

MI Safer Schools Guidance for Managing COVID-19 Exposures in K-12 School Settings

Michigan.gov/Coronavirus

Updated: January 10, 2022

MDHHS continues to recommend universal masking in all K-12 school settings.

MDHHS recommends students, teachers, and staff age 5 and up get vaccinated, and that students, teachers, and staff ages 12 and up receive their booster as soon as they're eligible.

This guidance is specific to school setting exposures; community and household exposures should follow general public guidance for isolation and quarantine.

Key Guidance Updates:

- Updating of isolation and quarantine guidance to align with the CDC
- CDC K-12 isolation and quarantine guidance also now applies to teachers and staff exposed in a school setting, in addition to students

The state is committed to ensuring Michigan students and educators are as safe as possible in the classroom. This guidance will help K-12 schools maintain in-person learning by outlining mitigation strategies when students, teachers, and staff are exposed to a COVID-19 case in a school setting. When layered prevention strategies such as vaccination, masking, distancing, testing, isolation, and quarantine are applied consistently, school-associated transmission of COVID-19 is significantly reduced.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) recommends local health departments and schools work together to quickly **isolate COVID-19 cases** among students, teachers, and staff, identify close contacts of those cases, and adopt quarantine policies that reduce the risk of transmission in schools while allowing in-person learning. When evidence-based prevention measures are utilized, such as vaccination and masking, students, teachers, and staff exposed to COVID-19 cases may not have to quarantine at home and can stay in the classroom.

Quarantine and isolation are determined by the local health department and are used as important tools to prevent the spread of disease.

- You **isolate** when you are already infected with COVID-19 and have tested positive, even if you do not have symptoms. Isolation is used to separate people who are infected with COVID-19 from those who are not infected.
- You **quarantine** when you might have been exposed to COVID-19. This is because you might become infected with COVID-19 and could spread COVID-19 to others.

Overview of COVID-19 Isolation Guidance for K-12 Schools

- **Students, teachers & staff who test positive for COVID-19 and/or display [COVID-19 symptoms](#) should isolate regardless of vaccination status:**
 - If asymptomatic, monitor for symptoms for days 0 – 10; and
 - Isolate at home for days 0 – 5 (day “0” is day symptoms begin or day test was taken for those without symptoms); and
 - If symptoms have improved or no symptoms developed, return to school, while wearing a well-fitted mask, for days 6 -10; or
 - Stay home for days 0 - 10 if unwilling/unable to wear a mask.

If you have a fever, stay home until you are fever free for a period of 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.

Overview of COVID-19 Quarantine Guidance for K-12 Schools

These quarantine guidelines only apply to exposures that occur in a school setting. Students, teachers, and staff that are a close contact of a COVID-19 case in their household or in the community should follow quarantine guidance for the general public.

- **[Close contacts](#) of a COVID-19 case do not need to quarantine at home if they:**
 - Had confirmed COVID-19 within the last 90 days
 - Are up to date on [all recommended COVID-19 vaccines](#) for which they are eligible

These contacts should still conduct symptom monitoring and “Mask to Stay” for 10 days from the date of last exposure.
- **[Close contacts](#) of a COVID-19 case who do not meet the criteria above need to quarantine or may [test to stay](#) and mask to stay.** Exposed individuals may:
 - Home quarantine for days 1-5, if feasible test on day 5, AND “Mask to Stay” for days 6-10, OR
 - “[Test to Stay](#)”* for days 1-5 AND “Mask to Stay” for days 1-10; OR
 - Home quarantine for days 1-10 if unable/unwilling to mask

Students, teachers & staff should monitor for symptoms throughout quarantine period (days 1 through 10). Day “0” is day of last close contact with any COVID-19 positive student, teacher, or staff. If symptoms develop, get tested.

Symptom Monitoring

During days 1-10 following exposure:

- Watch for symptoms, such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other COVID-19 symptoms.
- If symptoms develop, get tested immediately and isolate until receiving test results. If they test positive, then follow [isolation](#) recommendations.
- If they do not develop symptoms, get tested at least 5 days after they were last exposed.
- If possible, stay away from people that they live with, especially people who are at higher risk of getting very sick from COVID-19

For the full 10 days after last exposure, avoid people who are immunocompromised or at high risk for severe disease, and nursing homes and other high-risk settings

***Test to Stay:** test every other day for 6 days following the exposure and consistent and correct use of a [well-fitted mask](#)

Mask to Stay: is the consistent and correct use of a [well-fitted mask](#) when around others and in school and public settings


MDHHS continues to recommend universal masking in all K-12 school settings.

Local conditions may vary. The local health department may modify quarantine policies based on factors including ventilation, duration/intensity of the contact, and other local factors. Schools and local health departments should work together to decide what quarantine policies work best in their communities.



School Quarantine Guidance

What to do when students or staff are exposed to COVID-19 in a school setting, **but do not have symptoms.**

Students and staff experiencing symptoms should not attend school activities.


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Students and staff should monitor for symptoms throughout quarantine period (days 1-10). If symptoms develop, test immediately. Day "0" is day of last close contact with a COVID-19 positive student, teacher or staff.

	Actions to Take
 Up to Date on Vaccines No Need to Quarantine	Students and staff without symptoms do not need to quarantine. They should monitor for symptoms and wear a well-fitted mask for 10 days.
 Not Up to Date on Vaccines Need to Quarantine	Home quarantine for days 1-5 and test on day 5; and "Mask to Stay" ^{**} for days 6-10.
	OR
	"Test to Stay" ^{**} for days 1-6 AND "Mask to Stay" ^{**} for days 1-10.
	OR
	Home quarantine for days 1-10 if unable/unwilling to mask.

*Mask to Stay: The consistent and correct use of a well-fitting mask when around others in school and public places
**Test to Stay: Test every other day for six days following the exposure and consistent and correct use of a mask

Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 should not attend school and should isolate at home for five full days after symptom onset (or five days after the positive test if they do not have symptoms). They may return to school on day six if they have no symptoms and can wear a mask for five additional days.

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School Testing Opportunities and State Support

MI Safer Schools Testing Program

MDHHS is providing schools antigen testing supplies free of charge through the [MI Safe Schools Testing program](#). Schools and individual school districts can request antigen test kits through the Mi Safer Schools: [School Antigen COVID Test Ordering form](#). Questions about test supply orders or any other school testing related questions can be sent directly to MDHHS at MDHHS-COVIDtestingsupport@michigan.gov

Community Testing Locations

- Free community-based pop-up rapid antigen testing
[Coronavirus - Community Based Pop-Up Rapid Antigen Testing](#)
- Find a COVID-19 testing location
[Coronavirus - Test](#)

Home Tests

At-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests are now available and can be purchased over-the-counter in grocery stores and pharmacies. MDHHS has some at-home tests that will be available to schools through the MI Backpack Home Test program. The [MI Backpack Home Test Pilot Program](#) is a voluntary program offered by MDHHS for Michigan K-12 students, educators, staff, and their

families who want an extra layer of protection against COVID-19. School districts can indicate their interest in participating in this program by completing the following survey:

<https://forms.office.com/g/is9FYDMRzn>

Additional Resources

- [MDHHS Recommendations for Safer School Operations during COVID-19](#)
- [Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools | CDC](#)
- [Parents and Caregivers | CDC](#)
- [CDC Guidance for Staying up to date with Vaccines](#)
- [COVID-19 Guidance for Safe Schools \(American Academy of Pediatrics\)](#)
- [MDHHS Mask Up, Mask Right](#)

For the latest information on Michigan's response to COVID-19, please visit

Michigan.gov/Coronavirus. You may also call the COVID-19 Hotline at 888-535-6136 or email COVID19@michigan.gov.