

# What happens if a student, teacher, or employee is exposed to someone with COVID-19?

If a student, teacher, or employee was exposed to a person who tested positive for COVID-19, the health department and the school will work together on contact tracing. Contact tracing is how public health workers find the close contacts of someone who has COVID-19.



---

## Contact tracing in schools

Each school should have a point of contact (POC).

The POC works with the health department on contact tracing. The POC will notify eligible students, parents, teachers, and employees if they were exposed to COVID-19 at school.

- 1 People who are tested for COVID-19 will get their test results from the healthcare provider or testing location where their sample was collected.
- 2 The health department will call anyone who tests positive for COVID-19. It may take a few days for the health department to call the person who tested positive. They will ask the person who he or she may have been in close contact with up to 2 days before he or she got sick or tested positive.
- 3 The health department will notify the POC at the school if a student, teacher, or employee who works in the school or with students tests positive for COVID-19. The health department gives the name of the person who tested positive and the date of last exposure to the POC.
- 4 The POC collects and provides a list to the health department of students, teachers, or employees who are at [higher risk](#) for severe illness from COVID-19 known to have come into close contact with the person who tested positive.

The health department will notify the parents of students, teachers, or employees who are at higher risk and provide guidance on how long they should quarantine, how to check for symptoms, and when to consider testing.

- 5 The POC will notify any other eligible students or students' parents, teachers, or employees who may have been exposed to the person who tested positive. The POC will provide guidance on how long they should quarantine, how to check for symptoms, and when to consider testing.

In most cases, the school may only notify the parents of an eligible student (a student who is 18 years old or a student of any age who has taken postsecondary courses) if the eligible student has signed a written consent. There are some situations where parents of eligible students will be notified without a written consent.

- 6 Only students, teachers, or employees who came into close contact with the person who tested positive will be notified of a possible exposure.

## What does a close contact exposure mean in a school setting?

A close contact exposure means a person was closer than 6 feet or 2 meters (about 2 arm lengths) from someone who tested positive for COVID-19 for 15 minutes or longer.

Anyone who was in close contact with a person who has COVID-19 up to 2 days before he or she had symptoms or tested positive is considered exposed and should quarantine for 14 days.



**For 15 Minutes**

---

### In a school setting, close contact exposure means:

- Anyone in a school setting (like a classroom) or in a school bus who sat 6 feet or 2 meters in the front, back, or to the side of the person who tested positive for 15 minutes or longer.
- A teacher, employee (such as a paraprofessional or bus driver), or visitor who was 6 feet or 2 meters for 15 minutes or longer from the person who tested positive.
- Anyone who was closer than 6 feet or 2 meters for 15 minutes or longer to the person who tested positive during extracurricular activities (sports, dances, clubs); during a school gathering (assemblies, dances); or during lunch or free periods.



If the health department or point of contact at the school are unable to determine who was in close contact with the person who tested positive, everyone in the classroom, school bus, lunch or free period, extracurricular activity (sports, dances, clubs), or school gathering (assemblies, dances) will be considered exposed and should quarantine for 14 days.



Wearing cloth face coverings or masks at all times during school reduces the risk of COVID-19. However, the use of cloth face coverings does not eliminate the risk completely. As such, anyone who came into close contact with a person who tested positive for COVID-19, even if they were both wearing a cloth face covering or mask, will still be considered exposed and should quarantine for 14 days.