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Protocols for Symptoms, Close Contacts, and COVID-19 Cases: Students in School Settings

*This document is provided for technical assistance purposes and not intended to modify or supersede [CDPH K-12 Schools Guidance](#). In the event that a discrepancy exists between this document and current CDPH guidance; follow current CDPH guidance. **This does not include guidance for staff in school settings; for staff follow [Cal/OSHA FAQ's regulations](#).***

Student(s) with:	ACTION	DISTRICT COMMUNICATION
1. Any of the COVID-19 symptoms , regardless of the vaccination status of the individual or previous infection. • (Including “just a cold”). Symptoms are listed below on page 3 or accessible through above hyperlink.	SYMPTOMS Individual isolates at home. A medical evaluation is strongly encouraged. • Students with symptoms of COVID-19 infection, regardless of vaccination status are not to return in-person until: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> At least 10 days have passed since symptom onset AND at least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever reducing medications AND other symptoms have improved OR A negative test for SARS-CoV-2 (Antigen Test preferred²) and symptoms have improved OR A healthcare provider has provided documentation that the symptoms are typical of their underlying chronic condition (e.g., allergies or asthma), OR A healthcare provider has confirmed an alternative named diagnosis (e.g., Streptococcal pharyngitis, Coxsackie virus), IN ALL SCENARIOS ABOVE: Wear a well-fitting mask around others for a total of 10 days, especially when indoors. 	Notify Close Contacts ¹

<p>2. Confirmed COVID-19 case regardless of vaccination status, previous infection or lack of symptoms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If Asymptomatic, day 0= date first positive If Symptomatic, day 0=date first symptom 	<p>ISOLATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isolate case and exclude from school until return criteria has been met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay Home for 10 days; OR Isolation can end after day 5 if symptoms are not present OR are resolving AND tests negative on day 5 or later. (Antigen test preferred²); OR If fever is present, isolation should be continued until fever resolves without the use of fever reducing medications; OR If symptoms, other than fever, are not resolving continue to isolate until symptoms are resolving or until <u>after</u> day 10. <p>ALL SCENARIOS ABOVE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wear a well-fitting mask around others for a total of 10 days, especially indoors. Contact trace and follow quarantine recommendations for close contacts above. Initiate disinfection and cleaning of primary spaces where case spent significant time. Notify SBC PHD of all positive COVID 19 case, SBCPHD SS4A COVID Case Report. If 3 (or more) cases within a 14-day period, report a potential outbreak to Santa Barbara County Public Health Department Disease Control through the COVID-19 Outbreak Reporting Form, and/or phone Disease Control (805) 681- 5280. 	<p>Notify Close Contacts ¹</p> <p>Schools are required to report COVID-19 cases to the local public health department*.</p> <p>For technical assistance contact Georgene Lowe, RN; Glowe@sbcphd.org or (805) 705-6911/ Jan Chytilo, MS; jchytilo@sbcphd.org or 805-729-7159</p>
<p>Individual-Based Tracing</p> <p>3. When an UNVACCINATED Student has close contact with a person with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the community or a household</p> <p><u>Outside of School</u></p> <p>Day 0=last date of known close contact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> QUARANTINE: Outside of School Close Contacts – Students may return on Day 11 after a 10-day quarantine if symptom free OR; Students may return on Day 8 if negative test (antigen test preferred²) on or after day 5 and are symptom free. To discontinue quarantine before 14 days following last known exposure, asymptomatic close contacts must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue daily self-monitoring for symptoms through Day 14 from last known exposure; AND Follow all recommended non-pharmaceutical interventions (e.g., wear a well-fitting mask around others for a total of 14 days, especially in indoor settings, hand washing, avoiding crowds) through Day 14 from last known exposure; AND If any symptoms develop during this 14-day period, the exposed person must immediately isolate, get tested and contact their healthcare provider with any questions regarding their care. 	<p>Consider school community notification of a known case.</p>

<p>Individual-Based Tracing</p> <p>4. When an UNVACCINATED Student has close contact¹ with a person with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the school setting.</p> <p><u>Inside of School</u></p> <p>Day 0=last date of known close contact</p>	<p>Quarantine: In School Close Contacts</p> <p>In school close contacts who are asymptomatic may discontinue self-quarantine under the following applicable conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Standard Quarantine can end after Day 10 from the date of last close contact without testing; OR ii. Modified Quarantine (both parties wore face coverings and were in school setting): Attend school with face covering but exclude from sports, extracurricular, & school activities) AND test twice during the ten days following close contact date; AND quarantine can end on Day 8 with negative test on Day 5 or later from date of last close contact; OR iii. Shortened Quarantine (either party did not wear face covering) Quarantine for 10 days; AND quarantine can end on Day 8 if a diagnostic specimen is collected on Day 5 or later from date of last exposure and test result is negative. <p>IN ALL SCENARIOS ABOVE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Continue daily self-monitoring for symptoms through Day 14 from last known exposure; AND ii. Follow all recommended non-pharmaceutical interventions (e.g., wear a well-fitting mask around others for a total of 14 days, especially in indoor settings, hand washing, avoiding crowds) through Day 14 from last known exposure; AND iii. If any symptoms develop during this 14-day period, the exposed person must immediately isolate, get tested and contact their healthcare provider with any questions regarding their care. 	
<p>Individual-Based Tracing</p> <p>5. Fully Vaccinated³ Student has close contact¹ with a person with a confirmed case of COVID-19 inside or outside of school.</p> <p>Includes persons previously infected with SARS-Cov-2, in the 90 days prior</p> <p><u>Inside or outside of school</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Refrain from quarantine following a known exposure if asymptomatic AND recommend test on days 3-5 from close contact (antigen test preferred²); AND ii. Wear a well-fitting mask around others for 14 days, especially in indoor settings; OR iii. If tests positive, follow isolation recommendations above; OR <p>If symptoms develop, follow symptoms recommendations above.</p>	<p>Consider school community notification of a known contact.</p>

<p>Group-Tracing Approach to Students Exposed to COVID-19 in a K-12 Setting Regardless of Vaccination Status</p> <p>6. Students who spent more than a cumulative total of 15 minutes (within a 24-hour time period) in a shared indoor airspace (e.g., classroom) with someone with COVID-19 during their period of infectiousness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Exposed students, regardless of COVID-19 vaccination status or prior infection, are strongly recommended to get tested for COVID-19 with at least one diagnostic test² obtained within 3-5 days after last exposure. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. In the event of wide-scale and/or repeated exposures, broader (e.g., grade-wide or campus-wide) once weekly testing for COVID-19 may be considered until such time that exposure events become less frequent. ii. Exposed students who participate in testing may continue to take part in all aspects of K-12 schooling, including sports and extracurricular activities, unless they develop symptoms or test positive for COVID-19. They should test as recommended in Section 2, report positive test results to the school, and follow other components of this guidance, including wearing face-coverings as directed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Exposed students who develop symptoms should see Section 1 of the K-12 Guidance. b. Exposed students who receive a positive test result should isolate in accordance with Section 2 of this guidance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notification should occur to "groups" of exposed students (e.g., classmates, teammates, cohorts, etc.) rather than contact tracing to identify individual "close contacts" (e.g., those within 6 feet). 2. Notifications should be provided to all individuals considered exposed, including those who are vaccinated and/or recently infected. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) For example, if a student in tenth grade is diagnosed with COVID-19, the school should notify groups with whom that student interacted as per the criteria above, such as those in the same classes, sports team, and/or other extracurricular cohorts.
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**Per [AB 86](#) (2021) and [California Code Title 17, section 2500](#), schools are required to report COVID-19 cases to the local public health department. Schools or LEAs should have a COVID-19 liaison to assist the local health department with contact tracing and investigation.*

¹ A **close contact is:** Someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person (laboratory-confirmed or a clinically compatible illness) for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (for example, three individual 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes). An infected person can spread SARS-CoV-2 starting 2 days before they have any symptoms (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days before the positive specimen collection date). In some school situations, it may be difficult to determine whether individuals have met this criterion and an entire cohort, classroom, or other group may need to be considered exposed, particularly if people have spent time together indoors [without masking and social distancing].

² Any FDA-approved antigen diagnostic test, PCR diagnostic test, or pooled PCR test is acceptable for evaluation of an individual's COVID-19 status. An antigen test is preferred for testing out of isolation and quarantine. At—Home antigen tests are acceptable for this purpose. A confirmatory PCR test is not necessary following a positive antigen test. For individuals who have been recently infected (within the past 90 days), antigen testing is strongly recommended as PCR results may remain persistently positive and not be indicative of a new active infection. Repeat antigen testing and/or confirmatory molecular testing should be considered in individuals who receive a negative result with an antigen test but have symptoms specific for COVID-19 (such as loss of taste and smell).

³ **Fully vaccinated** means a person has received their [primary series](#) of COVID-19 vaccines.

Symptoms of Coronavirus

This list does not include all possible COVID-19 symptoms. CDC and CDPH will continue to update this list.

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea