

COVID-19: When a student, or faculty/staff member can return to school or child care

Purpose: The purpose of this document is to assist school health care staff, child care staff and public health officials in determining when a student, or faculty/staff member needs to be excluded from the facility for COVID-19 quarantine or isolation. The chart uses three criteria to determine this: close contact, symptoms, and COVID-19 test status.

How to use: The first step is to determine if the individual was a close contact to a person with COVID-19 based on the definition below and then selecting the appropriate chart on the next page. The second step is to determine if the individual is showing symptoms of COVID-19 (symptomatic) or not. Finally, determine if they were tested for COVID-19 and the result of the test. Key definitions are provided below. When an individual's symptom, contact, or test status changes, their quarantine or isolation requirements should be reassessed.

Definitions:

Isolation means keeping sick people away from healthy ones. This usually means that the sick person rests in their own bedroom or area of your home and stays away from others. This includes staying home from school.

Quarantine means separating people who were around someone who was sick, just in case they get sick. Since people who were around other sick people are more likely to get sick themselves, quarantine prevents them from accidentally spreading the virus to other people even before they realize they are sick. Usually people who are in quarantine stay at home and avoid going out or being around other people. This includes staying home from school.

Close contact: An individual is considered a close contact if **any** of following is true. If they:

- Were within 6 feet of a person with COVID-19 for more than 15 minutes total in a day.
- Had physical contact with the person.
- Had direct contact with the respiratory secretions of the person (for example, from coughing, sneezing, contact with dirty tissue, shared drinking glass, food, or other personal items).
- Lives with or stayed overnight for at least one night in a household with the person.

These close contact criteria apply regardless of mask use, face shields, or physical barriers, such as Plexiglas or plastic barriers. The only exception is if a health care worker in a school setting is wearing the proper personal protective equipment.

Symptoms

Symptoms are considered consistent with COVID-19 when one of the symptoms marked with a (^) or two of the other symptoms are present above baseline for that individual.

Cough[^] Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing[^] New loss of taste or smell[^] Congestion or runny nose
Fever or chills* Nausea or vomiting* Diarrhea* Headache Fatigue Muscle or body aches Sore throat

*Note: Vomiting, diarrhea, and fever – alone or together – should exclude a person from school or child care.

Individual is NOT a known close contact to a COVID-19 case:

Symptoms?	Test Result	Recommendations for isolation or quarantine and when individuals can return to school
YES	POSITIVE (PCR or Antigen)	Must isolate at home for at least 10 days since the first symptoms began AND be fever free without the use of fever-reducing medications for 24 hours AND with improvement in symptoms. Repeat testing is NOT recommended for deciding when people can return to work or school. Siblings, household members, and other close contacts should follow the close contact chart below.
YES	Negative (PCR, not antigen*)	Must be fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications if negative by PCR . If diagnosed with another condition, the individual must complete the exclusion period for the diagnosed disease as listed on the Wisconsin Childhood Communicable Diseases Wall Chart . An alternative diagnosis is not required. Siblings and household contacts do not need to quarantine. *A negative antigen test result from a symptomatic student or staff member should be confirmed with a PCR test, collected within 48 hours of the initial test. The student or staff member should isolate and siblings and household members should quarantine while waiting for the PCR results.
YES	Not tested	The individual must remain home for at least 10 days since the first symptoms began AND be fever free without the use of fever-reducing medications for 24 hours AND with improvement of symptoms. Siblings and household members should follow the close contact chart below for exclusion. If diagnosed with another condition that explains the symptoms, such as influenza or strep throat, the symptomatic person does not need to isolate and household members do not need to quarantine. Follow guidance from the health care provider and exclusion period of the diagnosed disease as listed on the Wisconsin Childhood Communicable Diseases Wall Chart
No	POSITIVE (PCR or Antigen*)	Must isolate at home for 10 days after the day the sample was collected. Siblings, household members, and other close contacts should follow the close contact chart below. *A positive antigen test from an asymptomatic student or staff member should be confirmed with a PCR test, collected within 48 hours of the initial test. The student or staff member should isolate and close contacts should quarantine while waiting for the PCR results. If the PCR test is negative the case may be released for isolation and close contacts released from quarantine.
No	Negative (PCR or Antigen)	May attend school or child care if negative by PCR or antigen test.
No	Not tested	May attend school or child care.

Individual IS a known close contact to a COVID-19 case:

Symptoms?	Test Result	Recommendation for isolation/quarantine and when can return to school
YES	POSITIVE (PCR or Antigen)	Must isolate at home for at least 10 days since the first symptoms began AND be fever free without the use of fever-reducing medications for 24 hours AND with improvement in symptoms. Repeat testing is NOT recommended for deciding when people can return to work or school. Siblings, household members, and other close contacts should also follow this chart to determine quarantine length.
YES	Negative (PCR or Antigen)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must quarantine for 14 days after the last contact with the COVID-19 positive person. If the exposure is to a household member and the case cannot properly isolate away from others at home, the last date of contact may be the last day of isolation for the case. • If tested by <u>PCR test</u>, the individual must also be fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications AND if diagnosed with another condition, they must complete the exclusion period for the diagnosed disease as listed on the Wisconsin Childhood Communicable Diseases Wall Chart. An alternative diagnosis is not required. • If tested by <u>antigen test</u>, the individual must also isolate at home for at least 10 days since the first symptoms began AND be fever free without the use of fever-reducing medications for 24 hours AND with improvement in symptoms. Follow-up PCR testing is recommended for these individuals within 48 hours of the negative antigen test. <p>The criteria in the first bullet AND either the second or third bullet above must be met before returning to school.</p>
YES	Not tested	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must quarantine for 14 days after the last contact with the COVID-19 positive person. If the exposure is to a household member and the case cannot properly isolate away from others at home, the last date of contact may be the last day of isolation for the case. • The individual must also remain home for at least 10 days since the first symptoms began AND be fever free without the use of fever-reducing medications for 24 hours AND with improvement of symptoms. <p>The criteria in both of the above bullets must be met before returning to school.</p>
No	POSITIVE (PCR or Antigen)	Must isolate at home for 10 days from the day the sample was collected. Siblings, household members, and other close contacts should also follow this chart to determine quarantine length.
No	Negative (PCR or Antigen)	If the individual's test result was collected on or after day 6 of quarantine, quarantine may end after day 7. The individual must continue to monitor for symptoms for the full 14 days from last exposure before returning to school or child care. If the exposure is to a household member and the case cannot properly isolate away from others at home, the last date of contact may be the last day of isolation for the case.
No	Not tested	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must quarantine for 14 days from the date of last exposure before returning to school or day care. Quarantine may be shortened to 10 days after the date of last exposure, provided people still monitor for symptoms, wear a mask, and physical distance for the full 14 days. Quarantine may be shortened further to 7 days after the date of last exposure if a person receives a negative test result (PCR or antigen) that was collected on or after day 6 provided people still monitor for symptoms, wear a mask, and physical distance for the full 14 days. • If the exposure is to a household member and the case cannot properly isolate away from others at home, the last date of contact may be the last day of isolation for the case.