

# Protocol for Schools Assisting Public Health with Close Contact Identification for COVID-19

Student or staff with **POSITIVE TEST<sup>1</sup>** for novel coronavirus or designated as a "Probable Case" by Public Health Immediately exclude positive student or staff from school for full isolation period.

Exclude household contacts<sup>2</sup> for duration of quarantine as determined by public health.

Public health staff will conduct contact tracing as with any reported case. Contact tracing within a school setting can be most efficient and effective with the partnership of school staff.

**Work quickly to identify close contacts:**

Students/staff within 6 feet of a case for a cumulative total of  $\geq 15$  minutes over a 24-hour period.

Exposure period to consider is any time from 48 hours before through 10 days after symptom onset or positive test result if case is without symptoms.

Districts may assist by **immediately** notifying their local health department and providing a list of identified close contacts.

Schools MAY exclude students or staff at their discretion. The Health Department makes official decisions regarding which students or staff require isolation or quarantine. Districts may consider sending parents letters and handouts available on the [TDH Education Resource Page](http://www.tn.gov/health/cedep/ncov/educational-resources.html).

Student or staff with positive<sup>1</sup> test will be instructed by public health to isolate at home. They may return to school after a 10-day isolation<sup>3</sup> from symptom onset (or date of positive test, if no symptoms) **AND** no fever for  $\geq 24$  hours (without fever reducing medication) **AND** improved symptoms.

Individuals determined to be close contacts will be instructed by public health to quarantine at home. Exceptions include:

- those within 90 days of testing positive for COVID-19
- those who are fully vaccinated<sup>4</sup> **and** without symptoms.
- instances where both the case and contact were engaged in consistent correct use of well-fitting masks<sup>5</sup>

Options for quarantine include:

10 days (return to school on day 11) from last contact with case if without symptoms (no testing required).

7 days (return to school on day 8) from last contact with case if without symptoms and test<sup>1</sup> obtained on or after day 5 is negative.

Mask use, physical distancing, and daily symptom monitoring is important through day 14.

See [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html)

**CONSIDER**

Classroom contacts within 6 feet in the front, side, and back of student

Lunch contacts within 6 feet for a cumulative total of  $\geq 15$  minutes over a 24hr period

Free period contacts within 6 feet for a cumulative total of  $\geq 15$  minutes over a 24hr period

Transportation contacts within 6 feet for a cumulative total of  $\geq 15$  minutes over a 24hr period

Sports team or extracurricular contacts within 6 feet in the front, side, and back of student

<sup>1</sup> **Test** refers to SARS-CoV-2 PCR or antigen test (NOT antibody).

<sup>2</sup> Quarantine for household contacts extends beyond last exposure to COVID case for duration of selected quarantine option.

<sup>3</sup> Immunocompromised individuals or those with severe illness may require isolation of up to 20 days. CDC guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html>

<sup>4</sup> Fully vaccinated =  $\geq 2$  weeks following receipt of either the second dose in a 2-dose series or receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine.

<sup>5</sup> Exposed individuals are not required to quarantine if both they and the case wore well-fitting masks throughout the exposure. The exposed individual must continue to wear a mask following exposure. Testing is recommended on day 5 or later. Isolate immediately if symptoms develop or a positive test result is received. This applies to teachers/staff/other adults, not just students.