

2021-2022 Summary of Guidance for K-12 Schools

This guidance is dated 9/22/2021 and is subject to change based on new recommendations from MDHHS, CDC, local trends, or new information regarding COVID-19.

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Recommendations

The Washtenaw County Health Department (WCHD) recommends that schools follow the COVID-19 recommendations from [MDHHS¹](#) and [CDC²](#).

This involves responsive and layered prevention strategies to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission to students, staff, and the greater community. Local school districts should implement preventive strategies based on an ongoing assessment of:

- 1) [the current level of community transmission of COVID-19](#),
- 2) the current level of in-school transmission of COVID-19, and
- 3) the capacity of the school's facilities, staff, and resources.

Prevention strategies include staying home when sick, vaccination, consistent and correct mask use, physical distancing/cohorting, regular screening and testing when appropriate, ventilation, handwashing and respiratory etiquette, contact tracing and appropriate isolation and quarantine, cleaning and disinfecting.

School-based prevention strategies may change throughout the school year, particularly as COVID-19 transmission changes, vaccinations become available to younger persons, or we learn more about the virus and its impact locally.

WCHD works with schools to monitor COVID-19 cases, local trends, and outbreaks, and to provide situation-specific guidance. WCHD encourages schools to prioritize in-person instruction while implementing available preventive measures to reduce transmission.

Requirements

Some things are required for schools:

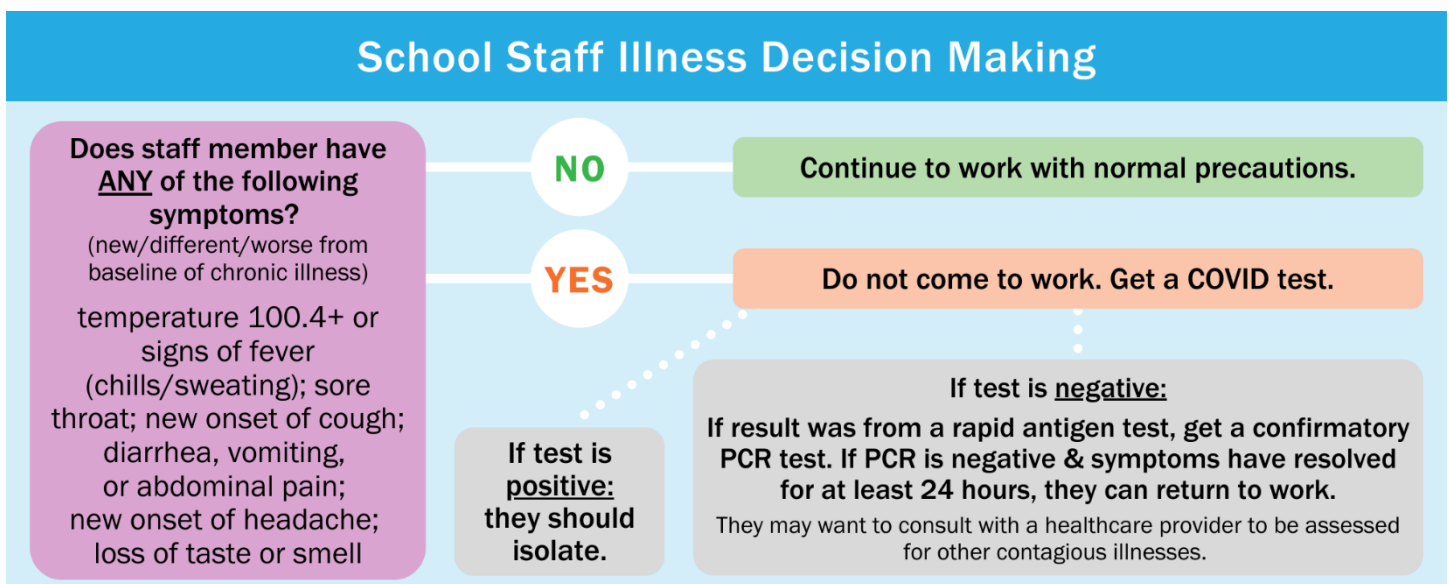
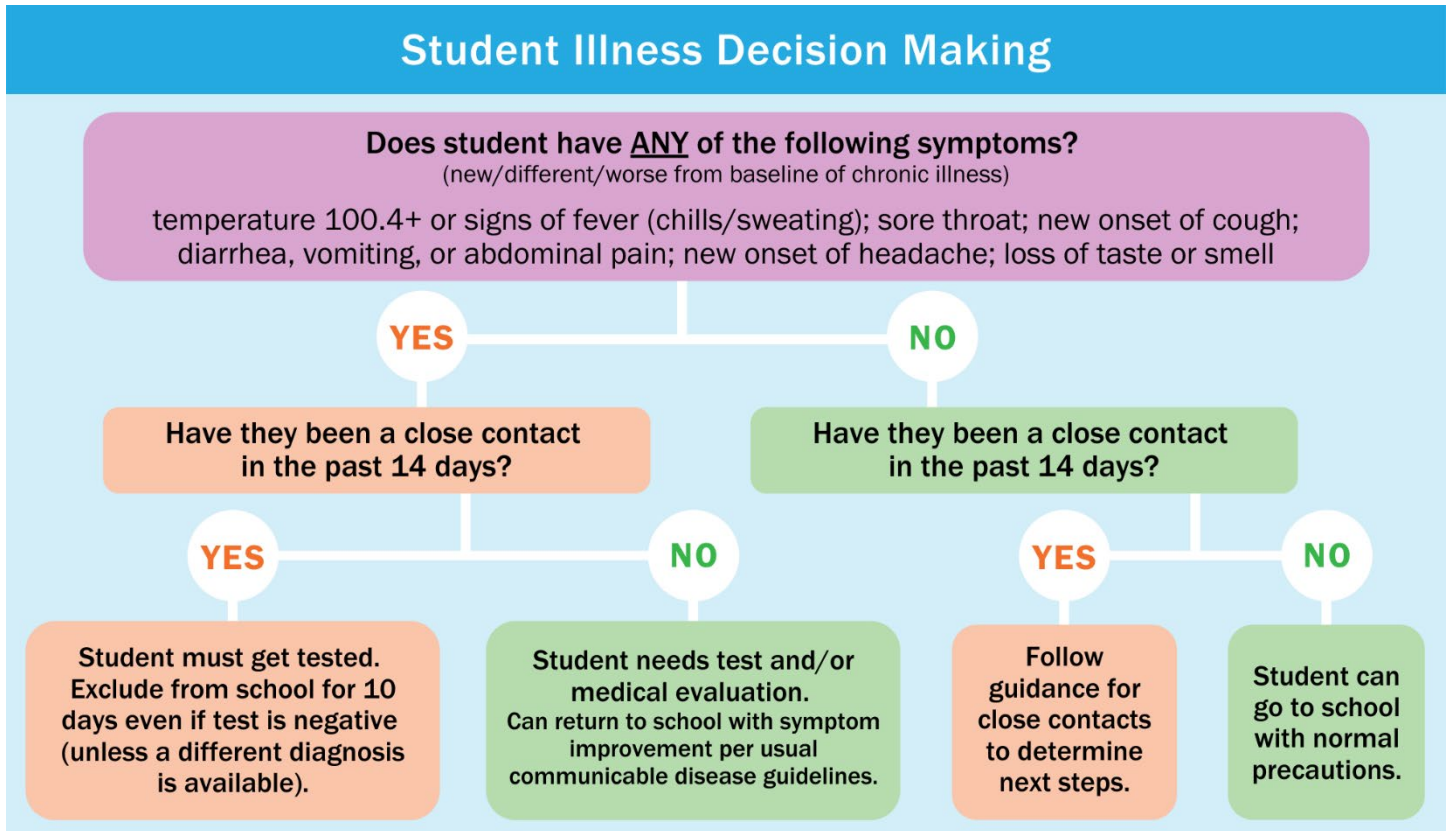
- Effective September 7, 2021, the Health Department has issued two local public health [orders](#) for Washtenaw County educational institutions and settings: one [requiring face masks indoors](#) and one [requiring isolation and quarantine](#). The isolation and quarantine order has been updated as of 9/15/21.
- There is a CDC [order](#) that requires face coverings on school bus transportation.
- Case notification to the Health Department and contact tracing is required by the [Michigan Public Health Code](#).
- Schools must also follow the MDHHS Order [Reporting of Confirmed and Probable Cases at Schools](#), which requires schools to post data about case counts on their websites. In addition, standard school infectious disease policies mandate requiring students and staff to stay home when sick.

¹ Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) at [Michigan.gov/coronavirus](https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus) or https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus/0,9753,7-406-98178_104699--,00.html

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

What to do if someone is sick

Here is a general overview of guidance for students and staff. Additional next steps for each situation may need to be discussed with WCHD case investigators. See usual communicable disease guidelines (referenced below) [here](#).



Close contact guidance for the K-12 community (when to quarantine or isolate)

The guidance below applies to all members of the K-12 community (students, staff, teachers, etc.) regardless of where an exposure took place. See “quarantine notes” on page 5 for important clarifications.

For students in traditional classroom or school bus settings

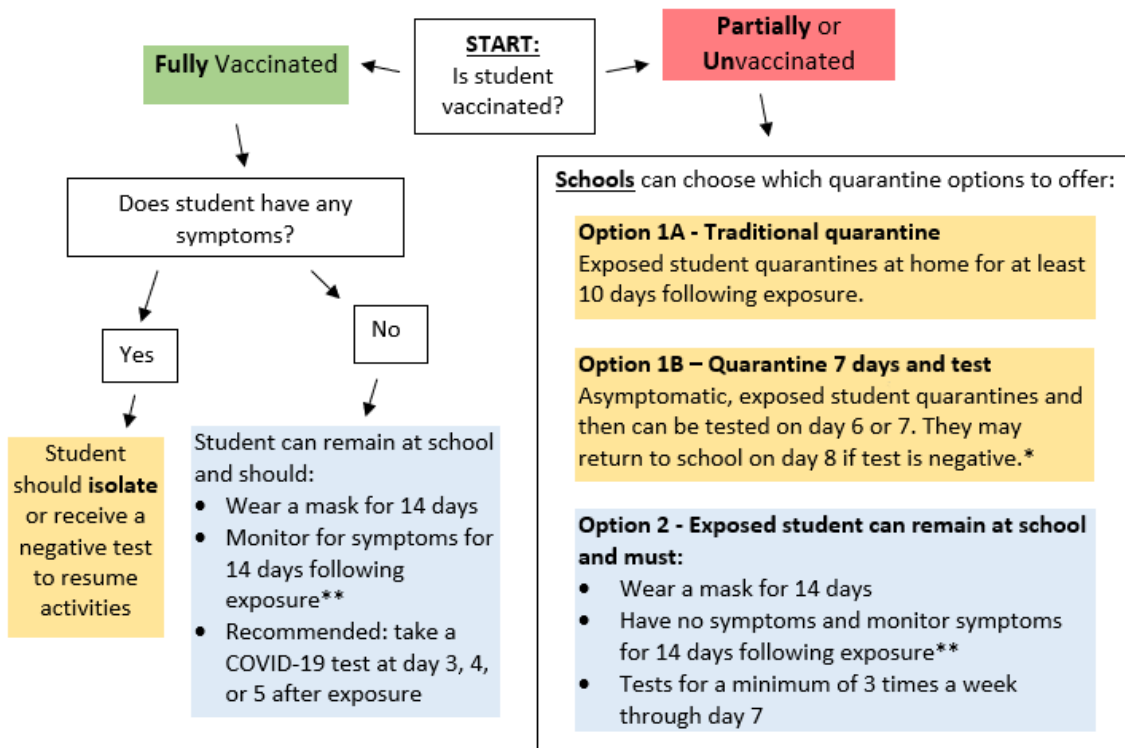
Here is a general overview of guidance for **students** potentially exposed in **traditional classroom or school bus settings**. Traditional classrooms include classrooms where students are primarily staying in place while receiving instruction; this does not include physical education/gym, recess, choir, band, or cafeteria/lunchroom settings.

The guidance for close contacts depends on how far away the student was from a positive case:

- If students were masked and between 3-6 feet apart for 15 total minutes or more in a 24-hour period: potentially exposed student should closely monitor symptoms for 14 days; they do not need to follow the guidance on the chart below.
- If students were masked and less than 3 feet apart for 15 total minutes or more in a 24-hour period: follow the guidance on the chart below.

Quarantine Decision Making

For students in traditional classrooms and school bus settings
 who were masked and less than 3 feet from someone with COVID-19
 for 15 total minutes or more in a 24-hour period



*Test should be PCR or a rapid antigen test administered by a health care provider or at school.

**If student develops COVID symptoms, they must isolate at home and follow Health Department directives.

Blue means: Remain at school
 Yellow means: Stay at home

For students in all other settings and school staff/teachers in all settings

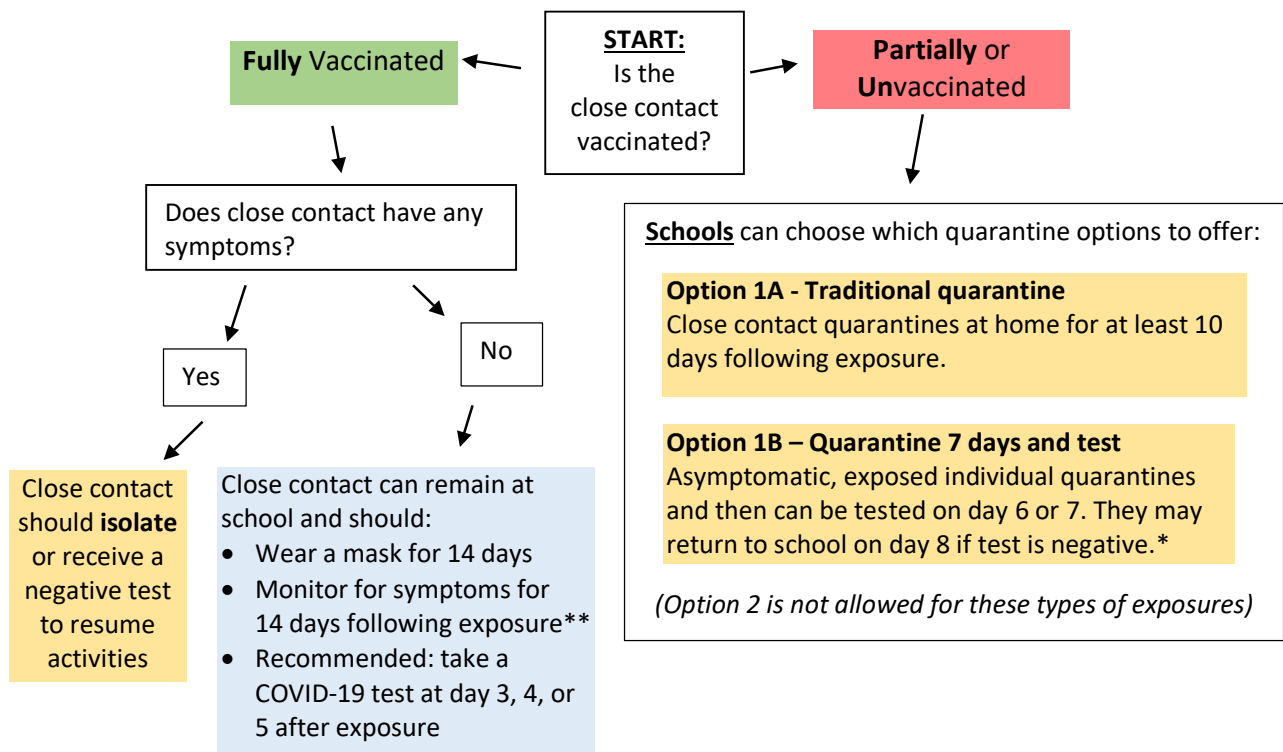
Here is a general overview of guidance for **students** potentially exposed in **all settings other than a traditional classroom or school bus**. This guidance also applies to **school staff and teachers in all settings**.

The guidance for close contacts depends on how far away the individual was from a positive case:

- For students NOT in traditional classroom or school bus settings: if individuals were masked and within 6 feet for 15 total minutes or more in a 24-hour period, follow the guidance on the chart below.
- For school staff/teachers in all settings: if individuals were masked and within 6 feet for 15 total minutes or more in a 24-hour period, follow the guidance on the chart below.

Quarantine Decision Making

For students in all settings other than traditional classroom or school bus settings
 For school staff and teachers in all settings



*Test should be PCR or a rapid antigen test administered by a health care provider or at school.

**If individual develops COVID symptoms, they must isolate at home and follow Health Department directives.

Blue means: Remain at school Yellow means: Stay at home

Quarantine Notes

- Additional steps for each situation may need to be discussed with Health Department case investigators. In all situations, Health Department guidance may change according to the specific circumstances or when necessary to control a large or ongoing outbreak.
- Close contacts are anyone who was within 6 feet of a positive case for a total of 15 minutes or more in a 24-hour period. Schools must notify all close contacts.
- For Quarantine Option 1B: if an individual returns to school on day 8 after receiving a negative test result, they are still restricted from all extracurricular activities (including sports, clubs, social events, etc.) for day 8, 9, and 10. However, attending before/after childcare is acceptable on these days.
- For Quarantine Option 2: this option allows for students to continue attending school and riding the bus. It does not allow students to participate in extracurricular activities, sports, clubs, or social events. Individuals doing Option 2 may participate in before/after school childcare.
- Individuals should continue to limit unnecessary activities and closely monitor for symptoms during days 10-14 after an exposure.
- If an individual is a close contact but has had COVID in the last 90 days, they do not need to follow this guidance and can remain in school – as long as they remain asymptomatic. If it has been longer than 90 days since they had COVID or they have symptoms, they must follow the above guidance.

Quarantine and sports

Fully vaccinated individuals do not need to quarantine unless they develop symptoms. Unvaccinated individuals will have to undergo home quarantine (option 1A or 1B) if they are identified as close contacts. Option 2 is not acceptable for sport exposures, where transmission is more likely.

- For outdoor sports, quarantine may not be required for other teammates, coaches, or the opposing team, if there is no other exposure (carpooling, team parties, etc.). Identification of close contacts will be more narrowly defined than last year.
- For certain indoor sports (e.g., hockey, basketball, volleyball, wrestling*), all unvaccinated individuals on the team will be identified as close contacts and will need to undergo home quarantine (option 1A or 1B).
 - *For wrestling, this applies to an individual's specific opponents rather than the entire team

Which test can be used?

In almost all circumstances, rapid antigen tests and PCR tests are both acceptable options for testing.

You can use rapid antigen tests on symptomatic or asymptomatic individuals.

Some situations may specifically require a PCR test. A PCR test is needed when:

- Confirming a positive rapid antigen test result for someone who is asymptomatic if confirmation is necessary.
- Confirming a negative rapid antigen test result for someone who is symptomatic.
 - In this situation, another option is to have a medical evaluation to identify a different diagnosis other than COVID-19.

Additional testing notes:

- If quarantine option 1B is allowed by the school: to determine if someone can end quarantine early, a rapid antigen test is acceptable if it is administered by a health care provider or at school. At-home rapid antigen tests are not acceptable in this situation.
- Most at-home rapid antigen test results are not reported to the Michigan Disease Surveillance System (MDSS) with the exception of certain at-home tests that include an app. To ensure that tests are appropriately captured, schools should report any positive at-home antigen test results to the Health Department.

COVID-19 vaccination

WCHD recommends all eligible individuals get vaccinated against COVID-19.

All eligible individuals who have had COVID previously should still get vaccinated. They just need to wait until their isolation is complete – in most cases, they do not need to wait 90 days to get vaccinated.

Find a vaccine clinic near you by visiting <http://bit.ly/vaxwchd> or by calling us at 734-544-6700. See even more Washtenaw County COVID-19 vaccine options by visiting <http://bit.ly/vaxlocations>.

Local pharmacies and the Regional Alliance for Health Schools clinics are also offering vaccinations.

Resources and notes

Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [NextDoor](#), or [Instagram](#) or [sign up](#) for our COVID-19 update emails for the latest local COVID-19 information.

- [CDC COVID-19 Data Tracker \(https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view\)](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view)
- [Michigan MI Safe Start Map \(mistartmap.info\)](http://mistartmap.info)
- [MDHHS K-12 School Opening Guidance \(michigan.gov/coronavirus\)](http://michigan.gov/coronavirus)
- [WCHD COVID-19 General Webpage \(washtenaw.org/covid19\)](http://washtenaw.org/covid19)
- [WCHD COVID-19 Webpage for Schools, Childcare, Camps, and Sports](#)
- [WCHD “When Should a Child be Kept Home or Sent Home from School for Illness”](#)
- WCHD “If you test positive for COVID-19” (includes quarantine instructions for general public) [English](#), [Spanish](#), [Arabic](#), [Simplified Chinese](#), [French](#)

From Washtenaw County Health Department, current as of September 22, 2021.