

# QUICK GUIDE FOR SCHOOLS REGARDING SUSPECTED OR CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASES AND EXPOSURES

SOLANO PUBLIC HEALTH | DEC 2020

This document incorporates Solano Public Health's guidance for schools regarding suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases and exposures in school settings.

## I. Notifying Solano Public Health

Please call Solano Public Health Communicable Diseases Main Line at **707-784-8001** to report a confirmed COVID-19 case or email the COVID-19 Case Notification Template to [schoolcict@solanocounty.com](mailto:schoolcict@solanocounty.com) and [ccoutee@solanocounty.com](mailto:ccoutee@solanocounty.com)

## II. Definitions

- **Confirmed case:** A person who has a positive lab test result for COVID-19.
- **Symptoms of COVID-19:** Symptoms include fever over 100.4 or higher, subjective fever, chills, new cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting and/or diarrhea
- **Infectious Period:** When a person is considered infectious and has a positive COVID-19 test. The infectious period starts 2 days before symptom onset or 2 days from positive test if asymptomatic (no symptoms).
- **Isolation Period:** Staying home from work, school, and/or activities during a person's infectious period. Isolation decreases transmission of illness to others.

### *For mild to moderate illness:*

Isolation lasts for 10 days after the onset of symptoms and 24 hours fever-free without fever reducing medication. For people who have not had symptoms, isolation lasts 10 days from the day they gave the sample for their first positive test.

### *For severe to critical illness and if staff/student is severely immunocompromised:*

In some instances where the case is critically ill or is severely immunocompromised, as determined by an individual's medical provider, isolation may last 20 days and 24 hours fever-free without fever reducing medication.

- **Quarantine Period:** Staying home from work, school and/or activities when a person is a close contact of someone with COVID-19. The Quarantine Period is the period when a person has been identified as a close contact to someone confirmed to have COVID-19 and remains asymptomatic. Quarantine of close contacts decreases potential transmission of COVID-19 if the exposed person ends up developing symptoms. For asymptomatic contacts, quarantine can last 10 days without testing or 7 days (if testing was done after Day 5 and the test result is negative) if no further exposure takes place. If the contact develops symptoms, they will be following isolation guidance.
- **Close Contact:** A close contact is someone who was within 6 feet of an infectious/contagious person for at least 15 minutes cumulative/total over the course of a 24-hour period, with one or both parties not wearing a mask, starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to positive testing date), continuing until the time the patient is isolated.

- **Cohorting:** The practice of keeping the same individuals in the same group **at all times** during the school day. Cohorting helps limit the potential number of close contacts each individual may have.
- **Confirmed Outbreak:** Two or more laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases among students/staff who are epidemiologically linked and live in separate households within two-week period.
- **Continuous and Unavoidable Exposure:** If a student is unable to avoid close contact with a COVID-19 positive parent/primary caregiver, they must stay in quarantine 10 days after the day the parent/caregiver has completed their self-isolation (without testing) or 7 days (with testing). The quarantine period may be as long as 20 days if the positive COVID-19 person is not able to isolate from the exposed individual.

### III. Case Notification Form and Close Contact Notification Forms

The [Case Notification Form](#) and [List of Close Contacts Form](#) are used to gather information from the COVID-19 confirmed case to help prevent or mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in schools. Upon learning that a staff, student or other personnel has tested positive for COVID-19, you can work with your **District COVID Liaison** for the next steps. If your school does not have a District COVID Liaison, your School Point of Contact should do the following:

- 1) Send a notification letter to the confirmed case. The notification template should not be delayed while awaiting consultation with Solano Public Health.
- 2) Fill out the Case Notification Form.
- 3) Notify close contacts who may have been exposed to the case.
- 4) Fill out the School List of Close Contacts Form **only if the case is not part of a stable cohort.**
- 5) The District COVID Liaison or School Point of Contact can then send both forms to [schoolcict@solanocounty.com](mailto:schoolcict@solanocounty.com) and [ccoutee@solanocounty.com](mailto:ccoutee@solanocounty.com).

## IV. Steps to Take for Suspected or Confirmed Cases and Exposures

Scenario	Action	Communication
<b>Student/staff is having symptoms of COVID-19</b>	Student/staff will be sent home. Persons waiting for transportation will wait in isolated space. *Recommend testing.	
<b>Student/staff tested positive for COVID-19</b>	Notify Solano Public Health Communicable Diseases Line at 707-784-8001 or email the COVID-19 Notification Form to <a href="mailto:schoolcict@solanocounty.com">schoolcict@solanocounty.com</a> and cc <a href="mailto:ccoutee@solanocounty.com">ccoutee@solanocounty.com</a> . Student/staff should remain at home for 10 days following symptom development or 10 days after testing date (if no symptoms) and 24 hours after fever resolution without using fever-reducing medications.	School provides Isolation Guidance to student/staff.
<b>Student/staff tested positive for COVID-19 and has severe or critical illness or student is severely immunocompromised</b>	Notify Solano Public Health Communicable Diseases Line at 707-784-8001 or email the COVID-19 Case Notification Form to <a href="mailto:schoolcict@solanocounty.com">schoolcict@solanocounty.com</a> and cc <a href="mailto:ccoutee@solanocounty.com">ccoutee@solanocounty.com</a> . Student/staff should remain at home for 20 days following symptom development or 20 days after testing date (if no symptoms) and 24 hours after fever resolution without using fever-reducing medications. Ultimately, the degree of illness or immunocompromised condition will be determined by the case's health care provider.	School provides Isolation Guidance to student/staff.
<b>Student/staff was exposed to confirmed case within the same cohort</b>	Identify close contacts of the person with COVID-19 and confirm they are in the same cohort. There is no need to send the Close Contacts form to individuals in the same cohort, and cohort may remain open. The cohort may get quarantined together for 7 days, after getting tested on the 6 <sup>th</sup> day or later, and the test result is negative. They can continue to go to school; however, the cohort members cannot attend other school activities outside of this cohort. If student/teacher was not tested throughout quarantine period, avoid activities outside of cohort for an additional 10 days. Student/teacher must continue to monitor for symptoms and wear a mask for 14 days following last date of exposure. Recommend testing.*  Please check Cal/OSHA's regulations for additional guidance for employees.	School notifies close contacts using the Close Contact Guidance.
<b>Student/teacher is exposed to a positive case outside of cohort (e.g. household, workplace contact outside of cohort)</b>	Student/staff should remain at home for quarantine period extends to 10 days following last date of exposure without testing, and 7 days following last date of exposure with testing done on Day 6 or later. If student/teacher was not tested on Day 6 or later throughout quarantine period. Student/teacher must continue to wear and mask and monitor for symptoms for 14 days following last date of exposure. Recommend testing*	School notifies close contacts using the Close Contact Quarantine Guidance.

### \*Testing Recommendation:

Recommend testing with healthcare provider, community testing sites through [www.lhi.care/covidtesting](http://www.lhi.care/covidtesting) or Verily Project Baseline. For more information about testing sites in Solano County, visit [www.bit.ly/solanotestingsites](http://www.bit.ly/solanotestingsites)

## V. Sample Notification Letters

### A. Sample letter to student who is a confirmed COVID-19 case

Dear Parent/Guardian or Staff,

Based on the information reported, [your child, xxx, / you are] has tested positive for COVID-19. Please follow the steps below to prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home and your community:

*For individuals with mild to moderate illness and do not have severely immunocompromised conditions*

- 1) If [you/your child] has symptoms of COVID-19\*, remain at home for 10 days after their symptoms started and 24 hours since your fever has ended without the use fever-reducing medications (e.g. ibuprofen or acetaminophen). This is because [you/your child] is infectious for up to 10 days after their symptoms first appeared and can infect others they come in close contact with.
- 2) If [you/your child] does not have symptoms, have them remain at home for 10 days from the day [you/your child] was swabbed for their first positive COVID-19 test.

#### **During the isolation period:**

- [You/your child] should stay in their room as much as you possible and maintain at least 6 feet of distance from others in the home, otherwise they will continue to expose people at home. This is true whether [you/your child] appears to have symptoms or not.
- [You/your child] should use the bathroom closest to their room. If you don't have more than one bathroom at home, clean and disinfect all surfaces after use.
- Do not [have your child] hug or kiss others in your household.
- Do not [have your child] share food, dishes, drinking glasses, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people in your home. After using these items, they should be washed thoroughly with soap and water and dried before use by others.
- If possible, [have your child] sleep alone in a room that has a window with good airflow.
- If there are other members in your household that are positive, [you/they] may isolate together.
- Remain isolated at home except to get medical care.
- If there is a need to go to the doctor, tell them that [you/the child] has COVID-19. This will help the healthcare provider's office take steps to keep other people from getting infected or exposed.

[Encourage your child] to do the following best practices:

- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Cover mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw used tissues in a lined trash can; immediately clean hands as described below.
- Clean hands often.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry.
- Soap and water are preferred if hands are visibly dirty.
- Avoid touching the eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Solano Public Health and [School] are currently investigating this situation. If you have further questions, please contact [School District Contact Information].

## B. Sample letter to students determined to be close contacts of a COVID-19 case in a cohort setting

Dear Parent/Guardian or Staff,

This letter is to notify that [you/your child, Child's Name], may have been exposed to someone who tested positive for COVID-19 and is being considered a "close contact." This means [you/your child] is at higher risk of becoming ill from the virus and must be carefully monitored for a 14-day period from the last exposure to the COVID-19 case.

[You/your child] has been identified as being in close contact this individual during their infectious period on [date of exposure]. Because [you/your child] is in a stable cohort, [you/your child] may continue to participate in this cohort as long as [you/your child] remains without symptoms. Besides participating in this cohort, [you/your child] should not go to other activities around other people for 10 days without testing or 7 days after the last date of exposure if [you/your child] get tested on Day 6 and the test result is negative, and if no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring.

### During this period:

- Monitor [your/your child's] health daily for any COVID-like symptoms until 14 days after their last exposure. Symptoms include fever over 100.4 or higher, subjective fever, chills, new cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Do not have visitors in your home.
- Do not [have your child] attend gatherings.
- Do not [have your child] attend a different day care, school, camp, or program during this time.
- If possible, [have your child] sleep alone in a room that has a window with good airflow.
- If possible, have your child use a separate bathroom. If a separate bathroom is not available, clean the bathroom's high-touch surfaces after use.
- [Have your child] use [your/his/her] own plate, bowl, and utensils.
- Avoid sharing other personal household items (combs, toothbrush, cups, sheets/blankets etc.).
- Wash [his/her] laundry separately with detergent; bleach can be used but is not needed.
- Do not [have your child] hug or kiss others in your household.

### Testing

Schedule COVID-19 testing with [your/their] healthcare provider or with OptumServe through [lhi.care/covidtesting](https://lhi.care/covidtesting) close to the end of their quarantine period (day 6 or later). A negative test early on the quarantine period only means that [you/your child] did not have COVID-19 at the time of testing, but [you/they] may still develop symptoms or test positive for COVID-19 later.

**Please note:** [You/Your child] will still have to refrain from all other activities outside of their cohort until their quarantine end date, even if they test negative. If [you/your child] is not tested during the quarantine period, they may be quarantined for an additional three days. You may receive a follow-up call with a Contact Tracer with additional guidance.

### If [You/Your Child] Starts to Develop Symptoms

It is possible that [you/your child] may develop symptoms sometime in the 14 days after their last exposure to the person with COVID-19. Keep your child home from school and avoid other activities around other people. Schedule testing with your healthcare provider or through OptumServe through [lhi.care/covidtesting](https://lhi.care/covidtesting). Please notify the school immediately if [you/your child] tests positive.

Solano Public Health and [School] are currently investigating this situation. If you have further questions, please contact [School District Contact Information].

### C. Sample letter to students determined to be close contacts of a COVID-19 case in a non-cohort setting

Dear Parent/Guardian or Staff,

This letter is to notify that [you/your child, Child's Name], may have been exposed to someone who tested positive for COVID-19 and is being considered a "close contact." This means [you/your child] is at higher risk of becoming ill from the virus and must be carefully monitored for a 14-day period from the last exposure to the COVID-19 case.

[You/your child] has been identified as being in close contact this individual during their infectious period on [date of exposure]. During this time, [you/your child] should stay home and not go to other activities around other people for 10 days after the last date of exposure without testing, or 7 days after the last date of exposure if [you/your child] get tested on Day 6 or later and the test result is negative. Other household members may continue to attend school or work as long as no one in the household develops symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19.

#### During this quarantine period:

- Monitor [your/your child's] health daily for any COVID-like symptoms until 14 days after their last exposure. Symptoms include fever over 100.4 or higher, subjective fever, chills, new cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting and/or diarrhea.
- [Have your child] stay home as much as possible.
- Do not have visitors in your home.
- Do not [have your child] attend gatherings.
- Do not [have your child] attend a different day care, school, camp, or program during this time.
- If possible, [have your child] sleep alone in a room that has a window with good airflow.
- If possible, [have your child] use a separate bathroom. If a separate bathroom is not available, clean the bathroom's high-touch surfaces after use.
- [Have your child] use [your/his/her] own plate, bowl, and utensils.
- Avoid sharing other personal household items (combs, toothbrush, cups, sheets/blankets etc.).
- Wash [his/her] laundry separately with detergent; bleach can be used but is not needed.
- Do not [have your child] hug or kiss others in your household.

#### Testing

Schedule COVID-19 testing with [your/your child's] healthcare provider or with OptumServe through [lhi.care/covidtesting](https://lhi.care/covidtesting) close to the end of their quarantine period (day 12-14). A negative test early on the quarantine period only means that [you/your child] did not have COVID-19 at the time of testing, but [you/they] may still develop symptoms or test positive for COVID-19 later within the 14-day period.

**Please note:** [You/Your child] will still have to refrain from all other activities until [your/their] quarantine end date, even if they test negative. If [you/your child] is not tested during the quarantine period, they may be quarantined for an additional three days. You may receive a follow-up call from a Contact Tracer with additional guidance.

#### If [You/Your Child] Starts to Develop Symptoms

It is possible that [you/your child] may develop symptoms sometime in the 14 days after their last exposure to the person with COVID-19. Keep your child home from school and avoid other activities around other people. Schedule testing with your healthcare provider or through OptumServe through [lhi.care/covidtesting](https://lhi.care/covidtesting). Please notify the school immediately if [you/your child] tests positive.

Solano Public Health and [School] are currently investigating this situation. If you have further questions, please contact [School District Contact Information].

## VI. Returning to School

Scenario	Returning to School Guidance
<p><b>Staff/student tested positive for COVID-19, and staff/student has mild to moderate illness and not severely immunocompromised</b></p>	<p>The staff/student may return to school when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It has been 10 days after symptoms began or 10 days after testing date (for those without symptoms) AND</li> <li>• No fever for 24 hours without using fever-reducing medication such as acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) or naproxen (Aleve).</li> </ul> <p>There is no need for a doctor’s note to return to school.</p> <p>Schools should NOT request proof of negative virus tests. People may test positive for the COVID-19 virus for a long time after they have COVID-19 because dead viral particles can still be found in bodily fluids for several weeks. These dead viral particles will turn viral tests positive even though they cannot cause disease in others.</p>
<p><b>Staff/student tested positive for COVID-19, and staff/student has severe or critical illness and not severely immunocompromised</b></p>	<p>The staff/student may return to school when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It has been 20 days after symptoms began or 20 days after testing date (for those without symptoms) AND</li> <li>• No fever for 24 hours without using fever-reducing medication such as acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) or naproxen (Aleve).</li> </ul> <p>There is no need for a doctor’s note to return to school.</p> <p>Schools should NOT request proof of negative virus tests. People may test positive for the COVID-19 virus for a long time after they have COVID-19 because dead viral particles can still be found in bodily fluids for several weeks. These dead viral particles will turn viral tests positive even though they cannot cause disease in others.</p>
<p><b>Staff/student had close contact with someone with confirmed COVID-19</b></p>	<p>The staff/student may return to school when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It has been 7 days (with testing on day 6 or later) or 10 days (without testing) after the last close contact, even if the child has a negative test during this time, or is still waiting for test result</li> <li>• No symptoms have developed since the last close contact.</li> <li>• Staff/student must continue to wear a mask in the school setting.</li> </ul> <p>There is no need for a doctor’s note to return to school.</p> <p>If the staff/student has ongoing close contact with the person with COVID-19 (for example, a family member), the child must quarantine for 7 days (with testing after day 6) or 10 days (without testing) after the person with COVID-19 is no longer infectious. In most cases, this is a total of 20 days after the person with COVID-19 first developed symptoms, or if asymptomatic, had a positive test.</p>