



School Health Policy

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Please visit the [FAQ page](#) for more information on COVID-19 policies in schools. Developed collaboratively with labor unions, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), and NYC Test + Trace Corps (T2), this policy provides guidance for schools regarding:

- Staying healthy while at school
- Daily health screenings for students and school-based staff
- What to do if a student or staff member shows signs of COVID-19 while at school
- Outreach to the Situation Room

Vaccinations Pop-up Sites

If your school has been identified for a vaccine pop-up for students ages 5-11, you can find the schedule on the [Vaccination Pop-up Site location document](#) . Please backpack home the letter to families in the appropriate language.

The pop-up sites will operate from 8AM to 5PM.

Vaccination Pop-up Sites available in:

Related Links

[Illuminate Education](#)

[PSAL](#)

[School Health Policy](#)

[COVID-19 Testing](#)

[Situation Room](#)

[Field Trips](#)

[Instructional Expectations for Short-Term Remote Learning](#)

[Attendance](#)

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[Daily Routines in Early Childhood Classrooms](#)

[Use of DOE Space](#)

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Staying Healthy While at School: Vaccinations

Vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. People who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are at low risk of symptomatic or severe infection.

Currently, people five years and older are eligible for COVID-19 vaccinations and those 12 and older are eligible for a COVID booster. Schools can promote vaccinations among eligible students by providing information about the COVID-19 vaccination, encouraging vaccine trust and confidence, and establishing supportive policies and practices that make getting vaccinated as easy and convenient as possible.

NEW! The DOE is committed to increasing the COVID-19 vaccination rate among students. Please print these [fliers](#) [📄](#), which encourage vaccination, and post in highly visible locations in your school.

In partnership with the DOHMH, the NYCDOE is emphasizing the use of multiple layers of protection against COVID-19 and encouraging those who are eligible to get vaccinated. Strategies to prevent the spread of COVID-19 include:

- Properly wearing a face covering when returning from isolation after COVID;
- Increasing ventilation, wherever possible;
- Washing and sanitizing hands regularly;
- Staying home when sick, after being in close contact with a person with COVID-19, or if someone in your household is exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms;
- If eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine or booster, getting the vaccine or booster.

Updates for June 10: Face Coverings for Students In Early Childhood Programs

Mayor Adams announced that, starting Monday, June 13, face coverings will be optional for students and staff in early childhood schools or programs.

To maintain the safety of our staff and students, early childhood programs will continue to practice strict COVID-19 protocols, including increased ventilation, a daily health screening, and test kit distribution.

As of June 13, face coverings for early childhood students and staff will become optional indoors, outside, and on school buses. Anyone who chooses to wear a face covering may continue to do so, and students and staff members may request a face covering from their school or program if they need one.

Face coverings are strongly recommended for any staff member or student who knows they have been exposed to COVID-19 within the previous 10 days. Wearing a face covering is still required in medical rooms and nurses' offices. Nurses will have masks on hand for anyone entering who may need one.

[Instructional Guidance](#)

[Physical Education](#)

[Guidance for the Arts](#)

[Extension of Services for Students 21 and Older with IEPs](#)

[Transportation Guidance](#)

[Internet Connectivity Support Policy](#)

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[Supporting Students in Foster Care and Temporary Housing](#)

[Building Response Team](#)

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[End of Year Activities Guidance](#)

[Illuminate Education](#)



Updates for April 26: Continuation of Home Test Kits

As shared in the April 26 edition of [Principals Weekly](#), the distribution of home test kits will continue:

- Any student who exhibits COVID-like symptoms at school or has been exposed to COVID-19 in a classroom setting should continue to receive a home test kit for use at home.
- Please continue to give all staff members two test kits per week, and all students four test kits per week, until further notice.
- Please remember that if an individual is exposed multiple times in a week, they need only one test kit (2 tests) for the week; the two tests are sufficient for multiple exposures.

Updates for March 7: Face Coverings

Beginning March 7, face coverings will become optional, indoors and outdoors on NYC public school grounds and on school buses, for all K-12 students and staff with a few exceptions. Please note that while wearing a face covering will no longer be required, anyone who chooses to wear a mask may continue to do so. Face coverings will continue to be available through your school's custodian engineer. Teachers may continue to ask for a KN95 mask; school should give one to any staff member who asks. These masks are to be used for five days. Custodian engineers have adult-sized KN95 masks available for staff and for students who can tolerate a high-grade mask; they also have three-ply surgical masks for students who cannot tolerate a high-grade mask, including younger students. For more information on face coverings, please see below and visit the updated [Face Coverings InfoHub page](#).

Face coverings are required:

- **Face coverings are required after returning from 5-day isolation or quarantine:** Anyone returning on Day 6 after a positive COVID-19 diagnosis or after having COVID-19 symptoms without testing is still required to wear a well-fitting face covering (such as a KN95, KF94, or a surgical mask under a cloth mask) at all times on school property through Day 10. If the individual is unable to wear a well-fitting face covering for the duration of the school day, the individual must continue to isolate for 10 days.
- **Face coverings are required when experiencing symptoms:** If an individual is symptomatic but has a negative COVID-19 diagnostic test performed by a provider OR two negative results from an at-home test taken at least 24 hours apart since the onset of symptoms, and has been fever-free for the past 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine, the individual must wear a face covering through Day 10.
- **Face coverings for Early Childhood:** The indoor face covering mandate is still active for LYFE, EarlyLearn (Infants & Toddlers), 3-K, Pre-K, and 4410 classrooms. Children two years old and older, and all staff in these classrooms, must continue to follow the same masking requirements whether they are in a district school, CBO, or home-based program. Since children under the age of five are not yet eligible to receive the vaccine, face coverings remain our strongest defense against COVID-19 for early childhood populations.
- **Face coverings in medical rooms/nurses' offices:** Wearing a face covering is still required in medical rooms/nurses' offices, as well as in School Based Health Centers. Nurses will have face coverings on hand for anyone entering who needs one.



Face coverings are strongly recommended:

- **Face coverings following exposure:** It is strongly recommended that face coverings be worn when an individual has been exposed or potentially exposed at school (in the same room for 15 minutes or longer with a person who tested positive for COVID-19). Face coverings are also strongly recommended if an individual knows they have been exposed to COVID-19 in any setting within the previous 10 days.

Updates for February 3, 2022

Continuation of Home Test Kits

As mentioned in an email from the First Deputy Chancellor, the distribution of home test will continue:

- Any student who exhibits COVID-like symptoms at school or has been exposed to COVID-19 in a classroom setting should continue to receive home test kit for use at home.
- Please continue to give all staff members a home test kit, once a week, until further notice.
- Please remember that if an individual is exposed multiple times in a week, they need only one test kit (2 tests) for the week; the two tests are sufficient for multiple exposures.

Home Test Kits for Return from Midwinter Recess

The DOE wants to ensure that everyone (students and staff) has a test kit to use prior to returning from the midwinter recess. Students and staff can use this kit to test on the evening of Saturday, February 26 and the evening of Sunday, February, 27 before returning on Monday, February 28. Please note that while use of the test kit is *strongly encouraged*, participation is voluntary, and staff and students are not required to show proof of a negative test result before being allowed to return to work or school.

Distribution to Staff: For the week of February 14, schools should distribute home test kits to all staff on Monday, February 14 and again on Friday, February 18. This is to ensure staff have a second kit (2 tests) to use before they return from the midwinter recess on February 28.

Distribution to Students: All students should receive home test kits (2 tests) on Friday, February 18, even if they were exposed earlier in the week. A family letter to accompany the February 18 distribution of test kits will be available on the [Messages for Families](#)  page on February 11.

Updates for January 31, 2022

Shortened Isolation Periods

As a reminder, anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 must isolate. This means the individual cannot go to school or work and should not leave their home, except to seek medical care.

Staff, Students in K-12 Classrooms: The isolation period for all staff and students in Kindergarten and above who test positive for COVID-19 has been shortened to five days (from ten), regardless of age or vaccine/booster status. Individuals who have tested



positive for COVID-19 do not need a negative COVID test to return to school or work on Day 6.

If an individual has COVID symptoms and tests positive (on any kind of COVID test), the individual must isolate for a minimum of five days with Day 0 being the day that symptoms started. After five days the individual may return to school/work so long as they have been fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication and symptoms are improving.

If an individual has no symptoms but tested positive (on any kind of COVID test), the individual must isolate for five days, with Day 0 being the day the test was collected. If symptoms develop within five days of testing positive, the five-day isolation count must restart, with Day 0 being the day symptoms started.

If an individual has COVID-like symptoms and is awaiting a test result, the individual must isolate until the test result is received OR for five days, whichever comes first. If the test result is negative, the individual can end isolation. If the test result is positive, the individual must complete the five-day isolation period and may return to school/work so long as they have been fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication and symptoms are improving.

Anyone who has tested positive and returns to school or work after Day 5 must wear a well-fitting face covering from Day 6 through Day 10. DOHMH recommends a high-grade well-fitting mask such as a KN95 or KF94, or a surgical mask worn under a cloth mask. Schools' Custodian Engineers have adult-sized KN95 masks available for staff and for students who can tolerate a high-grade mask; they also have three-ply surgical masks for students who cannot tolerate a high-grade mask, including younger students. Anyone who experienced symptoms and tested negative for COVID but is returning to school or work must also wear a well-fitting face covering from Day 6 through Day 10. If the individual cannot wear a well-fitting face covering for the duration of the school day, the individual should continue to isolate and can return on Day 11.

Children in LYFE, 3K, Pre-K, and DECE-Contracted Providers: Isolation periods for infants, toddlers, 3-K and Pre-K children who test positive for COVID-19 will remain at 10 days.

Shortened Quarantine Periods

Staff, Students in K-12 Classrooms: All staff and students in grades Kindergarten and higher, when exposed to COVID-19 at school, do not need to quarantine and should continue to use the home test kits provided by their schools. Following an exposure at school, an individual should test that evening and test again five days later.

If an individual is not fully vaccinated and exposed to COVID-19 outside of a school setting, the individual must quarantine for five days; this has been reduced from ten days. An unvaccinated student who is exposed in the home must continue to quarantine for an additional five days after a household member's isolation period has ended, if the household member and student are staying in the same home during that time.

Anyone knowingly exposed to COVID and returning to school or work after Day 5 must wear a well-fitting face covering from Day 6 through Day 10.



Please note that if a staff or student has recovered from COVID-19 within the last three months, they do not need to quarantine or receive an at-home test kit following exposure unless they become symptomatic (new fever of 100 degrees F or higher, new cough, new sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, new shortness of breath).

Children in LYFE, 3K, Pre-K, and DECE-Contracted Providers: Children ages 2 through 5 years of age can now return after five days of quarantine if they are asymptomatic and test negative for COVID-19, regardless of where the exposure occurred.

They can return to school on Day 6 using a diagnostic test administered by a healthcare professional on Day 5 or they can use two at home rapid tests on Day 4 and Day 5. Any child returning from quarantine on Day 5 must wear a well-fitting face covering (such as a KN95) from Day 6 through Day 10.

NEW! Fully vaccinated children aged 5 in Pre-K settings do not need to quarantine after an exposure.

Children under 2 years old can return after eight days of quarantine if they are asymptomatic, and test negative for COVID-19 on Day 5 (or later) with a diagnostic test administered by a healthcare professional ONLY. Please note that at home tests are not considered valid for children under 2 years old unless used at the direction of a healthcare provider.

Please note that if a staff member or student has recovered from COVID-19 within the last three months, they do not need to quarantine or receive an at-home test kit following exposure unless they become symptomatic (new fever of 100 degrees F or higher, new cough, new sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, new shortness of breath).

Children in 3-K, Pre-K, DECE-Contracted, and LYFE classrooms that do not get tested can return to the school/program on Day 11 after completing a ten-day quarantine. If they become symptomatic during quarantine, please refer to the isolation guidance above.

Home Test Kits for Students Age 2 through 5 in LYFE, 3K, Pre-K, DECE-Contracted Providers

Beginning the week of January 31, home test kits should now be distributed to children age 2 and older when exposed at their school/program, as well as when they are sent home with symptoms. These children who have been exposed to COVID-19 in a classroom setting will still need to quarantine for at least five days but may choose to use the home test kit to test on Day 4 and Day 5 in order to return on Day 6. Any child returning from quarantine on Day 5 must wear a well-fitting face covering (such as a KN95) from Day 6 through Day 10.

Previous Updates

Home Test Kits

Beginning January 3, schools will distribute free, take-home COVID-19 test kits to:

- A student who exhibits COVID-like symptoms
- A student who has been in a classroom where a positive case has been identified
- Staff should receive a test kit once a week, even if they do not fall into the categories above. Should a staff member need an additional test kit due to



extenuating circumstances, the staff member should request one from the principal.

Beginning January 10, schools with 3-K and Pre-K classes will distribute these take-home COVID-19 rapid test kits to any 3-K or Pre-K student who exhibits COVID-like symptoms.

Individuals Experiencing Symptoms

A student experiencing COVID-like symptoms at school should be isolated and have the guardian called for pick up. The school should give the guardian a home test kit (two tests), along with the [Family Notification of a Case letter](#).

A staff member experiencing COVID-like symptoms at school may be given a home test kit (two tests) and leave work immediately.

Please note, test kits are for use at home and not on school property.

Students and staff experiencing COVID-like symptoms should use both tests within 24 hours. Symptomatic students should receive the [Return After Symptoms letter](#).

How to Use Home Test Kits for Symptomatic Individuals:

- The first test should be used immediately upon returning home, and the second test should be used 24 hours later.
 - The symptomatic individual must stay home until two negative home rapid test results have been received.
 - The individual may return to school/work after two negative test results and if they are fever free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication.
- If the individual tests positive on either home test, the individual must isolate.

Individuals Exposed to COVID at School (All Staff and Students in K-12)

Exposure is considered any student or teacher who was in a classroom with a positive case. Students may have been exposed to COVID at school should be given a home test kit for use at home. Students should receive one test kit (2 tests) after exposure and they do not need an additional kit if they experience multiple exposures during the week.

The individual should administer the first home test on the day they receive the test kit and then again on Day 5.

If an individual begins to show symptoms of COVID before Day 5, they should use the test kit immediately, treating themselves as a potential positive case and isolate. It is recommended that the individual also seek a PCR test.

As mentioned above, if a student was exposed multiple times in the same week (i.e. on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday), the student should receive ONLY one kit (two tests) that week. The student should test on Monday and then use the second test after the second exposure. If an individual is exposed multiple times in a week, they don't need another kit until next week; the two tests should be able to pick up any infection.



Please note that this home testing program applies only to school exposures; it does NOT apply to individuals with household exposures. Students and staff who are not fully vaccinated and experience an exposure outside of the classroom must still quarantine at home for 10 days. If those individuals obtain a COVID-19 test result (a rapid home test is acceptable) on or after Day 5 from exposure, they can return to school from quarantine on Day 8.

If a student begins to have COVID-like symptoms overnight, an adult guardian can pick up a test kit from the school for use on the student.

Quarantine/Close Contacts

Beginning January 3, the DOE and Situation Room will no longer ask for close contacts or implement partial class quarantines.

Using the Test to Stay policy, all students in Kindergarten onwards and all school-based staff may return to school so long as no one experiences symptoms and continues to test negative after exposure.

Principals must still call the Situation Room to report a positive case. However, schools DO NOT need to call the family of every student that would have been a “close contact.” Schools should send home test kits to students and staff in the class with the relevant [Situation Room letter](#).

Please note that full classroom closures still apply to classroom serving students in Pre-K and younger. Students impacted by classroom closures due to COVID-19 may test out of quarantine (see January 31 updates.)

Individuals Recovered from COVID-19 in the Last 90 Days

Students or staff who have recovered from a confirmed case of COVID-19 within the past 90 days do not have to quarantine or test following an exposure unless they show COVID symptoms. Starting on January 31, the health screener will be revised to address this scenario.

Students or staff who have recovered from a confirmed case of COVID within the past 90 days should not receive at-home test kits following exposure and should not participate in school-based PCR testing.

COVID-19 Surveillance Testing

Regular COVID-19 testing provides school communities and public health experts with valuable information. Please visit [the COVID-19 Testing page](#) for the most up-to-date information. Families can give consent for testing through their student's [New York City Schools Account \(NYCSA\)](#) [↗](#).

Daily Health Screenings

Operationalizing Health Screenings

To ensure that staff and students do not report to school if they have or potentially may have COVID-19 or are feeling ill, a health screening must be completed, ideally at home, by all students, staff, and visitors before entering NYCDOE school facilities.



Principals must have procedures in place to ensure that everyone who enters the building each day has passed the health screening at home or prior to entry to the school building. Schools should have a designated staff person to review the incoming reports of screening by staff and parent/guardian and to attest that they are completed.

To operationalize this guidance please note that as per [NYSDOH](#), schools are prohibited from keeping records of student, faculty, staff, and visitor health data (e.g., the specific health data of an individual), but are permitted to maintain records that confirm individuals were screened and the result of such screening (e.g., pass/fail, cleared/not cleared). Any paper questionnaires that are collected for purposes of completing the daily screening attestation requirement must be immediately shredded to protect student, faculty, staff, and visitor health data.

Students and school-based staff can or cannot report to school based on their results of the following questions in the NYCDOE's [daily health screener](#). Translations will be available shortly.

Using the Online Health Screening Tool

NYCDOE families/students are encouraged to use [the online health screening tool](#) to pre-screen themselves before entering a NYCDOE building. Upon entering the school facility, families/students will be asked to provide the results of their screening either by showing the email on their smartphone or a printout of the results. Families should support students as needed with this online screening questionnaire and should ensure students have proper documentation for morning entry.

For students who travel via school bus, families must complete the screening, including checking their child's temperature prior to boarding a school bus to make certain that their child is well enough to ride on the bus and attend school. Bus personnel will not be conducting screenings of children prior to boarding the bus. School site designated staff will be checking for completion of student health screening at entry. Students without a daily screening clearance will need to be supported in completing this process at the school, particularly young children.

For morning student drop off, every effort should be made to ensure that student health screenings are completed prior to families dropping off their children to school, especially for younger students.

NYCDOE employees are strongly encouraged to use the online tool to pre-screen themselves before entering a NYCDOE building. Upon entering the facility, staff will be asked to provide the results of the screening either by showing the email on their phones or a printout of the results. The screening results for school-based staff are valid until midnight of the same day. School-based staff must show clearance every time they reenter a NYCDOE building.

Paper Copy of Health Screening Questionnaire

If students are not able to pre-screen using the online tool, schools must provide families with several copies of the health screening questionnaire so families can complete the questionnaire at home. If staff are not able to pre-screen using the online tool, staff should print and complete the [Health Screening Questionnaire](#) document for completion on a daily basis at home.

In-Person Health Screening at School



If NYCDOE families are unable to pre-screen their child(ren) at home using either the online tool or paper questionnaire, families will need to complete their child's screening in-person at the school building prior to their child's entry. Schools should determine the best way to implement on-site screening for students using either the online health screening tool or paper copies of the screening questionnaire. Young children may require additional support from a staff member.

If NYCDOE school staff are not able to pre-screen themselves prior to coming to work, they will be required to complete an in-person screening assessment prior to entering the building. The screening results for school-based staff are valid until midnight of the same day and school-based staff must show clearance every time they reenter a NYCDOE building.

Supporting Younger Students and District 75 Students with In-Person Health Screenings

For younger students who arrive at school without a completed questionnaire and are unable to respond to the health screening questions, the school should make an effort to contact a family member for support with screening. However, if a parent/guardian is unable to be contacted, the school should check the student's temperature to ensure that it is below 100.0 degrees F and ask the student about their well-being (e.g., "How are you feeling today?").

For District 75 students who arrive at school without a completed questionnaire, the school should make an effort to contact a family member for support with screening. If it is not feasible to contact the student's family member prior to the student's entry, the school should check the student's temperature to ensure that it is below 100.0 degrees F and ask the student about their well-being (e.g., "How are you feeling today?"). In District 75 schools, temperature check alone prior to entry is acceptable if a student is not developmentally able to answer questions regarding their well-being. In the event that contact with the family was not possible prior to the student's entry, once the student is in class the school should conduct outreach to the family to complete the screener as well as remind the family that the screening must be conducted at home before the student leaves for school.

Student Pick Up

If a student fails a health screening or shows symptoms of COVID-19, as mentioned above, the student should be escorted to a school-designated area and the guardian must be contacted to pick up the student. If the guardian cannot be reached, the school must contact the emergency contacts on the student's Blue Card. Please note that failure of the guardian or emergency contact to pick up the student in a timely manner does not warrant a report to the New York State Central Registry (SCR), unless accompanied by additional concerns or suspicions regarding the student's safety which would require that a report be made in accordance with [Chancellor's Regulation A-750](#) .

Failing a Health Screening: Students

Any unaccompanied student who fails their health screening (i.e., answers yes to any of the health screening questions below) should be escorted to a school-designated room per the guidance below and must be picked up by a family member. For students who fail a health screening and are dropped off by a guardian, these students should be sent home with their guardians prior to entering school, where possible.



Failing a Health Screening: School-Based Staff

Any employee who fails their health screening will be refused entry to the building by the School Safety Agent/NYCDOE Safety Officer.

Symptoms of COVID-19 While at School

Student Shows Symptoms of COVID-19 While at School

For the 2021-22 school year, schools are not required to have an Isolation Room. All schools must have an area designated to hold students who are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, but this room can be used for other purposes when not holding an ill student. Schools and campuses should decide on space that can be used. Regardless of the designated area, the space must be thoroughly cleaned after holding a student who showed signs of COVID-19. No additional staffing is needed for this designated space, as the nurse or campus health care professional will assess potentially ill students. Should a school have the space, the school may designate a room to be solely used for holding students who show symptoms of COVID-19.

Schools should follow the steps below when a student shows symptoms of COVID-19 during the school day:

1. A classroom teacher or school aide notifies the nurse that a student is not well and experiencing one or more COVID-like symptoms, including:
 - Fever of 100.0 degrees F or higher or chills,
 - New cough,
 - New loss of taste or smell, and/or
 - New shortness of breath.
2. The student showing symptoms of COVID-19 will be escorted to the designated area in the school by a staff member wearing appropriate PPE.
3. When the ill student is placed in the designated area, the nurse will be contacted and will come to the designated area and assess the student.
 - Should the nurse/health professional be unavailable at that moment to examine the student and the guardian arrives, the student should leave with the guardian. The guardian should receive a home test kit for use on the student.
 - The nurse will assess if the student was vaccinated against COVID-19 within the past three days.
 - If the student was recently vaccinated, the student may be experiencing post-vaccine symptoms which include fatigue, fever, headache, and/or chills.
4. The area/classroom where the student was showing symptoms must be isolated/closed immediately and cleaned prior to re-occupancy.
5. The school calls the student's guardian for pick up.
6. Upon arrival of the student's guardian, a staff member escorts the student to the visitors' entrance for pick-up by the guardian, reviews the NYCDOE's "Sent Home With Symptoms" letter with the guardian and gives the guardian a home test kit.
7. The staff member will report the incident to the principal. The principal or designee will ensure that the incident involving the ill student is reported to the Situation Room by calling 212-393-2780 and is documented in OORS.
8. The Situation Room will provide the principal with a letter to be disseminated to the school community regarding a student exhibiting COVID-like symptoms during the school day.
 - The school may use any communication platform available to disseminate the letter.



- The principal asks a school designee, such as the Parent Coordinator or nurse, to follow up with the family on the ill student's condition at regular intervals.
- The principal and/or designee shares any test results or updates with the Situation Room and in the OORS report.

School-Based Staff Member Shows Symptoms of COVID-19 While at School

Schools should follow the steps below when a staff member shows symptoms of COVID-19 during the school day:

1. The ill staff member immediately notifies the principal that they are not feeling well and are experiencing COVID-like symptoms, such as:
 - Fever of 100.0 degrees F or higher or chills,
 - New cough,
 - New loss of taste or smell and/or,
 - New shortness of breath.
 - Note, if the staff member was vaccinated against COVID-19 within the past three days, the staff member may be experiencing post-vaccine symptoms which include fatigue, fever, headache, and/or chills. The staff member should go home and can return to work after being fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of medication.
2. The staff member goes home with a home test kit.
 - If the staff member does not immediately leave the building and needs to wait for transportation assistance, the staff member may report to the designated area.
3. The area/classroom where the staff member was showing symptoms must be cleaned as soon as possible.
4. The principal or designee will ensure that the incident involving the ill staff member is reported to the Situation Room by calling 212-393-2780 and files an OORS report.
 - The Situation Room will provide the principal with a letter to be disseminated to the school community regarding a staff member having exhibited COVID-like symptoms during the school day.
 - The school may use any communication platform available to disseminate the letter.
 - The principal and/or designee will follow up with the ill staff member and share any test results or updates with the Situation Room and in the OORS report.

Student or School-Based Staff Member Calls Out Sick With COVID-Like Symptoms Or Because Someone In Their Household Is Sick With COVID-Like Symptoms

Should a student or staff member call out sick because they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, the principal or designee must call the Situation Room at 212-393-2780 and await next steps. Individuals who were vaccinated against COVID-19 within the past three days may experience post-vaccine symptoms which include fatigue, fever, headache, and/or chills. In that case, the individual should stay home and can return after being fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of medication.

Criteria for Returning to School



Beginning January 3, schools will distribute free, take-home COVID-19 test kits to any students or staff who exhibit COVID-like symptoms or have been in a classroom where a positive case has been identified.

Individuals Experiencing Symptoms

The individual experiencing symptoms should use both tests within 24 hours. The first test should be used immediately upon returning home, and the second test should be used 24 hours later. The individual must stay home until two negative home rapid test results have been received. The individual may return to school/work after two negative test results and if they are fever free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication.

Individuals Exposed to COVID at School

Students and staff who may have been exposed to COVID at school should be given a home test kit to take home. The individual should administer the first home test on the day they receive the test kit and then again on Day 5.

If an individual begins to show symptoms of COVID before Day 5, they should use the test kit immediately, treating themselves as a potential positive case and isolate.

Please note that this home testing program applies only to school exposures; it does NOT apply to individuals with household exposures. Students and staff who are not fully vaccinated and experience an exposure outside of the classroom must still quarantine at home for 10 days. If those individuals obtain a COVID-19 test result (a home rapid test result is acceptable) on or after Day 5 from exposure, they can return to school from quarantine on Day 8.

Testing Positive from a Home Test

Anyone who tests positive, regardless of vaccine status, from a take home test should immediately report it to the school and begin isolating. Students who test positive must isolate for 5 days and can return to school on Day 6 so long as they are able to wear a well-fitting mask while at school from Day 6 through 10. No negative test is required to return to school.

Students and Staff Identified as Close Contacts in a COVID-19 Case

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.

Beginning immediately, if there is a positive case in a classroom, schools should follow this protocol:

- Students and staff members who were in close contact with a positive case, but who are not symptomatic, should not automatically quarantine.
- 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.
- These individuals should use the at-home rapid test kit to test themselves two times within five days. It is recommended that exposed individuals take one test on the day it is received 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.
- As always, people who are experiencing COVID symptoms should stay home.



- As a reminder, 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.

COVID Response Situation Room

The NYCDOE, T2, DOHMH, and Department of Buildings have collaborated to create the [COVID Response Situation Room](#) (the Situation Room).

Principals (or their designees) should continue to contact the Situation Room to report positive cases to the Situation Room via the [intake form](#)  or by calling 212-393-2780.

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
- Please visit the [Situation Room InfoHub](#) page for more information.

Nurses

In the event that your school building does not have a nurse on January 3, 2022 or in the future, you should reference the following guidance:

- The principal should escalate this issue to the [nurse supervisor](#). 
- The principal should inform the superintendent.

If there is a student who requires medicine:

- The principal should reach out to guardians of students requiring medications/treatment and inform them that the school has no nurse coverage for the day.
- Guardians of students requiring medication/treatment may decide how to proceed in absence of a nurse and an option could include the guardian coming into school to give medication.
- Trained unlicensed staff may administer emergency medication (such as epinephrine and glucagon) consistent with students' medication administration forms, 504 plans, and as allowable by law.
- The school should designate someone at the school to provide non-emergency first aid. The BRT should be informed and assist. The school must call 911 in the case of an emergency.

If there is a student showing COVID-like symptoms:

- The student showing symptoms of COVID-19 will be escorted to the designated area in the school by a staff member wearing appropriate PPE.
- The school must contact the guardian for pick up.
- The area/classroom where the student was showing symptoms must be isolated/closed immediately and cleaned prior to re-occupancy.
- Upon arrival of the student's guardian, a staff member escorts the student to the visitors' entrance for pick-up by the guardian.



- The staff member reviews the NYCDOE's "Sent Home With Symptoms" letter with the guardian,
- Gives the guardian a home test kit.
- The staff member will report the incident to the principal.
- The principal or designee will ensure that the incident involving the ill student is reported to the Situation Room by calling 212-393-2780 and is documented in OORS.
- The Situation Room will handle next steps and provide communication.

School Year 2021-22

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