



1843 Oakwood Avenue  
Napoleon, OH 43545

Phone: (419) 599-5545  
Fax: (419) 592-6400

[www.henrycohd.org](http://www.henrycohd.org)

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**HENRY COUNTY SCHOOLS'  
MODIFIED QUARANTINE FOLLOWING SCHOOL EXPOSURE**

The Health Department and Superintendents of **Henry County** have worked together to develop a plan that gives families options if their child is in close contact to someone with COVID-19 in the school setting.

Since the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year, many Henry County students have been quarantined due to exposure in the classroom. Being out of the classroom significantly impacts students' mental health, educators' ability to teach, and caretakers' financial stability. To keep our students safe, our schools open, and our community united, we want to improve our strategy for living life with COVID-19. This modified quarantine procedure allows flexibility for students, staff, and families to make life with COVID more manageable, while still protecting others.

**Students will have the following two options for quarantine when exposed AT SCHOOL:**

1. At-home quarantine: Ten days at home or return to school after day 5 with proof of a negative test result and no symptoms.
2. In-school mask quarantine: If the student is symptom-free, he/she is allowed to stay in school wearing a mask for 10 days. They may stop wearing the mask indoors after day 5 with proof of a negative test result and no symptoms.

Regardless of quarantine status, any student who tests positive for COVID-19 or is showing symptoms, will be required to stay home. Student athletes who have chosen the in-school mask quarantine option and participate in an indoor sport will be expected to wear a mask when they are not actively participating in practice or a contest, including wearing a mask on the bench or when awaiting practice. A quarantined individual is still to stay home when not attending school and wear a mask in all indoor settings.

COVID-19 is still circulating in Henry County and steps to slow the spread of the illness remain important. We continue to urge our community members to please consider getting vaccinated, wear a mask in indoor settings with people outside of your home, wash your hands frequently, stay home when you're ill, and keep sick children home from school as well. Full details of this modified quarantine protocol can be found on the health department and county schools' websites and social media outlets.

"The Henry County School Superintendents express their sincere appreciation to Health Commissioner, Joy Ermie, for her efforts and foresight in collaborating in the development of a plan with quarantine options for our families. We have been strong advocates in respecting the choices of our families during this pandemic. Our collaborative work to prioritize a safe learning environment for students and staff- while also keeping them in school as much as possible- is vital in order for us to move forward and learn to manage life with COVID. This new quarantine protocol helps us accomplish that collective goal. We're all proud of this work, and we will continue to prioritize not only the health of our students but also their educational and social-emotional well-being."

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Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Joy Ermie, Henry County Health Commissioner

Dr. Erik Belcher, Napoleon Area City Schools

Dr. Josh Biederstedt, Patrick Henry Local Schools

Mr. Richard Peters, Liberty Center Local Schools

Mr. Tim Meister, Four County Career Center

Mrs. Kelly Meyers, Holgate Local Schools