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COVID-19 Recommendations for K-12 Schools

Updated: January 18, 2022

General Recommendations for COVID-19 Prevention in All K-12 Schools

- Report all known positive cases of COVID-19 among students and/or teachers/staff (per 173 NAC 1-007.04) using the Douglas County Health Department REDCap form (for REDCap assistance, please call 402.444.7214). Positive cases among students and teachers/staff should be reported within 24 hours of notification.
- Encourage vaccination for all eligible individuals.
- “Up-to-date” means a person has received all recommended COVID-19 vaccines, including any booster dose(s) when eligible³.
- Mask all students, teachers/staff, and visitors, regardless of vaccination status, if the transmission risk in the community is “high” or “substantial”¹, per the Douglas County Health Department COVID-19 Dashboard².
- Practice social distancing when and where possible (3 feet of physical distance between students)¹.
- Exclude symptomatic individuals; parents should monitor children for symptoms.
- COVID-19 positive individuals should isolate at home for a minimum of 5 days from their date of onset, or date of test if no symptoms. If the individual is asymptomatic, or their symptoms have improved with no fever for 24 hours, they may return to school with a mask for an additional 5 days.
 - DCHD advises that positive individuals who are returning from isolation after 5 days should participate in their extracurricular activities (i.e. sports, choir, theater) in such a manner that they can continue to mask at all times and practice social distancing.
- Staff/student(s) who are not up-to-date with their COVID-19 vaccine and who live with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, need to be quarantined. Guidance for exposures at home can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html>.

Update to School Quarantine Guidance for Schools Requiring Masks

In schools that require all students and staff to wear masks, either because of a policy decision of the school or because of the City of Omaha Mask Mandate, students are not considered close contacts and therefore would not have to quarantine in the following setting as outlined by the CDC.

In the K–12 indoor classroom setting or a structured outdoor setting where mask use can be observed (i.e., holding class outdoors with educator supervision), the close contact definition excludes students who were between 3 to 6 feet of an infected student (laboratory-confirmed or a clinical diagnosis) if both the infected student and the exposed student(s) correctly and consistently wore well-fitting masks the entire time. This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting. Teachers, staff, and other adults need to follow the recommendations in the COVID-19 Isolation and Quarantine Basics Section on page 3 of this document.

If a school suspects that transmission is occurring within a class or a core group resulting in a cluster or outbreak, please call the Douglas County Health Department to discuss the situation. Clusters or outbreaks may result in additional recommendations, including potential quarantine.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>

² https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/1205c60366ba43719a59225ec62e31b5/page/page_17/

³ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html>

Recommendations for Schools That are not Requiring Masks

Classroom or Core Group Exposure:

- When a case occurs, identify close contacts and notify parents and teachers/staff of the exposure. In an elementary setting, it is recommended to notify the entire classroom.
- All close contacts will need to monitor for the onset of symptoms and mask for 10 days following the last exposure.

Clusters and Outbreaks (3 or more cases): *Notify DCHD when clusters or outbreaks are identified.

- Quarantine is not recommended for close contacts who are up-to-date with their COVID-19 vaccination.
 - It is recommended to test 5 days after the last exposure.
- Quarantine may be recommended for close contacts who are not up-to-date with their COVID-19 vaccination
 - It is recommended to test 5 days after the last exposure.
 - To allow time for students to catch up with the latest recommendations and to minimize disruption to in-person learning, schools may consider forgoing quarantine for students ages 12-17 years who completed their primary vaccine series but have not yet received all eligible boosters.
 - In specific situations where quarantine is not possible, the exposed individual should mask for 10 days.
 - DCHD will provide written notification to the school district health point of contact and copy the superintendent when mitigation measures for addressing clusters or outbreaks are necessary. DCHD will no longer provide written communication for parents or faculty notification, notifications should come from the district/school.

COVID-19 Isolation and Quarantine Basics

Cases (Isolation)⁴:

- Positive individuals may return to school 5 days after their onset of symptoms (or test date if they had no symptoms) if they are asymptomatic or their symptoms are improving with no fever for 24 hours, hours, followed by 5 days of masking at school.
 - Stay in a separate room from other household members, if possible.
 - Avoid contact with other members of the household.
 - Positive at-home tests should be accepted as evidence of infection.
 - PCR tests are preferred for individuals who are asymptomatic (have no symptoms).
 - There is no “testing out” early from the isolation period.

Exposed Close Contacts (Quarantine)⁴:

- If an individual has been identified as close contact, quarantine **is not** recommended for those who **are up-to-date** with their COVID-19 vaccination.
- If an individual has been identified as close contact, quarantine **is** recommended for those who **are not up-to-date** with their COVID-19 vaccination.
 - Stay home and away from other people for at least 5 days (day 0 through day 5) after your last contact with a person who has COVID-19.
 - For 10 days after your last close contact with someone with COVID-19, watch for fever (100.4 F or greater), cough, shortness of breath, or other COVID-19 symptoms.
 - It is recommended to test 5 days after the last exposure.
 - Exposed individuals can be released from quarantine on day 6 after their exposure if they tested negative, followed by 5 days of masking in public.
 - In specific situations where quarantine is not possible, the exposed individual should mask for 10 days.

⁴ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html>