

Guidance for Principals COVID-19

Coordinated School Health (monicas.adamian@cms.k12.nc.us) 704-965-3150

Public Health Hotline 980-314-9400

What to do if a student or staff reports receiving a positive COVID-19 test?

- Ensure the individual is not at school and any household members that work for or attend school at CMS are quarantined, if not fully vaccinated.
- Notify the health department (you or school nurse can report):
 - Provide: name, DOB, date of test, date of symptoms, date last on campus
 - Email [COVID reporting template](#) to Communicable Diseases: covidschoolteam@mecklenburgcountync.gov

*NOTE: you will get a quicker response with email than by phone (Pam Coffman, CD Nurse: **980-314-9662** or Brian Lackey, CD Nurse Supervisor: **980-314-9206**)

- The health department will reply when they confirm the positive case and will provide you with the official exposure notification for any close contacts.
- Submit [DRT Form](#), this is an internal notification for CMS (used in metric reporting).
- Determine if contact tracing is needed: if the individual was on campus within 2 days of symptoms developing or testing positive (if no symptoms).
- Ensure necessary cleaning protocols are followed:
 - All buildings have enhanced cleaning protocols in place, including frequent routine cleaning of high-touch areas. Additional cleaning should focus on areas of the building in which the individual spent significant time.

See chart below for when positives and close contacts can return

CONTACT TRACING: only needed if individual at school within 2 days of symptoms starting or within 2 days of positive test, if no symptoms.

- Need to know when tested, when last in building and when symptoms started.
- Identify anyone who was within 6 feet of the individual for more than a total of 15 minutes within 48 hours of symptoms developing. This can be determined by:
 - Asking the positive individual or their teachers
 - Looking at class schedules and reviewing seating charts
 - Considering other activities or special events
 - Reviewing list of visitors and subs to provide notification
 - considering transportation, review bus seating charts or video
- If the close contact was a student and they wore their mask at all times, they do not need to quarantine.
- If the close contact is fully vaccinated and is not having any symptoms, they do not need to quarantine.
 - Fully vaccinated close contacts are encouraged to get tested 3-5 days after exposure.

- If the close contact has tested positive for COVID-19 within 3 months and they are not having symptoms, they do not need to quarantine.
- Any other close contacts must leave the building and begin quarantine.
 - Call families to make them aware of the need to quarantine
 - Close contacts must quarantine for 10 days after exposure. Quarantine can end after 7 days if they do not have any symptoms and after 5 days receive a negative PCR or Antigen test. (14 days for anyone who cannot adhere to precautions upon return).

QUARANTINE AND ISOLATION GUIDELINES	
SCENARIOS	When they can return to School? (all timeframes start from the last date of exposure)
POSITIVE TEST: vaccinated or not vaccinated	Can return after 10 days from start of symptoms (or date of test if no symptoms) IF symptoms are improving and no fever for at least 24 hours (without medicine)
CLOSE CONTACT: students wearing a mask in the classroom	If a student is a close contact and is wearing a mask in the classroom setting they <u>do not need to quarantine</u>
CLOSE CONTACT: fully vaccinated	If a close contact is fully vaccinated with no symptoms, they <u>do not need to quarantine</u> . It is recommended that they get tested 3-5 days after exposure
CLOSE CONTACT: previously tested positive (within 3 months)	If a close contact tested positive within 3 months of this exposure and they are not experiencing any symptoms, <u>they do not need to quarantine</u>
CLOSE CONTACT: exposure in non-classroom setting with a mask CLOSE CONTACT: without a mask CLOSE CONTACT: Adult with or without a mask	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14-day quarantine if cannot adhere to precautions OR • 10-day quarantine if able to follow precautions for 14-days OR • 7-day quarantine if no symptoms and after 5 days they receive a negative PCR or antigen test and adhere to precautions for 14-days.

*Adhering to precautions includes wearing a mask for the full 14-days, monitoring for symptoms, maintaining distance and avoiding crowds

When can someone return to the building after a positive COVID-19 test?

- The individual must isolate until all three of the below items are true:
 - It has been at least 10 days since symptoms started, or 10 days since the test if no symptoms.
 - It has been at least 24 hours since the individual had any fever (with no fever-reducing medicine).
 - Symptoms are showing improvement.

What if someone develops COVID-19 symptoms?

Symptoms include: fever of 100.4 or higher, chills, sore throat, new cough, shortness of breath, new loss of taste or smell.

- Individual must leave school or not report to school and should be tested for COVID-19.
- They can contact their healthcare provider and/or access available testing from the **Mecklenburg County COVID-19 Testing Site Locator website**.
- Someone can return to school after:
 - Confirmation of an alternative diagnosis that explains the COVID-19-like symptoms, once there is no fever without medicines and they have felt well for 24 hours, student can return to school following any other normal illness procedures.
 - A negative PCR or Antigen COVID-19 test and symptoms resolved.
 - If positive test, no test or no alternative diagnosis, return after 10 days, at least 24 hours without fever with no medicine and all symptoms improving.

What if someone has Post-vaccine symptoms/side effects?

- If common symptoms from the vaccine (fever, fatigue, headache, chills, muscle or joint pain) within 3 days of receiving the vaccine and no known exposure to someone, then they should be excluded from work until the symptoms have improved/resolved and 24-hours fever-free. If symptoms persist for more than 2 days, then the employee should be evaluated by a healthcare professional.**
- If uncommon symptoms within 3 days of receiving a vaccine: cough, shortness of breath, runny nose, sore throat, loss of taste or smell and no known exposure to a positive person, then follow the above procedures to return (alternative diagnosis or COVID testing)

What if someone discloses close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19?

- If someone has previously tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 3 months and is identified as a close contact, they do not need to quarantine if there are no symptoms present. If symptoms develop or it has been more than 3 months since the infection, the individual must follow usual quarantine requirements.
- If someone has been fully vaccinated for at least 2 weeks, they do not need to quarantine unless they develop symptoms.
- All other close contacts must leave school or not report to school:
 - Individual should self-quarantine for 10 days from the last exposure (14 days for any pre-k students or others who cannot adhere to strict precautions*).

- Quarantine can end at 7 days if they do not have any symptoms and receive a negative PCR or Antigen test on or after 5 days from exposure and can adhere to precautions for 14 days.
- Monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 and get tested if they develop symptoms.
- A test is recommended for anyone with known close contact. If they do not develop symptoms, the recommendation is to be tested 5-7 days after exposure.
- A negative test is not required to return to school after completing the required quarantine, as long as the student remains asymptomatic.

*Strict precautions include: monitoring for symptoms and isolating if symptoms develop, wearing a face covering at all times in public and practicing social distancing.

What if someone has received the vaccine for COVID-19?

- If a vaccinated person is exposed to someone with confirmed COVID-19, they are NOT required to quarantine if they meet all of the following criteria:
 - Are fully vaccinated (i.e., ≥ 2 weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or ≥ 2 weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine)
 - Have remained asymptomatic since the current COVID-19 exposure
- If a vaccinated person tests positive, they must quarantine for 10 days from the start of symptoms, they must be 24 hours fever free and symptoms improving.

Notification/Communication Guidelines

- Any notifications must maintain confidentiality in accordance with state and federal laws. Official Mecklenburg County Public Health (MCPH) notifications must be approved by MCPH.
- School principals may send out an initial communication through CMS to notify staff and families prior to MCPH confirmation. The MCPH notification letter(s) will still be sent.
- Document all positive cases and students under quarantine order in the [isolation tracking form](#) to monitor return.
- If the student has been out of school for at least 14 days prior to symptoms or test (if asymptomatic), then no additional notification is required.
- If student was in the school within 14 days of symptoms developing or test, work with MCPH for initial guidance, which may include:
 - Close contacts receive an exposure letter instructing them to quarantine for 10 days after the date of exposure (14 days for any pre-k students or others who cannot adhere to precautions*). Close contacts may return after 7 days of quarantine, if they do not have any symptoms and receive a negative PCR or Antigen test on or after 5 days from date of exposure.
 - School-wide students and staff receive a non-exposure communication (can provide a letter, email, or ConnectEd/Parent Square message) that someone tested positive and if you were in close contact and need to take further action, you would receive additional information and further communication.

*Strict precautions include: monitoring for symptoms and isolating if symptoms develop, wearing a face covering at all times in public and practicing social distancing.

What if Principals receive questions from staff/students/families concerned about the non-exposure notice

- Advise the individual to consult with their healthcare provider and/or access available testing from the Mecklenburg County COVID-19 Testing Site Locator website. The decision to get tested is up to the individual.
- If additional questions, direct them to call the Public Health Hotline at 980-314-9400.
- Reassure them that those who were in close contact have been notified directly that they may have been exposed and instructed to self-quarantine.
- Staff or students who are **NOT** identified as close contacts do **NOT** need to self-quarantine, even if they were in the building at the same time. They should self-monitor for symptoms and stay home and seek evaluation if any symptoms develop.
- Based on privacy regulations, we are unable to provide any information about the individual who tested positive.
- Anyone who develops any symptoms should stay home until further evaluation.

What COVID related leave options are available?

- The **ONLY** available COVID-19 related paid leave for employees at this time is when the **Director of the local health department, orders an employee to leave his or her work environment if the employee has tested positive for COVID-19 and/or is being ordered to quarantine or isolate by the Director of the Local Health Department.** The appropriate documentation from the director of the local health department is **REQUIRED** for an employee to be eligible and approved for this paid leave. This is the only paid leave available and the director of the health department will determine the timeframe of the leave. **Failure to provide the required documentation from the local health department may result in unpaid leave time.**

Employees will be able to apply for this leave by going to <http://my.cms.k12.nc.us> and submitting the required documentation from the health department. Please contact the Leave department at leavedept@cms.k12.nc.us if you have any questions.