Addendum 5

Adapt, Advance, Achieve: Connecticut's Plan to Learn and Grow Together

Connecticut State Department of Education

Interim Guidance for Responding to COVID-19 Scenarios in Connecticut School Districts

September 9, 2021

This document addresses issues when a student or staff person has or develops possible signs and symptoms of COVID-19; a diagnosis of COVID-19; or exposure to a person diagnosed with COVID-19. It describes immediate actions for removing an individual from the school setting and when to safely return them to school. School district leaders are encouraged to use this as a guide, in consultation with public health experts and health professionals in consideration of all specific circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

When a case of COVID-19 is identified in a student or school staff person, contact tracing should begin immediately. Contact tracing for COVID-19 is the process of identifying the close contacts of a person who has been diagnosed with COVID-19. A person diagnosed with COVID-19 (i.e., a COVID-19 case) is considered infectious from 2 days prior to symptom onset (or the date of the test if no symptoms) until they start isolation. The definition of a close contact is a person who has spent at least 15 minutes (within 24 hours) within 6 feet of a person diagnosed with COVID-19 during their infectious period, or a direct exposure to possibly infected droplets of saliva or nasal mucus (e.g., being sneezed on or coughed on in the face). CDC has created an exception to this definition specifically for students solely in the classroom setting. For students in a classroom setting exposed to another student, if both the case and contacts are all consistently and correctly wearing masks, the definition of close contact is spending a total of 15 minutes (within 24 hours) within 3 feet of a student with COVID-19. **This exception ONLY applies to students in the classroom setting who are also wearing masks.** It does not apply to adults, nor to students outside the classroom setting. As always, decisions related to the need for isolation or quarantine should be made in consultation with local public health officials.

Event	Location of Event	Testing Result PCR or antigen tests can be accepted[2]	Isolation/Quarantine **Isolation** = when you are experiencing symptoms or have a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 **Quarantine** = when you have been exposed but you are not experiencing symptoms
Individual has COVID-19 symptoms[1] (regardless of vaccine status) but has NOT had close contact to a person diagnosed with COVID-19	**If at home:** Stay home, notify the school immediately (do not wait until the beginning of the next school day), and **get tested**. **If at school:** Students should remain masked, adhere to strict physical distancing, be assessed by the school nurse or school medical advisor (if available), stay in the isolation room (with adult supervision), until picked up to go home. Parents should be instructed to consult a healthcare provider and have the student tested. If symptoms arise **on the bus**, students should remain masked and follow the remaining measures listed above upon arrival to school. They must not be sent home on the bus. **Staff members** should remain masked, adhere to strict physical distancing, immediately contact leadership (per district protocols), go home, consult a healthcare provider, and get tested. If a staff member or student is ill enough to require transport to a healthcare facility, notify EMS that COVID-19 is a concern.	Individual tests **negative**	Return to school once there are no symptoms for 24 hours.
		Individual tests **positive**	Remain home (except to get medical care), monitor symptoms, notify the school immediately, notify personal close contacts, assist the school in contact tracing efforts, and answer communications from public health officials/contact tracing staff. Stay in self-isolation[3] for at least 10 days since the onset of symptoms and until at least 24 hours have passed with no fever[1] (without fever-reducing medications) and with improvement in other COVID-19 symptoms.
		Individual **is not tested or test results not yet available**	Presume COVID-19. Stay in self-isolation[3] for at least 10 days since the onset of symptoms **and** until at least 24 hours have passed with no fever[1] (without fever-reducing medications) and with improvement in other symptoms. Can return to school earlier if healthcare provider provides documentation with a specific, confirmed alternate diagnosis.

Event	Location of Event	Testing Result PCR or antigen tests can be accepted[2]	Isolation/Quarantine **Isolation** = when you are experiencing symptoms or have a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 **Quarantine** = when you have been exposed but you are not experiencing symptoms
Individual has COVID-19 symptoms[1] AND had close contact to a person diagnosed with COVID-19	**If at home:** Stay home, notify the school immediately (do not wait until the beginning of the next school day), and **get tested**. **If at school:** Students should remain masked, adhere to strict physical distancing, be assessed by the school nurse or school medical advisor (if available), stay in the isolation room (with adult supervision), until picked up to go home. Parents should be instructed to consult a healthcare provider and have the student tested. If symptoms arise **on the bus**, students should remain masked and follow the remaining measures listed above upon arrival to school. They must not be sent home on the bus. **If at school:** Staff members should remain masked, adhere to strict physical distancing, immediately contact leadership (per district protocols), go home, consult a healthcare provider, and get tested. If a staff member or student is ill enough to require transport to a healthcare facility, notify EMS that COVID-19 is a concern.	Individual tests **negative**	If the person is **not fully vaccinated** and has not tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days prior to the current exposure, remain home in self-quarantine[4] for the recommended 10 days from last exposure to the person diagnosed with COVID-19 or after 7 days with a documented negative test result at day 5 or later, consistent with school district policy. For either quarantine period, continue daily symptom monitoring through day 14 after last exposure. If the person is **fully vaccinated or tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days prior to the current exposure,** the person can return to school once there are no symptoms for 24 hours.
		Individual tests **positive**	**Regardless of vaccine status,** remain home (except to get medical care), monitor symptoms, notify the school, notify personal close contacts, assist public health and the school in contact tracing efforts. Stay in self-isolation[3] for at least 10 days since the onset of symptoms and until at least 24 hours have passed with no fever (without fever- reducing medications) and with improvement in other COVID-19 symptoms
		Individual **is not tested or test results not yet available**	**Regardless of vaccine status,** presume COVID-19. Stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days since the onset of symptoms and until at least 24 hours have passed with no fever (without fever-reducing medications) and with improvement in other symptoms or until test results are available.

Event	Location of Event	Testing Result PCR or antigen tests can be accepted[2]	Isolation/Quarantine **Isolation** = when you are experiencing symptoms or have a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 **Quarantine** = when you have been exposed but you are not experiencing symptoms
Individual *does not have COVID-19 symptoms*[1] BUT had close contact to someone diagnosed with COVID-19	**If at home:** Those not fully vaccinated should stay home, notify the school immediately (do not wait until the beginning of the next school day), and **get tested**. **If at school:** Students who are not fully vaccinated should remain masked, adhere to strict physical distancing, be assessed by the school nurse or school medical advisor (if available), be picked up to go home. Parents should be instructed to consult a healthcare provider and have the student tested. Students who do not have symptoms may remain in the health room/nurse's office until they are picked up. They do not have to be sent to the isolation room. They must not be sent home on the bus. **Staff members** who are not fully vaccinated should remain masked, adhere to strict physical distancing, immediately contact leadership (per district protocols), go home, consult a healthcare provider, and get tested. If an individual is fully vaccinated or has tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days prior to the current exposure and is asymptomatic, the individual can remain in school.	Individual tests **negative**	If the person is **not fully vaccinated** and has not tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days prior to the current exposure, remain home in self-quarantine[4] for the recommended 10 days from last exposure to the person diagnosed with COVID-19 or after 7 days with a documented negative test result at day 5 or later, consistent with school policy. For either quarantine period, continue daily symptom monitoring through day 14 after last exposure. For any length of quarantine, if any symptoms develop, immediately self-isolate and contact the local public health department and healthcare provider. Increase attentiveness to mitigating actions.[4] A person who is **not fully vaccinated** but tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days prior to the current exposure should not be tested if they remain asymptomatic. A **fully vaccinated** person should have a test 3–5 days after the last exposure If any symptoms develop, immediately self-isolate and contact the local public health department and healthcare provider.
		Individual tests **positive**	**Regardless of vaccine status,** remain home (except to get medical care), monitor symptoms, notify the school, notify personal close contacts, assist public health officials and the school in contact tracing efforts. Stay in self-isolation[3] for at least 10 days since the onset of symptoms and until at least 24 hours have passed with no fever (without fever-reducing medications) and with improvement in other symptoms.
		Individual **is not tested**	If the person is **not fully vaccinated** and has not tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days prior to the current exposure, remain home in self-quarantine for 10 days from last exposure to the person diagnosed with COVID-19. Continue daily symptom monitoring for an additional 4 days (days 11–14). If any symptoms develop, immediately self-isolate and contact the local public health department and healthcare provider. Increase attentiveness to mitigating actions.[4] A person who is **not fully vaccinated** but tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days prior to the current exposure should not be tested if they remain asymptomatic. A **fully vaccinated person** should have a test 3–5 days after the last exposure. If any symptoms develop, immediately self-isolate and contact the local public health department and healthcare provider.

End notes

1. **Key COVID-19 signs and symptoms are:** feeling feverish, measured temperature of 100.4 F or more, chills, uncontrolled new cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, loss of taste or smell. There are other more nonspecific signs and symptoms. For a full list, see CDC web page at https://www.cdc. gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html

2. **COVID-19 test for school/work attendance:** This is a viral test, NOT an antibody test. Tests for the presence of the virus must be used. Antibody tests, which test for the individual's immune system reaction to a past viral infection should not be used to determine school attendance (see CDC information on COVID-19 tests at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/testing.html). Viral tests can include a molecular test (often called a PCR test) or an antigen test. A negative antigen test in a person with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or a close contact without symptoms should be followed up with a PCR test. Find DPH guidance on the use of antigen tests at https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/HAI/COVID-19- Healthcare-Guidance.

3. **Self-Isolation:** Individual with signs or symptoms of COVID-19, or a positive test, regardless of COVID-19 vaccine status stays home until no longer infectious for at least 10 days since the onset of symptoms **and** until at least 24 hours have passed with no fever (without fever-reducing medications) and with improvement in other COVID-19 symptoms. See CDC web page at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/isolation.html

4. **Self-Quarantine: A not fully vaccinated** individual, who does not have symptoms of COVID-19, who has not tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days, and who is identified as a close contact of a person with COVID-19, stays home for 10 days since their last exposure to the person with COVID-19. After 10 days at home the person **can return to school**, but must continue daily symptom monitoring for an additional 4 days (day 11–14). When diagnostic testing resources are sufficient and available, a quarantine period of 7 days with a negative test result, consistent with CT DPH Interim Recommendations, is also acceptable; continue daily symptom monitoring for an additional 7 days (day 8–14). If any symptoms develop, immediately self-isolate and contact the local public health authority and healthcare provider.

   Individuals directed to self-quarantine are excluded from participation in **team athletics or other group extracurricular activities** for a full 14 days. When diagnostic testing resources are sufficient and available, a quarantine period of 10 days with a negative test result on day 8 or later from team athletics or other group extracurricular activities is also acceptable; continue daily symptom monitoring for an additional 4 days (day 11–14). If any symptoms develop, immediately self-isolate and contact the local public health authority and healthcare provider.

   For individuals returning from self-quarantine, for the balance of the 14-day period after exposure, school districts should: (1) ensure adherence to mitigating actions including strict supervision of mask wearing and social distancing; (2) restrict students from participating in athletics or other group extracurricular activities (for the full 14 days); and (3) consider limiting educator and staff duties that require sustained and close contact with other individuals (within 6 feet for 15 minutes or more within 24 hours). See CT DPH Interim Guidance on the Length of Quarantine for Contacts of Persons with SARS-CoV-2 Infection.