

## 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 and CDPH Isolation and Quarantine Guidance. For more information on K-12 School Guidance, please refer to [K-12 Guidance 2021-22 School Year \(ca.gov\)](#) or for frequently asked questions, including the requirement for masking in K-12 settings, please refer to the 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

#### **\*\*NOTE: RIVERSIDE COUNTY HAS ELECTED TO NOT UTILIZE CDPH GROUP-TRACING APPROACH FOR STUDENTS EXPOSED TO COVID-19 IN K-12 SETTINGS AT THIS TIME\*\***

If a student was previously infected with (laboratory confirmed) COVID-19 within the last 90 days: (1) Students are not required to undergo routine diagnostic screening testing. It's important to note that if a student becomes symptomatic within the 90-day period, diagnostic testing should be completed. (2) Students may not need to quarantine; an individualized assessment should be completed.

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#### **POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST – REGARDLESS OF VACCINATION STATUS**

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##### **Confirmed COVID-19 Test symptomatic:**

- Positive individual to remain in home isolation for at least 5 days from symptom onset.
- 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 from positive test date.
- 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

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#### **NO KNOWN EXPOSURE- SYMPTOMATIC- REGARDLESS OF VACCINATION STATUS**

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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 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** section in this document.

- **If student test is negative and symptoms are not present or are resolving:** Student may be released from isolation and return to school if: student tested on day 5 or later from symptom onset, received a negative test, symptoms are not present or are resolving AND student is afebrile for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.
- **If student test is negative but still continues to be symptomatic with symptom(s) not resolving:** Student should continue to be excluded from school and test 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. Student may be released from quarantine and return to school if: COVID-19 test result is negative, and student's symptoms are resolving 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 parent refuses or unable to test student, student must remain in 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.

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## EXPOSED TO COVID-19 - VACCINATED

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### ASYMPTOMATIC – Vaccinated

#### Exposed to Confirmed Positive COVID-19 Case

- Students who are vaccinated do not need to quarantine (including modified quarantine) if they remain asymptomatic.
- Students previously infected with (laboratory confirmed) COVID-19 within the last 90 days, are not required to quarantine unless new symptoms develop.
- Asymptomatic students are encouraged to test on day 5 from last exposure to positive COVID-19 case.
- Students may continue going to school and participate in extra-curricular activities if they remain asymptomatic.
- Students must continue to wear a well-fitted mask (surgical mask recommended) while on K-12 school settings while indoors.
- If exposed students become symptomatic, please refer to **EXPOSED- SYMPTOMATIC- VACCINATED** section in this document.

### SYMPTOMATIC - Vaccinated

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, and recommend testing on day 5 from symptom onset. If unable to test or choosing not to test, quarantine can end after Day 10 from last exposure to positive COVID-19 case if student symptoms improve AND is afebrile for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications

**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** section in this document.
- **If student test is negative but still continues to be symptomatic with symptom(s) not resolving:** Student should continue to be excluded from school and test 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. Student may be released from quarantine and return to school if: COVID-19 test result is negative, and student's symptoms are resolving 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.

- Students who test negative and symptoms are no longer present or are resolving can end quarantine after Day 5 if a test is collected on Day 5 or later from the date of last exposure and the test is negative AND student symptoms are no longer present or are resolving and is afebrile for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.

**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.

**NOTE:** If a school/district does not elect a shortened quarantine (test on day 5 or later and return with negative 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 POSITIVE COVID-19 CASE** in the section above.
- **If PPC test is negative** and exposed student symptoms either resolve or are resolving, they may be released from isolation and return to school 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 student continue to be symptomatic with symptom(s) not resolving**, they must continue to be excluded from school. Students should test 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. Students may be released from isolation and return to school if: COVID-19 test result is negative, and students’ symptoms are resolving 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 (surgical mask recommended) while indoors in K-12 schools, 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** section in this document.
- **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 as required
  - 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 5 if two negative tests are completed in the 5-day time period.

**OR**

- 2. If unable to test or choosing not to test, and symptoms are not present, quarantine can end after day 10.

**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 5 with a negative diagnostic specimen collected on day 5 or later.

**If exposed student becomes symptomatic**, please refer to **Exposed – Symptomatic- Unvaccinated** section in this document.

**NOTE:** If a school/district does not elect a shortened quarantine (test on day 5 or later and return with negative 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 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 PPC test is negative and exposed student continue to be symptomatic with symptom(s) not resolving**, they must continue to be excluded from school. Students should test 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. Students may be released from isolation and return to school if: COVID-19 test result is negative, and students’ symptoms are resolving 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

**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**

Send home, instruct to isolate, and recommend testing on day 5 from symptom onset. If unable to test or choosing not to test, quarantine can end after Day 10 from last exposure to positive COVID-19 case if student symptoms improve AND is afebrile for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications

**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** section in this document.
- **If student test is negative but still continues to be symptomatic with symptom(s) not resolving:** Student should continue to be excluded from school and test 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. Student may be released from quarantine and return to school if: COVID-19 test result is negative, and student’s symptoms are resolving 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.

- Students who test negative and symptoms are no longer present or are resolving can end quarantine after Day 5 if a test is collected on Day 5 or later from the date of last exposure and the test is negative AND student symptoms are no longer present or are resolving 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 day 5 or later and return with negative 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 POSITIVE COVID-19 CASE** in the section above.
- **If PPC test is negative and exposed student symptoms either resolve or are resolving** they may be released from isolation and return to school 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 student continue to be symptomatic with symptom(s) not resolving,** they must continue to be excluded from school. Students should test on day 5 or later from symptom onset. Students may be released from isolation and return to school if: COVID-19 test result is negative, and students' symptoms are resolving 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 was completed before day 5 from symptom onset, recommend retest on day 5 or later from symptom onset.

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

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## DEFINITIONS

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**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.

**Asymptomatic:** means there are no symptoms.

**Symptomatic:** means showing symptoms, or it may concern a specific symptom.

**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:** A student is considered fully vaccinated if at least 14 days have passed since the second dose in a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine series is completed.

**Unvaccinated:** A student is considered unvaccinated if the student has not yet received the second dose in a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine series.

**Booster:** For more information about booster eligibility please visit: [COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Shots | CDC](#)

**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.

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## MORE INFORMATION

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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 15<sup>th</sup> 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](#)