**K-12 School COVID-19 Guidelines**

School officials still need to promptly report COVID-19 cases and close contacts to the health department. While the public health orders requiring masks and social distancing in schools have been rescinded in Ohio, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) continue to recommend schools follow COVID-19 prevention measures implemented during the 2020-2021 school year. These prevention measures include universal and correct use of masks by staff and students and physical distancing of a *minimum* of 3 feet (6 feet preferred) in the classroom (6 feet required in some settings).[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Isolation and Quarantine**

Isolation and quarantine fall under the public health authority granted by the Ohio Revised Code. Isolation and quarantine requirements for individuals who have COVID-19 and their close contacts have ***NOT*** changed.

* **Isolation for individuals with COVID-19 remains the same.**
  + The infected individual may return to their normal activities 10 days after their symptom onset date (or test date if they are asymptomatic) AND they are fever free for 24 hours without medication and their other symptoms have improved.[[2]](#footnote-2)
* **Without full prevention measures in place, modified school quarantine no longer applies.**
  + If an individual is exposed to a COVID-19 case in the classroom setting without masking and social distancing, they are required to quarantine for 14 days\* from their last exposure to the infected individual, unless they are fully vaccinated.[[3]](#footnote-3) Contacts are NOT permitted to attend in person school or participate in extracurricular activities.
* **If full prevention measures remain in place, modified school quarantine can be implemented.1**
  + If an individual is exposed to a COVID-19 case in the classroom setting and both the case and contact were masked and social distanced, the contact is permitted to attend in person school and participate in extracurricular activities regardless of vaccination status.1 Contacts should quarantine outside of school for 14 days\* from their last exposure to the infected individual, unless they are fully vaccinated.3
* **Close contacts of a COVID-19 case that are exposed outside of the classroom setting are required to quarantine** for 14 days\* from their last exposure to the infected individual, unless they are fully vaccinated.3
* **Fully vaccinated individuals3 are NOT required to quarantine,** regardless of where they were exposed or the prevention measures in place. They should monitor for symptoms for 14 days from their last exposure to the infected individual, and isolate immediately if they develop symptoms.
* **All close contacts of a COVID-19 case should monitor for symptoms** for 14 days from their last exposure to the infected individual and isolate immediately if they develop symptoms, regardless of where they were exposed, the prevention measures in place, or their vaccination status.

**\*Note:** RPH continues to recommend 14-day quarantine. A 10-day or 7-day modified quarantine is permitted, with restrictions. See Options to Reduce Quarantine, CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html> for details.

**COVID-19 Specimen Collection Kits**

Schools should keep test kits for needs over the summer and fall. Schools still need to provide widespread access to COVID-19 testing for all students, faculty, and staff who have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 and who are not fully vaccinated, along with quarantine. Please keep track of any expired test kits that are disposed of. Test kits can be disposed of in the regular trash. Let us know if you need more test kits.

We will continue to closely monitor the status of the pandemic, as well as vaccination rates, throughout the summer. Unforeseen changes in the pandemic may cause CDC, ODH, and/or local public health to adjust this guidance. We will share detailed information about our fall COVID-19 safety protocols as we get closer to the beginning of the next academic school year in order to provide guidance based on the status of the pandemic and the best public health information available at the time.

1. COVID-19 Health and Prevention Guidance for Ohio K-12 Schools, ODH: <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/responsible/schools/K-12-Schools-Guidance.pdf>; Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools through Phased Prevention, CDC: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/operation-strategy.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/operation-strategy.html%20and%20COVID-19) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Isolation release criteria, CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Individuals are considered fully vaccinated for COVID-19 ≥ 2 weeks following their final dose of a COVID-19 vaccine series (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html#anchor_1615143349134>) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)