

MI Safer Schools Guidance for Managing Students Exposed to COVID-19

Michigan.gov/Coronavirus

Updated: December 3, 2021

The state is committed to ensuring Michigan students and educators are as safe as possible in the classroom. This guidance will help K-12 schools maintain in-person learning by outlining mitigation strategies when students are exposed to another student infected with COVID-19 in a school setting. When layered prevention strategies such as vaccination, masking, distancing, testing, isolation and quarantine are applied consistently, school-associated transmission of COVID-19 is significantly reduced.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) recommends local health departments and schools work together to quickly **isolate COVID-19 cases** among students and staff, identify close contacts of those cases, and adopt quarantine policies that reduce the risk of transmission in schools while allowing in-person learning. When evidence-based prevention measures are utilized, such as vaccination and masking, students exposed to COVID-19 cases may not have to quarantine at home and can stay in the classroom.

MDHHS continues to recommend universal masking in all K-12 school settings.

Quarantine and isolation are determined by the local health department and are used as important tools to prevent the spread of disease.

- You **isolate** when you are already infected with COVID-19 and have tested positive, even if you do not have symptoms. Isolation is used to separate people who are infected with COVID-19 from those who are not infected.
- You **quarantine** when you might have been exposed to COVID-19. This is because you might become infected with COVID-19 and could spread COVID-19 to others.

Any individual that displays COVID-19 symptoms, regardless of vaccination status, should isolate and be tested for COVID-19. Individuals can return from isolation as directed by their local health department.

COVID-19 School Quarantine Guidelines for Asymptomatic Students

These quarantine guidelines only apply to exposures that occur in a school setting. Students that are a close contact of a COVID-19 case in their household or in the community should quarantine at home.

- **Fully vaccinated contacts without symptoms do not need to quarantine.**
- **Contacts that are not fully vaccinated and do not have symptoms:**
 - If masking was maintained, contacts can participate in school activities if wearing a mask for 14 days after exposure and using a “Test to Stay” strategy*
 - If masking was not maintained, contacts may participate in school activities at the **discretion of the local health department**, if additional testing and mitigation strategies are used

Definition of a close contact: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/appendix.html#contact>

Definition of fully vaccinated: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated.html>


*Test to Stay suggested approach: test every other day for 7 days after exposure

Local conditions may vary. The local health department may modify quarantine policies based on factors including ventilation, duration/intensity of the contact, and other local factors. Schools and local health departments should work together to decide what quarantine policies work best in their communities.




School Quarantine Guidance

What to do when a student is exposed to COVID-19 in a school setting, **but doesn't have symptoms.**

Students experiencing symptoms should not attend school activities.



Michigan.gov/Coronavirus

Fully Vaccinated 	Fully vaccinated contacts without symptoms do not need to quarantine.
Unvaccinated (both the exposed student and the COVID+ student were masked) 	Contacts can participate in school activities if wearing a mask for 14 days after exposure and using a “Test to Stay” strategy.*
Unvaccinated (one or both students unmasked) 	If additional testing and mitigation strategies are used, contacts may participate in school activities at the discretion of the local health department.

*Test to Stay suggested approach: Test every other day for 7 days after exposure.

Students who test positive for COVID-19 should not attend school and should isolate at home for 10 days after symptom onset (or 10 days after the positive test if they do not have symptoms).

MDHHS continues to recommend universal masking in all K–12 school settings.

School Testing Opportunities and State Support

MI Safer Schools Testing Program

MDHHS is providing schools antigen testing supplies free of charge through the [MI Safe Schools Testing program](#). Schools and individual school districts can request antigen test kits through the Mi Safer Schools: [School Antigen COVID Test Ordering form](#). MDHHS will be leveraging our partnership with Intermediate School Districts to help distribute COVID-19 antigen tests based on the orders placed in the School Antigen COVID Test Ordering Form. Questions about test supply orders can be sent to your Intermediate School District and any other school testing related questions can be sent directly to MDHHS at MDHHS-COVIDtestingsupport@michigan.gov

Community Testing Locations

- Free community based pop-up rapid antigen testing
[Coronavirus - Community Based Pop-Up Rapid Antigen Testing](#)
- Find a COVID-19 testing location
[Coronavirus - Test](#)

Home Tests

At-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests are now available and can be purchased over-the-counter in grocery stores and pharmacies. MDHHS has some at-home tests that will be available to schools through their ISDs. ISDs should contact the MDHHS-COVIDtestingsupport@michigan.gov team to order tests. The [MI Backpack Home Test Pilot Program](#) is a voluntary program offered by MDHHS for Michigan K-12 students, educators, staff, and their families who want an extra layer of protection against COVID-19

Additional Resources

- [MDHHS Recommendations for Safer School Operations during COVID-19](#)
- [Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools | CDC](#)
- [Parents and Caregivers | CDC](#)
- [CDC Guidance for Fully Vaccinated People](#)
- [COVID-19 Guidance for Safe Schools \(American Academy of Pediatrics\)](#)

For the latest information on Michigan's response to COVID-19, please visit Michigan.gov/Coronavirus. You may also call the COVID-19 Hotline at 888-535-6136 or email COVID19@michigan.gov.