5 from exposure (return Day 8).

NOTE: If a school/district does not elect a shortened quarantine (test on or after day 5 and return after day 7) OR if parent of exposed student refuses to test, a 10-day quarantine **must be completed**.

Exposed to Presumed Positive Case (PPC)

Send home, instruct to isolate, and recommend testing.

- While PPC test result is pending, exposed student must continue home quarantine.
- **If PPC test is positive**, exposed student must follow **EXPOSED TO CONFIRMED POSITIVE COVID-19 CASE** in the section above.
- **If PPC test is negative:** An exposed student may discontinue quarantine and be cleared to school if staff member continues to be asymptomatic and is afebrile for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.
- **If exposed student becomes symptomatic**, please refer to **Exposed – Symptomatic- Unvaccinated** section in this document.

Student must continue to mask while indoors, continue daily self-monitoring for symptoms, and adhere to other nonpharmaceutical interventions through day 14 from last known exposure

SYMPTOMATIC – Unvaccinated

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

If new symptoms develop after exposure: send home, instruct to isolate, and recommend testing. Notify School Health Office immediately and share test results.

- While exposed student COVID-19 test is pending, they must continue home isolation
- **If exposed student test is positive:** exposed student must continue isolation and follow protocol for **POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST- REGARDLESS OF VACCINATION STATUS**.
- **If exposed student test is negative:** exposed student must complete 10-day quarantine from the date of last exposure.
- **If parent of exposed student refuse to test**, a 10-day quarantine **must be completed**.

If exposed student test is negative for COVID-19, student may return to school after the quarantine period is completed only if: student's symptoms improve and is afebrile for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications. If student has no symptom improvement, an individualized assessment may be needed for other potential diagnoses (e.g., flu) to determine whether repeat testing is needed, or continued isolation is needed.

Exposed to Presumed Positive Case (PPC)

If new symptoms develop after exposure: send home, instruct to isolate, and recommend testing.

- While PPC test result is pending, they must continue home isolation.
- **If PPC test is positive, exposed student must:** follow **EXPOSED TO CONFIRMED POSITIVE COVID-19 CASE** in the section above.
- **If PPC test is negative:** A exposed student may discontinue quarantine and be cleared to return to school if student's symptoms improve and is afebrile for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications. If student has no symptom improvement, an individualized assessment may be needed from other potential diagnoses (e.g., flu) to determine whether repeat testing is needed.

Student must continue to mask while indoors, continue daily self-monitoring for symptoms, and adhere to other nonpharmaceutical 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) Boosters are currently not required to be considered vaccinated AT THIS TIME.

UNVACCINATED

Not vaccinated

Partially vaccinated (has not completed primary series of vaccine doses)

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](#)