COVID-19 Decision Trees for K-12 Schools

If the person...
- Has symptoms, use the Symptom and Isolation Tree
- Has tested positive and does not have symptoms, use the Asymptomatic Positive Tree
- Is identified as a close contact and does not have symptoms, use the Close Contact and Quarantine Trees

Symptom and Isolation Tree for Students and K-12 Workers

A person (vaccinated or unvaccinated) has one or more symptoms associated with COVID-19
Possible symptoms include fever, 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, and/or diarrhea.

- What type of test was used?
  - MOLECULAR
  - ANTIGEN

- Was a follow-up molecular test sample (collected within 48 hours) negative?
  - YES
  - NO

- Was the person identified as a close contact within the last 14 days?
  - YES
  - NO

- Is there a documented pre-existing condition that accounts for the symptoms?
  - YES
  - NO

- Result of COVID-19 test taken after the onset of symptoms?
  - POSITIVE or not done
  - NEGATIVE

- Is the person able and willing to wear a mask on Days 6 - 10?
  - YES
  - NO

- Can the person provide evidence of a negative diagnostic specimen collected on Day 5 or later?
  - YES
  - NO

- Return on or after Day 6 from onset of symptoms if symptoms are resolving, and free of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications for 24 hours.
  - On Days 6 - 10, a mask must be worn that fits snugly over the mouth and nose while indoors and when around others outside.
  - Care should be taken to ensure that on Days 6 - 10, people who have returned from isolation are not placed within 6 feet of a person who is immunocompromised.
  - See the Decision Tree FAQs No. 7 - 10 for additional recommendations for student meals, sports, and music on days 6 - 10.

- Return on or after Day 11 from onset of symptoms if symptoms have improved, and free of fever without the use of fever reducing medications for 24 hours.
Asymptomatic Positive Tree for Students and K-12 Workers

A person (vaccinated or unvaccinated) has tested positive for COVID-19 using any test type and does not have symptoms
Confirmation testing is not recommended

Isolate at home for 5 days from the date on which the first sample was collected.
- Return on or after Day 6 with evidence that a diagnostic sample collected on or after Day 5 is negative.
- On Days 6 – 10, a mask must be worn that fits snugly over the mouth and nose while indoors and when around others outside.
- If unable or unwilling to test or mask as required, return on Day 11.
- If symptoms develop, isolate immediately and follow the Symptom and Isolation Tree.

Close Contact and Quarantine Tree for Students

A student who is not fully vaccinated or is not within 90 days of a lab-confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, has been identified as having been in close contact with a person who is known to have COVID-19
Student close contacts who are fully vaccinated, or within 90 days of a lab-confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis, and who do not have symptoms, are not required to quarantine.

Use the Close Contact and Quarantine Tree for K-12 Workers

Is the person a K-12 worker or a student?

K-12 WORKER

STUDENT

Did the exposure occur in a school setting AND were both parties wearing masks during all contact within 6 feet of each other?

Will the student be able to provide evidence of a negative COVID-19 test taken within 24 hours and on Day 5, 6, or 7?

Will the student be able to provide evidence of a negative test taken on Day 5 or later?

Modified (in school) Quarantine: With the restrictions described below, remain in school with negative test results taken ASAP (within 24 hours) of notification and on Day 5, 6, or 7.

Return on Day 8: Testing is recommended ASAP (within 24 hours), and required on or after Day 5.

Return on Day 11: Testing is not required but is recommended on or after Day 5, 6, or 7.

See the additional requirements for quarantine in the table on page 3.

Note: The CDPH guidance on isolation and quarantine refers to the K-12 guidance on quarantine for students. The CDPH has not updated this guidance yet, but we have been told changes are coming.
If the student cannot or will not follow the requirements listed below, quarantine for 10 days (return Day 11) is required.

Quarantine Requirements

- **Modified (in-school) Quarantine:** This option may only be used by student close contacts exposed in a setting supervised by school staff, when the COVID-19-positive person and student close contact were both wearing masks during all contacts with each other within 6 feet. To remain in school the student must test within 24 hours of notification, and on day 5, 6, or 7. Rapid result (antigen) testing is recommended. The student may continue to participate in expanded learning or child care programs offered on the school campus, but must quarantine at home from all other before-school, after-school, and weekend activities. Activities may resume on or after Day 8 with evidence of a negative test sample collected on or after Day 5. (See FAQ answer No. 7).

- **Return on Day 8:** It is recommended that the student close contact test ASAP. Return as early as Day 8 is authorized with evidence that a diagnostic specimen collected on or after Day 5 is negative. For household exposures, see the note below.

- **Return on Day 11:** Allows a student to return on Day 11. Testing is recommended on Day 5, 6, or 7, but not required. For household exposures, see the note below.

- **Household Exposures:** For return on Day 8 or Day 11, Day 1 of quarantine begins on the day that the COVID-positive household member is no longer required to isolate. See questions 3 and 4 of the Decision Tree FAQs for more information and requirements.

- **If symptoms develop or a positive test result occurs** during quarantine, require isolation at home and consult the Symptom and Isolation or Asymptomatic Positive tree.

**Additional Requirements for Return Before Day 11**

- Students must agree to self-monitor for symptoms, wear a face covering over their nose and mouth as required, use good hand hygiene practices, and use good cough and sneeze etiquette.

- Accommodations (like changes in the close contact’s work, room, seat, or bus assignments) should be made to ensure that close contacts returning before Day 11 will not be near others who are immunocompromised (i.e., solid organ or bone marrow transplant, chemotherapy, similarly reduced ability to fight infections). If these accommodations cannot be made the close contact must quarantine for 10 days.

**Other Notes on Quarantine**

- The number of days required for quarantine is counted from the day after the person’s last close contact with a person who is contagious with COVID-19. Please see FAQ No. 1 under “isolation” for information on how long people are considered to be contagious.
Close Contact and Quarantine Tree for K-12 Workers

A K-12 worker has been identified as a close contact:

Is the close contact a student or a K-12 worker?

STUDENT

K-12 WORKER

Is the K-12 worker boosted; OR vaccinated and not yet booster eligible?

NO

Must the person work within 6 feet of a person who is immunocompromised?

YES

Return on Day 15

Return on or after Day 11

Return on Day 6:

• Must provide evidence of a negative diagnostic specimen collected on Day 5 or later. A positive test Day 5 or later requires waiting until Day 11 to return.
• Must wear a well-fitting mask through Day 10, indoors and around others outdoors.

Remain at Work:

• Must wear a well-fitting mask through Day 10, indoors and around others outdoors.
• Testing within 24 hours of close contact notification is recommended (not required).
• Must provide evidence that a diagnostic specimen collected on Day 3, 4, or 5 is negative.

Remain at Work:

• Must wear a well-fitting mask through Day 10, indoors and around others outdoors.
• Testing recommended on Day 5.

Return on or after Day 11

Household Exposures: If the close contact occurred with a COVID-positive household member, return to work must be delayed until the date on which the COVID-positive household member is no longer required to isolate. See the Decision Tree FAQs answers No. 3 and 4 for additional information and requirements.

Test Types By Situation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Appropriate Test Types</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Return from quarantine before Day 11</td>
<td>• Antigen • PCR or other NAAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return from isolation before Day 11</td>
<td>• Antigen is recommended because it is less likely to detect the virus beyond a person’s contagious period. • PCR or other NAAT are acceptable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modified quarantine</td>
<td>• Antigen is recommended because it returns a result quickly. • PCR or other NAAT is acceptable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person with symptoms</td>
<td>• Antigen is acceptable, but if a person with symptoms receives a negative result from an antigen test, confirmation with a PCR or other NAAT is necessary to accept the negative result. • PCR or other NAAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required screenings</td>
<td>• Antigen is preferred because it returns a quick result, however, if a person without symptoms is antigen positive, the person should isolate while PCR (or other NAAT test) confirmation is obtained. • PCR or other NAAT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At-Home Testing

The K-12 schools guidance Q&A (last updated 11/15/21) does not allow use of at-home testing for decision making, unless it is part of a CDPH pilot program, however the Guidance on Isolation and Quarantine for COVID-19 Contact Tracing states that home tests are acceptable for starting or ending isolation and quarantine.

Given the current limited availability of COVID testing and the increased demand, the County of San Diego is temporarily allowing (through 1/27/22) home testing to be used for any purpose that antigen tests can be used for in schools.

Schools should use one or more means described in the Over-The-Counter Tests Guidance to verify the results on tests administered at home. See the “What are best practices for verification of self-test results?” section for specific recommendations.