Situation Room Tips

This page was last updated on April 21, 2022 at 3:02 PM.

About the Situation Room

The Situation Room is a one-stop shop for handling COVID-19 cases in all schools and programs in DOE buildings, including charter schools, early childhood, and D75 and D79 programs. It is a multi-agency partnership between the Department of Education, Department of Health and Mental Health, and the Test & Trace Corps. The Situation Room provides a single point-of-contact between schools and agency partners responsible for performing both testing, contact tracing, and ensuring the appropriate interventions are being taken by school communities.

Situation Room Hours

- Monday-Friday: 7 AM – 4:30 PM
- Sunday: 11 AM – 3:30 PM

Situation Room Holiday Hours

The COVID-19 Situation Room will operate under special holiday hours on the following dates for the remainder of SY 2021-2022.

Midwinter Recess (February 21-25)
- Sunday, February 20: Closed
- Monday, President’s Day: Closed
- Tuesday, February 22 – Friday, February 25 8 AM – 2:30PM daily

Spring Recess (April 15 – 22)
- Friday, April 15: Passover: Closed
- Sunday April 17, Easter: Closed
- Monday, April 18, through Friday, April 22: 8 AM – 2:30PM daily

Eid al-Fitr
- Monday, May 2: 8 AM – 2:30PM

Memorial Day Weekend (May 28-30)
- Sunday, May 29: Closed
- Monday, May 30, Memorial Day 8 AM – 2:30PM

Juneteenth
- Monday June 20 8 AM – 2:30PM

Updates to the Situation Room: Stay Safe, Stay Open Policy

The Situation Room will continue to provide guidance when students and staff test positive for COVID-19; however, there are several important changes to note as staff and students return from the Winter Recess:
• Principals should continue to report all positive cases to the Situation Room. This now includes positive results from at-home rapid test kits that are reported to them. Principals no longer need to report suspected cases or symptomatic cases without positive test results.

• Beginning immediately, if there is a positive case in a classroom, schools should follow this protocol:
  + Schools should immediately distribute an at-home rapid test kit to each student and staff member who was in the classroom(s) with the individual who tested positive.
  + Schools will distribute at-home test kits
  + Individuals who shared classroom space with the individual who tested positive must use the at-home test kit to test themselves two times within five days. It is recommended that exposed individuals take one test that evening and one test on Day Five after exposure. If an exposed individual starts experiencing COVID symptoms before Day Five, they should use the second test.
  + Students or staff members who were in a large assembly space, such as a gymnasium or cafeteria, or on a school bus, should not receive a test kit.
  + Students or staff who have recovered from COVID within the past 90 days should not receive a test kit.
  + Each individual should only get one test kit per week even if they are exposed multiple times.
  + Students ages two and older must quarantine for 10 days when they are exposed in their classroom. They should receive test kits which they may use to test on Day 4 and Day 5 to return from quarantine on Day 6.
  + Students younger than two years of age can return after eight days of quarantine if they have no symptoms and test negative for COVID-19 on Day 5 (or later) with a diagnostic test administered by a health care professional ONLY. Please note that home rapid tests are not considered valid for children under two years of age unless used at the direction of a healthcare provider.

• As always, people who are experiencing COVID symptoms should stay home.
  + All students, staff and visitors must pass the health screener in order to enter a school building. The health screener will include questions about test results from these rapid tests for those students and staff who receive at home rapid test kits due to possible exposure in a classroom. No other proof of negative result is required.

• The Situation Room will continue to:
  + Answer questions from school leaders
  + Support with school communications and letters to families
  + Monitor for widespread transmission and provide guidance on large scale interventions like school closures
  + Update summary data and track citywide statistics

For questions on Situation Room policies and procedures, contact the Situation Room at 212-393-2780 or email RTS@buildings.nyc.gov.

### How do you submit a case?

Principals should continue to report all positive cases to the Situation Room.

Starting on January 2, 2022, cases can be submitted to the Situation Room through a quick and easy online intake form. All positive test results will be accepted as valid including PCR, rapid or at-home test kit.

**Use the Intake Form**

As a reminder, cases can be submitted to the Situation Room in the following ways:

• Complete the online intake form
  1. We encourage schools to use the online form, which will provide you an automated case number; emailing the Situation Room will not provide you with one.
     • You must be logged into the Infohub to access the online form.
     • The form can be completed 24 hours a day/7 days a week.
  2. Continue to call cases into the Situation Room at (212) 393-2780 on weekdays from 7AM-4:30PM and on Sunday from 11AM-3:30PM.

### When do you contact the Situation Room?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Call the Situation Room?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Issue</td>
<td>Call the Situation Room?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Please note that for purposes of the Situation Room, staff is</td>
<td>Yes, call 212-393-2780</td>
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<td>defined as a DOE employee or contracted vendor, irrespective of</td>
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<td>lines of accountability (e.g. custodial engineers, School Safety</td>
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<td>Agents, Cafeteria personnel, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stafford with positive COVID result</td>
<td>Yes, call 212-393-2780</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stafford/student fails health screening (no COVID symptoms)</td>
<td>No, contact your BCO Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stafford goes home or calls out sick (not COVID symptoms)</td>
<td>No, contact your BCO Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student goes home or calls out sick (not COVID symptoms)</td>
<td>No, contact your BCO Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Questions about whether staff or students may return to school</td>
<td>No, contact your BCO Health</td>
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<td>after out-of-state travel</td>
<td>Director &amp; Supt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Questions about staff absence or OORS codes for COVID-19</td>
<td>No, contact your BCO HR Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Questions about staff refusal to complete the Health Screening</td>
<td>No, contact your BCO HR Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Questions about mask, thermometer, or cleaning protocols</td>
<td>No, contact the school Custodial</td>
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<tr>
<td>Questions about translation and Interpretation services for COVID-19 documents</td>
<td>No, contact the school Field Access Coordinator or the BCO Director of Student Services &amp; Supt</td>
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**What Communications Can You Expect to Receive?**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Communications</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>Acknowledgement of Case</td>
<td>You will receive an email once your case is entered. It will explain your next steps and include letters that you may share with your school community.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Co-Located Schools</td>
<td>If you are co-located, all principals in the building will receive the same emails with attachments.</td>
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This communication is an email shared from the Situation Room with principals and families via their New York City Schools Accounts (NYCSA). This email summarizes what's happening in school buildings related to active COVID-19 cases.

The school community receives these updates every evening. ONLY when there is an active COVID case to report that has resulted in no intervention, a classroom closure, or a building closure. If there are no cases, the school community will not receive a Daily Rollup.

Calculating Infectious Period and Quarantine Dates

For people with symptoms, the infectious period is generally two days before symptom onset until ten days after illness onset.

For people with no symptoms (asymptomatic), the period is estimated at two days the test date through ten days after the test date.

Students in Kindergarten or higher with COVID-19 must isolate during their infectious period. The day they test or the day symptoms begin is Day 0. Day 1 is the next day. They may return on Day 6.

Students in LYFE, 3-K, Pre-K, and DECE-contracted classrooms must still continue to quarantine for ten days from their last exposure to the positive case. The day they begin to quarantine is Day 0. Day 1 is the next day. Students two years of age or older may test to return on Day 6; students under two years may test to return on Day 8.

Multiple Case Assessment

As of March 14, the Department of Health (DOHMH) will no longer initiate an epidemiological assessment when there are multiple cases of COVID-19 in a classroom or pod within the school. Note the process that schools should follow when there are multiple cases:

- Schools should continue to distribute test kits to all members of the impacted classes (see section on Multiple Case Assessment).
- If it is determined that these multiple cases need an assessment, the Situation Room will notify the Office of School Health (OSH) that there is a need to make an assessment.
- OSH will contact the superintendent, who should support the school in determining what may be causing the increase in transmission at the school.
- To do this, the superintendents should conduct a walkthrough with members of the BCO, facilities staff, or OSH within 24 hours of notification.
- If it is determined that there is in-school transmission, the superintendent and OSH will work together to help the principal with mitigating strategies to minimize further transmission.

The threshold for assessment may be reevaluated as the pandemic changes. DOHMH medical epidemiologists will be available to consult and investigate, as requested by the DOE and through the Situation Room.

As of January 10, the thresholds are as follows:

- For students in grades K–12, the threshold for an assessment of transmission is ten cases in a classroom, or on a sports team.
- For students in 3-K, Pre-K, LYFE programs or classrooms with 15 or fewer enrolled students, the threshold for assessment is five cases in a classroom.

FAQ

Please see the questions and answers on the Principals’ COVID-19 FAQs page.