

COVID-19 SCHOOL PROTOCOL

Saginaw County  HEALTH DEPARTMENT

FAQ Info for School Administrators

Q: If someone has tested positive for COVID-19, do they have a 90-day window upon return where they do not have to quarantine if exposed?

A: Anyone who has had close contact with someone with COVID-19 and who meets the following criteria does **NOT** need to stay home.

- Those who are fully vaccinated with no symptoms of COVID-19 – however, fully vaccinated people should get tested 3-5 days after their exposure, even if they don't have symptoms and wear a mask indoors in public for 14 days following exposure or until their test result is negative.
- Anyone with COVID-19 illness within the previous 3 months AND has recovered AND remains without symptoms.

Q: What if family members are unable to isolate from one another with a positive case in the household?

A: COVID-19 is primarily spread within households. So, these rules are important. Family members should:

- Quarantine for 10 days of the infectious period of the household member, and then another 7 – a total of 17 days, getting PCR tested on day 15 (if negative may return to school on day 18).

OR

- Quarantine for 10 days of the infectious period of the household member, and then can begin serial testing daily and return to school on day 11, testing for the next 7 days.

OR

- Remain on quarantine for 20 days – 10 days of the infectious period, and then an additional 10 days of quarantine, returning to school on day 21. Last year, most districts found this to be the easiest to explain with the best chance of compliance.

If they can strictly isolate from the household member, then quarantine can start after their last day of exposure.

Q: In the past, vaccinated students did not need to quarantine. Is that still the case?

A: That is still the case – those fully vaccinated do not have to quarantine but should get tested 3-5 days after exposure. They should also wear a mask until they receive the negative test result and monitor for any symptoms for the full 14 days.

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Q: Is quarantine mandated?

A: There is no county “mandate,” but we are requiring schools to quarantine close contacts (other than those listed as exempt above) during “high” levels of community transmission according to CDC thresholds. The 2021/2022 school year began in a period of “high” transmission.

For parents who want to fight quarantine, we recommend that schools offer serial antigen testing, 7-day quarantine with a negative PCR test, or 10-day quarantine without testing. This gives families options and maximizes protection for the entire school community.

If you have a parent who will not comply with any of the quarantine options listed above, let the health department know and we will likely issue a “quarantine” order directly to that individual.

Q: Am I interpreting this correctly? If we mask our kids and keep them 3 or more feet apart, they aren't considered close contacts and don't have to quarantine?

A: That is correct! Masked 3 or more feet is not close contact. Masked less than 3 feet is considered close contact.

Q: In order for 3 feet of distancing to qualify, do BOTH the covid positive person and the contacts have to be masked, or can just the infected person wearing a mask count for 3 feet?

A: Both must be wearing masks.

Q: If a household member of a student is positive for COVID-19, can the student participate in serial testing?

A: Yes. Timing for testing depends on isolation in the household. If the student is isolated from the positive

family member, they would test on school days within a 10-day timeframe from the date of exposure (or 7-day timeframe with a negative PCR test). If they are not isolated, they must quarantine for 10 days of the infectious period of the household member, and then can begin serial testing daily and return to school on Day 11, testing for the next 7 days.

Q: If a staff member or student is participating in serial antigen testing as part of their exposure protocol, what happens if they test positive?

A: If someone in quarantine who is serial tested daily ends up with a positive test, they need to move from “quarantine” status into “isolation.” First, they need to get a confirmatory PCR test. If the confirmatory PCR test comes back positive, they must stay home and isolate away from others for at least 10 days from the date of the positive test result AND they have no fever for 24 hours AND any symptoms greatly improve. If the confirmatory PCR test comes back negative, they may return to school/work to continue the serial testing protocol for the duration of their quarantine period as long as they remain symptom free and test negative with the antigen test protocol.

Q: Can we get more serial antigen testing kits?

A: You should be able to order kits just as you did last school year.

Q: Are masks required outside if the student becomes a close contact, tests negative in the morning, and wears a mask while indoors at all times?

A: Our recommendation for close contacts taking part in serial testing is to be masked indoors during that quarantine period.