

**COVID Leave
FAQs
March 2022
(as of 3.2.2022)**

<p><i>Is universal masking still required?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● As of March 2, 2022, universal masking is no longer required in public schools in New York State.● Staff and students can choose to wear masks and it is essential that schools establish a “mask positive” environment.● Masking still may be required or strongly recommended under certain circumstances and regardless of vaccination status:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Masking is required for staff and students returning from isolation (COVID positive) through day 10.○ Masking is highly recommended for staff and students who are identified as possible exposures of a COVID positive person for 10 days.
<p><i>What happens when the BOCES learns of a positive COVID-19 case?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The BOCES should notify affected school staff, students, and their parents/guardians of their exposure.● Close contacts can be identified by grouping (like a whole class) or by individuals, depending on the situation.● Close contacts are people that were within the zone of exposure for more than 15 mins within a 24 hour period during the two days prior to the person becoming symptomatic or testing positive.

<p><i>What is the “zone of exposure”?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In settings where masks are not worn, anyone within a 6-foot radius of an infected person should be considered within the zone of exposure. Schools do not need to rearrange their physical space to ensure students are 6 feet apart, but will understand the risk of potential exposure. ● Staff and students in this zone of exposure can attend school, but will be asked to wear a close fitting mask for 10 days and follow the testing recommendations.
<p><i>What if I’ve been exposed to COVID outside of school, but I’m asymptomatic?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NYSDOH strongly recommends that people exposed to a COVID positive person wear a mask for 10 days and undergo recommended testing. Based on these recommendations, staff and students that have been exposed will be able to continue to attend school.
<p><i>What is recommended testing?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If you are exposed to a COVID positive person, you are recommended to take a COVID test immediately and again 5 days after exposure regardless of vaccination status. ● If you are not fully vaccinated, it is <u>strongly recommended</u> that you test often (everyday or every other day) for the first 5 days after exposure. ● Tests will be provided by the BOCES as long as we have the resources. You can have a test administered by one of our nurses, or you can take the rapid tests home and test before the school day begins. ● Schools should track these tests, even when taken at home. Please report the date of test and the results to

	<p>your school nurse. If you do not work within one of our occupational centers, you can report the test to your supervisor.</p>
<i>What if I test positive for COVID?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You must report the positive test to your supervisor and Human Resources. • You will be required to isolate for at least 5 days with the first day of symptoms or the positive test being day 0. • If you feel well enough to return after 5 days, masking will be required upon return from isolation during days 6 through 10.
<i>Will I be paid while I am required to isolate?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At this time, NYS allows for up to two paid leaves for isolation after testing positive for COVID-19. Sick time can be used to isolate, after the NYS paid time is exhausted.
<i>Are unvaccinated staff still required to test weekly?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. The NYS public health law that outlines the expectation for unvaccinated staff to participate in weekly COVID testing was extended on March 1, 2022 until May 29, 2022. • Unvaccinated staff may opt out of the weekly testing requirement by providing proof of vaccination to the Human Resources Department.
<i>Additional mitigation measures</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masking is one of the measures we can implement to control the spread of disease. In addition, the BOCES will continue to work to improve ventilation, support vaccinations, offer testing, encourage physical distancing, hand hygiene and cough/sneeze etiquette.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Please do your part by staying home when ill or symptomatic.
<i>NYSDOH Guidance and FAQ for schools dated 2.28.22</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2022/03/school-guidance-03.01.22_0.pdf (ny.gov)• https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2022/03/school-guidance-faqs-for-schools_03.01.22.pdf