

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

SOLANO PUBLIC HEALTH | MAR 30, 2021

This document incorporates Solano Public Health’s guidance regarding suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases and exposures in school settings. This document has been revised to follow the State’s [COVID-19 Reopening Framework and Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools in California](#).

Latest Updates as of March 30, 2021:

- Changes to notification process for Solano Public Health
- Changes to reporting a positive antigen test
- Changes to quarantine exemption guidance

I. Notifying Solano Public Health

Please report a confirmed COVID-19 case by emailing the COVID-19 Case Notification Template to schoolcict@solanocounty.com and ccoutee@solanocounty.com. If the positive case has not been present on school grounds **within 10 days** before the positive test date, reporting is not required.

To report three or more COVID-19 cases within a two-week period in the school setting, call the Solano Public Health Communicable Diseases Main Line at **707-784-8001** immediately.

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 with a positive COVID-19 test is considered infectious/contagious to others. The infectious period starts 2 days before symptom onset or 2 days from positive test if asymptomatic (no symptoms) and continues for 10 days after the date of symptom onset or positive test.
- **Close Contact:** A close contact is someone who was within 6 feet of a person with COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes cumulative/total over the course of a 24-hour period, starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to positive testing date), continuing until the time the positive case is isolated. Close contact also refers to direct physical contact with the person, shared eating or drinking utensils, or being coughed or sneezed on by the positive case.
- **Isolation:** 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:** Staying home from work, school, and/or activities when a person has been identified as a close contact of someone confirmed to have COVID-19. Quarantine of close contacts decreases potential transmission of COVID-19 if the exposed person ends up developing symptoms or testing COVID-19 positive. For asymptomatic contacts, quarantine can last 10 days if no further exposure takes place. If the contact develops symptoms, they will then follow isolation guidance.
- **Stable Group: (Previously referred to as cohorts)** A group with fixed membership that stays together without mixing with any other groups for any activities. Implementing stable groups of students and staff reduces the numbers of exposed individuals if COVID-19 is introduced into the group, decreases opportunities for exposure to or transmission of the virus, facilitates more efficient contact tracing in the event of a positive case, and allows for targeted testing and quarantine of a small group instead of potential schoolwide closures in the event of a positive case or cluster of cases.
- **Cohorts: (Now referred to as Stable Group)** Per the January 2021 CDPH guidance, cohorts are groups of students who are meeting in-person for targeted support and intervention services, under the direction of an LEA, while the school is closed to in-person instruction and in addition to distance learning. These groups are subject to the CDPH Cohorting Guidance that limits groups to a maximum of 16 individuals and does not apply once the LEA is opened.
- **School Outbreak:** Three or more laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases at one school site within a two-week period among students/staff who are epidemiologically linked through transmission at the school site.
- **Continuous and Unavoidable Exposure:** If a staff/student is unable to avoid close contact with a COVID-19 positive household member, they must stay in quarantine 10 days after the day the household member has completed their self-isolation. 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 should not be delayed while awaiting consultation with Solano Public Health.
- 2) Fill out the Case Notification Form.
- 3) Notify those who may have been exposed to the case. This includes individually identified close contacts or entire stable groups who were potentially exposed.
- 4) Fill out the School List of Close Contacts Form **if close contacts at the school site can be identified**. If this cannot be determined, and the entire stable group of the positive case is thus considered potentially exposed and sent to quarantine, there is no need to send Solano Public Health the full list of contacts from that group.
- 5) The District COVID Liaison or School Point of Contact can then send both forms to schoolcict@solanocounty.com and ccoutee@solanocounty.com.

IV. Steps to Take for Confirmed Cases or Exposures

Scenario	Action	Communication
1. Student/staff is having symptoms of COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student/staff will be sent home. Persons waiting for transportation will wait in isolated space. • *Recommend testing. • School/ stable group can remain open until the person is confirmed to have COVID-19. 	
2. Student/staff tested positive for COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email the COVID-19 Notification Form to schoolcict@solanocounty.com and cc ccoutee@solanocounty.com. • 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. • Identify close contacts of the person with COVID-19 and quarantine contacts (possibly the entire stable group) for 10 days after the last date that the case was present at school while infectious. • Case investigation and contact tracing may be able to determine more precisely whether each stable group member has been exposed. In this situation, those who were not close contacts could continue with in-person instruction. • Recommend testing asymptomatic contacts 5-7 days from last exposure and immediate testing of symptomatic contacts (negative test results will not shorten 10-day exclusion). • Disinfection and cleaning of classroom and primary spaces where case spent significant time. • School/classroom remains open. <p>NOTE: In some situations, the staff/student may have severe illness that warrants a prolonged isolation of 20 days. This will be determined by the individual's medical provider.</p>	<p>School provides Isolation Guidance to student/staff.</p> <p>School notifies contacts using the Close Contact Quarantine Guidance.</p>
3. Symptomatic person tests negative or a healthcare provider has provided documentation that the symptoms are typical of their underlying chronic condition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May return to school after 24 hours have passed without fever and symptoms have started improving. • School/classroom remains open. 	

Scenario	Action	Communication
4. Student/staff notifies school that they are a close contact to a confirmed case.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student/staff will be sent home and will be placed in an isolated space while waiting for transportation. • Exclude from school for 10 days from last exposure, per CDPH quarantine recommendations. • Recommend testing 5-7 days from last exposure (but will not shorten 10-day exclusion if negative). • School remains open. 	No action needed if exposure did not happen in school setting.
5. Student/staff tested positive for COVID-19 using an antigen test.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student/staff will be sent home and will be placed in an isolated space while waiting for transportation. Check if they are showing symptoms of COVID-19. <p><i>If student/staff is symptomatic:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat as a confirmed case and refer to Scenario 2. • Email COVID-19 Notification Form to Solano Public Health. <p><i>If student/staff is NOT symptomatic:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat as a confirmed case and refer to Scenario 2. • Email COVID-19 Notification Form to Solano Public Health. • Refer student/staff to their HCP or a PCR testing site to obtain confirmatory testing within 24 hours. • If student/staff has a negative PCR test result they and all their close contacts may return to school following receipt of the test result. 	School provides Isolation Guidance through Antigen Testing to student/staff and refer asymptomatic contacts for additional testing.

V. Quarantine Exemptions for Fully Vaccinated Individuals

At this time, there are no quarantine exemptions implemented for fully vaccinated individuals in school settings. CDPH has not yet updated its guidance for fully vaccinated school employees. CAL/OSHA’s regulations on COVID-19-related screening, testing and quarantining also have not changed for school employees who are fully vaccinated against coronavirus. Schools, therefore, must continue to follow CDPH and CAL/OSHA regulations on COVID-19 quarantine guidance and **direct fully vaccinated staff who have had close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 to quarantine for 10 days from the last date of exposure.**

VI. Testing Sites

Solano Public Health recommends that close contacts or asymptomatic individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 using an antigen test get tested through their healthcare provider or through community testing sites, such as:

LHI www.lhi.care/covidtesting or

Verily Project Baseline www.projectbaseline.com/studies/covid-19/

Additional testing sites are available in Solano County here: www.bit.ly/solanotestingsites

VII. 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 of 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 this 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 with a tissue.
- Throw used tissues in a lined trash can and immediately clean hands.
- 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

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. 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

Testing is recommended from on the 5th day or later from the date of last exposure. 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. Schedule COVID-19 testing with **[your/your child's]** healthcare provider or with OptumServe through lhi.care/covidtesting.

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. 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 student or staff who tested positive through antigen rapid testing

Dear Parent/Guardian or Staff,

Based on the [name of antigen testing machine] test you took at [name of school site], [your child, xxx, / you] has **tested positive for COVID-19**. Solano Public Health will be notified of the results of your testing. Please follow the steps below to prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home and your community:

1. Schedule an appointment with your healthcare provider to obtain a PCR COVID-19 test to verify the results received from the machine.
2. Begin isolation while awaiting secondary testing.
3. Follow the directives provided by your healthcare provider. Solano Public Health may also call and provide you with additional guidance.

During this 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 with a tissue.
- Throw used tissues in a lined trash can and immediately clean hands.
- 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].