

Return to School:

A guide to responding to
COVID-19 cases in
K-12 school settings.
2020-2021

September 24, 2020

Fresno County Department of Public Health.



Return to School: A guide to responding to COVID-19 cases in K-12 school settings

This document was designed to provide guidance for Fresno County K-12 schools in response to COVID-19 related scenarios. As students return to school and in-person instruction resumes, we recognize the importance of protecting the health and safety of our students, school staff, and community. The goal of this document is to help school staff respond to different scenarios and cases of COVID-19. This document is applicable to all K-12 schools, public or private, throughout Fresno County.

As schools prepare to resume in person instruction, we advise schools to prepare plans for remote instruction for students who may need to isolate or quarantine. Schools should also be prepared for short-term and long-term school closures.

The following guidance is included in this document:

- COVID-19 Prevention and Best Practices
- COVID-19 School Scenario Guidance
- Guidelines for Covid-19 Exposure Scenarios for Schools

We will continue to revise these documents as necessary and as guidance from the California Department of Public Health and CDC is updated.

COVID-19 Prevention & Guidance for Schools

Fresno County Department of Public Health's Best Practices

- Perform symptom screening (including temperature check) for all students upon entry into first classroom of the day, AND for all staff, volunteers, or others when entering school buildings.
- Implement universal face coverings for all students, teachers, staff, volunteers, etc.
- Availability of hand sanitizer at all entrances and commonly visited locations.
- Practice Social Distancing (6 feet apart) in all indoor and outdoor settings including cafeterias, gyms, libraries, and on buses to and from school.
- Assess adequacy of ventilation in all indoor school settings.
- Keep windows open and circulation on during bus rides.
- For activities where social distancing is difficult to maintain we recommend:
 - students stay in pods of 10 or less
 - limit these activities to 15 minutes or less
 - stay outdoors as much as possible
- Maintain capacity for isolation of symptomatic students in a room with a separate entrance when students are on campus, with staff with appropriate PPE immediately available.
- Cleaning and disinfecting all used facilities each day after school has ended, and high-use surfaces more frequently.
- In classrooms where seats are shared by multiple students (middle and high school), desks should be cleaned and disinfected before and/or after each class.
- Minimize opportunities for contact where students/staff may congregate, i.e. start/end of the school day, lining up for lunch, etc.

Guidelines for Covid-19 Exposure Scenarios for Schools

This following is guidance for steps to take in response to confirmed and suspected positive cases on your school campus.

Scenario	Response and Isolation Steps	Communication and Contact Tracing Steps
<p>1. Student has tested positive for COVID-19</p>	<p>Student to remain at home for 10/1. If asymptomatic, the 10 days begins on the date the student was tested. If symptomatic, the 10 days begins on the day the symptoms began.</p> <p>If symptoms persist beyond 10 days, student to remain at home until at least 1 day after symptoms have resolved without the use of medication.</p> <p>Identify locations where the student spent more than 15 minutes: classroom, library, cafeteria, school bus, etc. If these locations have not been cleaned and sanitized since the student was present, close location for as close to 24 hours as practical for cleaning and sanitizing.</p>	<p>School to identify close contacts in the two days prior to the day the positive test was collected OR to symptom onset, up to the time the student was last in class. School to send notification letter to all close contacts.</p> <p>Advise ALL household and close contacts to quarantine for 14 days and to monitor for symptoms. If other school-aged children are in the household, notify their respective school sites.</p> <p>If second case either confirmed or suspected in classroom, either teacher or student, OR three or more cases in the school, OR if evidence of school-based spread, consider consultation with FCDPH to close classroom or school for 2 weeks and advise all students and teachers in classroom or school to quarantine for 2 weeks.</p> <p>Notify school community including staff and parents of a new positive case. Notification to indicate the date the school was informed of the positive case and the number of new positive cases that day without releasing information that would identify whether the positive case was a student or staff member or what grade or class was involved.</p> <p>Notify FCDPH liaison.</p>
<p>2. Student becomes ill off school campus and is waiting for test results</p>	<p>Student to remain at home for 10/1 or if symptoms persist beyond 10 days, for at least one day after symptoms resolve without the use of medication. OK to return to school if test negative for COVID AND symptoms have resolved for at least one day.</p>	<p>Recommend student follow up with physician for evaluation and testing.</p> <p>Notify student's family that other school-aged household contacts should not return to school for 14 days from last contact with index case. Household contacts may return if student tests negative for COVID AND household contacts have been asymptomatic for at least one day.</p> <p>Notify classroom teacher, and advise teacher to monitor other students for symptoms.</p> <p>If second confirmed or suspected case in classroom, school to identify close contacts in classroom and other school settings in the two days prior to illness up to the time the student was last in class, including key contributing</p>

		<p>factors. Identify close contacts with symptoms and advise them to quarantine for 14 days.</p> <p>Notify FCDPH liaison.</p>
<p>3. Student develops COVID symptoms while at school</p>	<p>Student placed in isolation room with separate entrance until transported home or to higher level of care. More than one student may be placed in isolation room if all masked and socially distanced as much as possible. Staff person with full PPE (N95 or higher mask, goggles, gown, and gloves) must be immediately available to evaluate or assist student if necessary.</p> <p>Student may be accompanied while moving from classroom or other school site to isolation room by staff person with face covering AND observing social distancing protocols. If closer contact required, staff person with full PPE must accompany child to isolation room.</p> <p>Isolation room to be cleaned and sanitized after symptomatic student leaves. Room cannot be re-used until cleaning and sanitizing completed.</p> <p>Student to remain at home for 10/1 or if symptoms persist beyond 10 days, for at least one day after symptoms resolve without the use of medication. OK to return to school sooner if test negative AND symptoms have resolved for at least one day without the use of medication.</p>	<p>Recommend student follow up with physician for evaluation and testing.</p> <p>Notify student's family that all household contacts should not return to school or work for 14 days from last contact with student. Household contacts may return if index case tests negative for COVID AND household contacts have been asymptomatic for at least one day without the use of medication.</p> <p>If second confirmed or suspected case in classroom, school to identify close contacts in classroom and other school settings in the two days prior to illness up to the time the student was last in class, including key contributing factors. Identify close contacts with symptoms and advise them to quarantine for 14 days.</p> <p>If student tests positive for COVID, identify and notify close contacts. Send notification letter.</p> <p>Notify FCDPH liaison.</p>
<p>4. Member of student's household tests positive</p>	<p>Student, and ALL household contacts, including other school-aged household contacts, need to quarantine and not return to work or school for 14 days from date of last contact with index case during index case isolation period.</p>	<p>Student sharing household with positive index case to quarantine for 14 days.</p> <p>Advise all other school-aged household contacts to quarantine for 14 days after last contact with index case during index case isolation period.</p> <p>If student sharing household becomes symptomatic, refer to scenario #2 above. If student tests positive for COVID, refer to scenario #1 above.</p>
<p>5. Teacher tests positive</p>	<p>Teacher to remain at home for 10/1. If asymptomatic, the 10 days begins on the date the teacher was tested. If symptomatic, the 10 days begins on the day the symptoms began.</p> <p>If symptoms persist beyond 10 days, teacher to remain at home until at least 1 day after symptoms have resolved without the use of medication.</p>	<p>School to identify close contacts in the two days prior to the day the positive test was collected OR to symptom onset, up to the time the teacher was last in class. School to send notification letter to all close contacts.</p> <p>Advise ALL household and close contacts to quarantine for 14 days and to monitor for symptoms. If there are school-aged children</p>

	<p>If not cleaned and sanitized since teacher was last in class or in any other school setting for more than 15 minutes continuously in the two days prior to testing positive or becoming symptomatic, close classroom or other school settings for as close to 24 hours as practical for cleaning and sanitizing.</p>	<p>are in the household, notify their respective school sites.</p> <p>If second case either confirmed or suspected in classroom, either teacher or student, OR three or more cases in the school, OR if evidence of school-based spread, consider consultation with FCDPH to close classroom or school for 2 weeks and advise all students and teachers in classroom or school to quarantine for 2 weeks.</p> <p>Notify school community including staff and parents of a new positive case. Notification to indicate the date the school was informed of the positive case and the number of new positive cases that day without releasing information that would identify whether the positive case was a student or staff member or what grade or class was involved.</p> <p>Notify FCDPH liaison.</p>
<p>6. Student feels ill with COVID symptoms but parent/guardian will NOT be testing child.</p>	<p>Student to remain at home for 10/1. The 10 days begins on the day the symptoms began. If symptoms persist beyond 10 days, student to remain at home until at least 1 day after symptoms have resolved without the use of medication.</p>	<p>Recommend testing and follow up with physician for index case.</p> <p>Notify teacher of symptomatic student and to monitor class to determine if others become ill.</p> <p>Notify FCDPH liaison.</p>
<p>7. Student tests negative but has COVID symptoms (possible false negative)</p>	<p>Student to remain at home while symptoms persist consistent with screening protocols at school. OK to return to school sooner if test negative AND symptoms have resolved for at least one day without the use of medication.</p>	<p>Recommend testing and follow up with physician for index case.</p> <p>Notify teacher of symptomatic student and to monitor class to determine if others become ill.</p> <p>If second confirmed or suspected case in classroom, school to identify close contacts in classroom and other school settings in the two days prior to illness up to the time the student was last in class, including key contributing factors. Identify close contacts with symptoms. Send notification letter.</p> <p>Notify FCDPH liaison.</p>
<p>8. Administrator or other staff member, or volunteer tests positive</p>	<p>Index case to remain at home for 10/1. If asymptomatic, the 10 days begins on the date the index case was tested. If symptomatic, the 10 days begins on the day the symptoms began. If symptoms persist beyond 10 days, index case to remain at home until at least 1 day after symptoms have resolved without the use of medication.</p>	<p>School to identify close contacts in the two days prior to the day the positive test was collected OR to symptom onset, up to the time the index case was last on campus. School to send notification letter to all close contacts.</p> <p>Advise ALL household and close contacts to quarantine for 14 days and to monitor for symptoms. If other school-aged children are in</p>

	<p>Identify locations where the index case spent more than 15 minutes: classroom, library, cafeteria, school bus, etc. If these locations have not been cleaned and sanitized since the index case was present, close location for as close to 24 hours as practical for cleaning and sanitizing.</p>	<p>the household, notify their respective school sites.</p> <p>If second case either confirmed or suspected in classroom, either teacher or student, OR three or more cases in the school, OR if evidence of school-based spread, consider consultation with FCDPH to close classroom or school for 2 weeks and advise all students and teachers in classroom or school to quarantine for 2 weeks.</p> <p>Notify school community including staff and parents of a new positive case. Notification to indicate the date the school was informed of the positive case and the number of new positive cases that day without releasing information that would identify whether the positive case was a student or staff member or what grade or class was involved.</p> <p>Notify FCDPH liaison.</p>
<p>9. Administrator or other staff or volunteer feels ill with COVID symptoms</p>	<p>Index case is sent home immediately or placed in isolation room with separate entrance until transported home or to higher level of care.</p> <p>Isolation room to be cleaned and sanitized after symptomatic index case leaves. Room cannot be re-used until cleaning and sanitizing completed.</p> <p>Index case to remain at home for 10/1 or if symptoms persist beyond 10 days, for at least one day after symptoms resolve without the use of medication. OK to return to school sooner if test negative AND symptoms have resolved for at least one day without the use of medication.</p>	<p>Recommend testing and follow up with physician for index case.</p> <p>If second confirmed or suspected case on campus is identified, school to identify close contacts in classroom and other school settings in the two days prior to illness up to the time the index case was last in class, including key contributing factors. Identify close contacts with symptoms and advise them to quarantine for 14 days.</p> <p>If index case tests positive for COVID, identify and notify close contacts. Send notification letter.</p> <p>Notify FCDPH liaison.</p>
<p>10. AM Kindergarten student or teacher tests positive</p>	<p>PM Kindergarten sharing classroom with AM class with positive case shall move class to another location on the day of notification unless classroom cleaned since index case tested positive.</p> <p>See scenario #1 and/or #8 regarding student tests positive for additional guidance, or #5 if teacher tests positive.</p>	<p>See scenario #1, #5, and/or #8 above.</p>
<p>11. Outbreak of cases on campus</p>	<p>Review all situations when two or more positive cases in a classroom, or three or more positive cases within a 2-week period on a school campus with FCDPH consistent with CDPH guidance.</p>	<p>Consider classroom or school shutdown on case by case basis in coordination with FCDPH and consistent with CDPH guidance.</p>

Transportation Services

Scenario	Response and Isolation Steps	Communication and Contact Tracing Steps
12. Bus driver or student rider on bus tests positive	Refer to #1, #5, and/or #8 above.	Refer to #1, #5, and/or #8 above. Conduct contact tracing consistent with guidance for school scenarios described above, paying attention to key contributing factors. Consult with FCDPH if questions regarding determining close contacts on bus.

After school programs

Scenario	Response and Isolation Steps	Communication and Contact Tracing Steps
13. Student or teacher or staff tests positive, or has symptoms	<p>Ensure availability of space to isolate children or staff with symptoms, with staff person with appropriate PPE available to monitor while awaiting disposition to home or for higher level of care consistent with guidance in above scenarios.</p> <p>Refer to #1, #3, and/or #8 above.</p>	<p>Conduct contact tracing consistent with guidance for school scenarios described above, while determining if close contacts in alternative settings utilized by after-care program.</p> <p>If any close contacts with symptoms identified, consider key contributing factors and notify FCDPH.</p> <p>Refer to #1, #3, and/or #8 above.</p> <p>Notify school community of positive cases.</p> <p>Notify school community including staff and parents of a new positive case. Notification to indicate the date the school was informed of the positive case and the number of new positive cases that day without releasing information that would identify whether the positive case was a student or staff member or what grade or class was involved.</p>

Definitions:

10/1: Current CDC guidelines state that the index case must self-isolate for at least 10 days from the date symptoms began (for symptomatic patients) OR at least 10 days from the day the positive test was collected, PLUS one day with no symptoms without the use of medications. If index case has serious underlying medical conditions, contact FCDPH for consultation regarding isolation period.

Index case: person with a positive COVID test. In these scenarios, index case also refers to the person (student, teacher, or staff) who reports symptoms.

Close contact*: a person within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes when the index case is without a mask. If questions about whether an individual meets the criteria for a close contact, refer to key contributing factors. Refer additional questions regarding close contact criteria to FCDPH.

Outbreak: Two or more confirmed COVID positive cases in a classroom OR three or more confirmed COVID positive cases on the school campus within 14 days.

Quarantine: Separates individuals who are close contacts of a confirmed COVID positive case but who are not yet ill. Individuals who are close contacts quarantine for 14 days from the date of last known contact with a COVID-19 patient. Household close contacts quarantine for 14 days after last close contact with index case while they are in isolation.

Isolation: Separates infected people who have a confirmed COVID test from others. Symptomatic COVID positive individuals must isolate for a minimum of 10 days from onset of symptoms and at least one day without fever and an improvement in respiratory symptoms. Asymptomatic COVID positive individuals must isolate for 10 days from test collection date.

* If there is social distancing in classrooms including in the configuration of student desks, and teachers and students wear masks when unable to socially distance (for example when student and teacher are working at the student's desk) then classroom contacts not necessarily considered close contact.

Covid-19 School Scenario Guidance

Potential Scenarios	Key Contributing Factors	Potential Responses/Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Student has tested positive for COVID-19 <input type="checkbox"/> Student feels ill and is waiting for test results <input type="checkbox"/> Student develops COVID symptoms while at school <input type="checkbox"/> Member of student's household tests positive <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher tests positive <input type="checkbox"/> Student feels ill with COVID symptoms but parent will not be testing child <input type="checkbox"/> Student tests negative but has COVID symptoms (possible false negative) <input type="checkbox"/> Administrator or staff member, or volunteer tests positive <input type="checkbox"/> Administrator or staff, or volunteer feels ill with COVID symptoms <input type="checkbox"/> AM Kindergarten student or teacher tests positive <input type="checkbox"/> Outbreak of cases on campus <input type="checkbox"/> Bus driver, or student rider on bus, tests positive <input type="checkbox"/> Student or teacher in after school program tests positive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Was index case wearing mask properly? <input type="checkbox"/> Was social distancing maintained? <input type="checkbox"/> Duration of exposure to index case. <input type="checkbox"/> COVID-19 confirmed or suspected <input type="checkbox"/> Index case symptomatic or asymptomatic <input type="checkbox"/> Location of exposure - classroom, outdoors, other indoor setting <input type="checkbox"/> Proper PPE used? <input type="checkbox"/> Prior positive cases in classroom? <input type="checkbox"/> Prior positive cases on school campus? <input type="checkbox"/> Type of transportation to and from school <input type="checkbox"/> Windows open or closed on bus <input type="checkbox"/> Presumed source of spread to index case-school vs community <input type="checkbox"/> Household contacts at other schools <input type="checkbox"/> Close contacts in school sports or other after-school programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Notify school community of COVID positive cases in the child's classroom or school <input type="checkbox"/> Complete contact tracing <input type="checkbox"/> Quarantine close contacts <input type="checkbox"/> Inform potential close contacts to self-monitor, follow up with physician if symptoms develop. <input type="checkbox"/> Sanitize and disinfect potentially contaminated equipment, supplies, and rooms <input type="checkbox"/> Close classroom <input type="checkbox"/> Contact the Fresno County Department of Public Health (FC DPH) <input type="checkbox"/> Recommend testing if not already done <input type="checkbox"/> Recommend evaluation from physician <input type="checkbox"/> Follow up contact with index case and/or close contacts scheduled

Sample Notification Letter for Positive Case

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Your student had a positive COVID-19 test.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an illness caused by a virus that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a new coronavirus that has spread throughout the world. COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild (or no symptoms) to severe illness. You can become infected by coming into close contact (about 6 feet or two arm lengths) with a person who has COVID-19. COVID-19 is primarily spread from person to person. You can become infected from respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. You may also be able to get it by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it, and then by touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.

_____ and the Fresno County Department of Public Health recommend the following steps:

1. Your student is required to self-isolate at home, including complete separation from others in the house. This means no contact, no time together in the same room, and no sharing of any spaces, such as same bathroom or bedroom.
2. Your student may return to school:
 - a. after being completely symptom-free for 24 hours without the use of medication,
 - b. AND a minimum of 10 days have passed since the symptoms began OR when the positive test was completed.
3. Any other students or adults in the household are now considered close contacts and must quarantine for 14 days.
 - a. Quarantine for 14 days following date of last exposure to the student with a positive COVID-19 test, including complete separation from the person in your house with COVID-19.
 - i. If unable to completely separate from student with COVID-19, any other students or adults in the household must quarantine for 14 days after the last contact with the student with COVID-19 during their isolation period.
 - b. If any household contacts develop symptoms during the 14 days, they should contact their medical provider for evaluation. The medical provider may or may not recommend testing for COVID-19.
4. We recommend evaluation by your student's medical provider if you have any questions or if their symptoms worsen, or go to the emergency room or call 911 if your student has any trouble breathing, continued pain or pressure in the chest, or bluish lips or face.
5. Notify the school(s) of any changes in status.

If you have general questions about COVID-19, you can visit the health department's web site at www.fcdph.org/covid19.

If you need resources, please contact _____.

If you would like to speak to someone on the school campus, please contact _____.

Sample Notification Letter – Symptoms

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an illness caused by a virus that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a new coronavirus that has spread throughout the world. COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild (or no symptoms) to severe illness. You can become infected by coming into close contact (about 6 feet or two arm lengths) with a person who has COVID-19. COVID-19 is primarily spread from person to person. You can become infected from respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. You may also be able to get it by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it, and then by touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.

Because your student has symptoms of COVID 19 and because your school wants to protect your student's health and the health of others, your student cannot return to school until the following are true:

1. Your student had a negative test result for COVID 19 and has no further symptoms (be prepared to show proof of negative COVID 19 test)
OR
2. At least 10 days have passed from the day symptoms were first identified
AND
At least 24 hours without symptoms and fever free without fever reducing medication.

COVID 19 and other illnesses are potentially very serious. Please consult your medical provider for any questions you may have regarding your students condition or testing. If your student has symptoms that are worsening, particularly any trouble breathing, continued pain or pressure in the chest , or bluish lips or face, immediately contact your medical provider or go to the emergency room or call 911.

If you do not have a negative COVID 19 test for your student, the earliest date your ill student can return is _____ *(NOTE: Calculate based on 10 days from date symptoms were identified)*

In addition, any other students living in the household of the sick student may not return for 14 days after the last day they were in contact with the ill child. You should try to isolate the sick student from well family members while at home.

Names of other students in house:

Return to school date if able to isolate other students from your student: _____

(NOTE: Calculate based on 14 days from last date of close contact with index case. Recommend followup to determine if close contact was able to remain quarantined from index case- if not will need to extend date of return to school to end of isolation period for index case, plus additional 14 days of quarantine)

Staff name: _____

For additional information on isolation and quarantine, please visit the Fresno County Dept of Public Health website at:

<https://www.co.fresno.ca.us/departments/public-health/covid-19/covid-19-orders>

Please contact the site health service staff if you have questions regarding returning.

Sample Notification Letter – Exposure

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Your student may have been exposed to COVID-19 on _____ at _____,

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an illness caused by a virus that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a new coronavirus that has spread throughout the world. COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild (or no symptoms) to severe illness. You can become infected by coming into close contact (about 6 feet or two arm lengths) with a person who has COVID-19. COVID-19 is primarily spread from person to person. You can become infected from respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. You may also be able to get it by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it, and then by touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.

_____ and the Fresno County Department of Public Health requires the following steps:

1. Your student must quarantine for 14 days from the date listed above.
2. Your student may return to school:
 - a. If 14 days have passed and no symptoms have developed. Return date would be: _____.
3. People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure to the virus**. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:
 - Fever or 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
 - Diarrhea
 - If any of these symptoms develop,
 - i. contact your medical provider for evaluation or go to the emergency room if getting worse or trouble breathing. The medical provider may or may not recommend testing for COVID-19.
 - ii. Student must be isolated, as much as possible, from the rest of the household.
 - iii. Student may return to school after being completely symptom free for 24 hours without the use of medication, AND a minimum of 10 days have passed since the symptoms began, which may extend the quarantine period beyond the original 14 days.
 - iv. Notify the school of any changes in status.

If your student is confirmed positive for COVID 19, please follow these guidelines:

1. Your student must be isolated, as much as possible, from the rest of the household.
2. We recommend evaluation by your student's medical provider if their symptoms worsen, or go to the emergency room if any trouble breathing.
3. Any other children or adults in the household are now considered close contacts and must quarantine for 14 days.
 - a. If any household contacts develop symptoms during the 14 days, please contact your physician for evaluation. The physician may or may not recommend testing for COVID-19.
4. Your student may return to school after being completely symptom free for 24 hours without the use of medication, AND a minimum of 10 days have passed since the symptoms began OR when the positive test was completed.
5. Notify the school(s) of any changes in status.

If you have general questions about COVID-19, you can visit the health department's web site at www.fcdph.org/covid19.

If you need resources, please contact _____.

If you would like to speak to someone on the school campus, please contact _____.