

COVID-19 Isolation and Quarantine Scenarios in Schools Flowchart

Staying home for 10 days minimum is required in both quarantine (exposures) and isolation (COVID+ test) per California Department of Public Health. Proper quarantine and isolation measures are very important in maintaining a safe return to in-person learning. Testing, symptom screening, vaccination status, and exposure risk determine when persons can return to school per current state and federal guidance. Please note that at-home testing kits are not acceptable at this time.

COVID-19 symptoms can vary person-to-person and be hard to tell apart from other causes like colds and allergies. Some people have mild symptoms so do not feel very sick, but can still spread it to those around them who can get very ill. If anyone has any symptoms of COVID-19, they should be tested ASAP even if they are vaccinated; persons are contagious for 10 days after symptoms start and can still be contagious even if they feel better sooner. Unless specified, the following may apply to both students and staff (employees do not qualify for any modified quarantine less than 10 days per CalOSHA standards).

Scenario #1 COVID-19 Diagnosis

Individual has a + COVID-19 test?

- **Immediate home isolation at least 10 days from symptom start (or test date if they never develop symptoms). Still must isolate even if no symptoms and/or if vaccinated.**
- **Must meet CDC criteria for return: no fever for 24 hours, at least 10 days have passed, and symptoms improved.**
- **School to begin contact tracing and exposure notifications in discussion with public health.**

Scenario #2 COVID-19 Symptoms

Individual has any symptoms?

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or trouble breathing
- Body aches
- Headache
- Sudden loss of smell or taste
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Sore throat
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Fatigue

- **Immediate home isolation at least 10 days from when symptoms start (even if vaccinated). Must meet CDC criteria for return: no fever for 24 hours, at least 10 days have passed, and symptoms improved (if no negative test or doctor's note).**
- **May return prior to 10 days when no fever for 24 hours AND either negative test or doctor's note providing alternate diagnosis (e.g. chronic condition). However, if known exposure and unvaccinated, the minimum quarantine of 7-10 days may still apply: see scenario #3.**
- **If individual has a + COVID-19 test, see scenario #1.**

Scenario #3 COVID-19 Exposure

Individual has been in close contact (within 6 ft for more than 15 min cumulatively within 24-hour period) to someone with confirmed COVID-19?

- **If fully vaccinated: Home quarantine not required if contact has no symptoms. Continue to mask and monitor for symptoms for 14 days after exposure; testing strongly advised 3-5 days from last exposure even if no symptoms.**
- **If unvaccinated: Home quarantine for 10 days from last exposure; testing days 5-10 is advised. Certain in-school exposures may allow students to test out of quarantine early if they have no symptoms: *see modified quarantine flowchart.***
- **If symptoms develop, restart at scenario #2.**
- **If contact has + COVID-19 test, restart at scenario #1.**