

# MI Safer Schools Guidance for K-12 School Settings in a COVID-19 Recovery Phase

Updated: March 11, 2022











[Michigan.gov/Coronavirus](https://Michigan.gov/Coronavirus)

**MDHHS recommends all eligible students and staff be up to date for vaccinations.**


**Current recommendations are aligned with the State entering a post-surge, Recovery period. Future updates and recommendations for heightened quarantine protocols may be needed should the risks of severe disease, hospitalizations, or death increase.**

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) recommends local health departments and school administrators, and leaders work together to quickly **isolate COVID-19 cases** among students and staff, adopt quarantine policies that reduce the risk of transmission in schools while supporting in-person learning, and maintain consistent and timely communication with school families and staff.

## Updated Recommendations for Isolation & Quarantine:

	Who is Impacted	Public Health Recommendations	
<b>Isolation</b> Has COVID-19	Any individual who tests positive for COVID-19 and/or displays COVID-19 symptoms (without an alternate diagnosis or negative COVID-19 test) regardless of vaccination status.	 Isolate at home for 5 days; and   If symptoms have improved or no symptoms developed, may leave isolation after day 5 and wear a well-fitted mask, for 5 more days (ending after day 10).*  <i>If positive with no symptoms, monitor for symptoms for 10 days as well.</i>	
<b>Quarantine</b> Exposed to COVID-19	<b>Personal or household contact</b> , regardless of vaccination status, exposed to someone with COVID-19 (see definition below).	 Monitor symptoms for 10 days.   Test 3-7 days after exposure or if symptoms develop.	 Wear a mask around others for 10 days after exposure.**   Avoid unmasked activities or activities with higher risk of exposing vulnerable individuals.***
	Other exposure (from community, social, work setting).	 Monitor symptoms for 10 days.   Consider wearing a mask around others for 10 days after exposure; at a minimum, mask in settings with higher risk of exposing vulnerable individuals.***	 Test if symptoms develop.

\* If a mask cannot be worn, recommend 10 days of home isolation.  
 \*\* If a mask cannot be worn, individual should home quarantine for 10 days. A Test to Stay protocol may also be developed in partnership between school and local health department.  
 \*\*\* Activities with immunocompromised or other high-risk individuals, social/recreational activities in congregate settings.  
**Personal/household contacts** include individuals who share living spaces, including bedrooms, bathrooms, living room and kitchens. It also includes those who live together, sleep over, carpool or have direct exposure to respiratory secretions from a positive individual. This would include exposure in childcare settings for those under 2 years of age.

  
Michigan Department of Health & Human Services

## COVID-19 ISOLATION Guidance in K-12 Schools

**Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 and/or displays [COVID-19 symptoms](#) (without an alternate diagnosis or negative COVID-19 test) should isolate regardless of vaccination status:**

- Isolate at home for the first 5 days (starting with the day after symptoms began or day after test was taken for those without symptoms); and
- If symptoms have improved or no symptoms developed, return to normal activities, while wearing a well-fitted mask, for the next 5 days to protect others.

AND

- If individual has a fever, stay home until fever free for a period of 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications before returning to normal activities while wearing a well-fitted mask, until the 10-day period is complete.

OR

- Isolate at home for 10 days if unwilling/unable to wear a mask.

## NOTIFICATION OF CONTACTS

Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 should also [notify others](#) they were in contact with during the time they were contagious (beginning 2 days before symptoms started or testing positive if no symptoms are present).

- *Role of Schools:*  
Have a [communication plan](#) for communicable disease notification and provide timely and accurate notification to parents, guardians, and school staff when an exposure from a COVID-19 positive individual has taken place in a school setting.
- *Role of Staff, Students & Families:*  
Notify others (friends, family, teammates, etc.) that they were in contact with during the time they were contagious
  - Prioritize notification of individuals who are personal/household contacts\* and to immunocompromised or high-risk individuals.
  - These exposed individuals would then follow the below guidance on QUARANTINE.

## COVID-19 Quarantine Guidance in K-12 Schools

Quarantine guidance may be adjusted to respond to and control outbreaks within a school setting. School administrators should work with their local health departments for outbreak response and follow additional quarantine recommendations as situations dictate to maintain a safer learning environment for staff and students.

## Individual is exposed to someone who is positive for COVID-19 and:

1. Exposure is to a **personal/household contact\***:
  - Conduct symptom monitoring for 10 days; and
  - Test at least one time if possible 3-7 days after exposure and if symptoms develop; and
  - Wear a well-fitting mask for 10 days from the date of last exposure to protect others – A “test to stay” protocol may be developed in partnership with the school and local health department based on local conditions; and
  - Avoid unmasked activities or activities with higher risk of exposing vulnerable individuals\*\* for 10 days from the date of last exposure
  
2. Exposure is to other type of contact (from a community, social or work setting)
  - Conduct symptom monitoring for 10 days; and
  - Test if symptoms develop; and
  - Consider wearing a well-fitting mask around others for 10 days from the date of last exposure to protect others. At a minimum, wear a mask in settings with higher risk of exposing vulnerable individuals\*\*

**\*Personal/Household contacts** include individuals you share living spaces with, including bedrooms, bathrooms, living room and kitchens. It also includes those who live together, sleep over, carpool or have direct exposure to respiratory secretions from a positive individual (e.g. kissing, sharing drinks, changing diapers, etc...). This would include exposure in childcare settings for those under 2 years of age.

**\*\*Activities with higher risk of exposing vulnerable individuals** may include activities where you cannot mask, interactions with those who are immunocompromised or other high-risk individuals, and social/recreational activities in congregate settings.

Schools may continue to implement Test-to-Stay strategies for students and staff as a part of quarantine recommendations. Schools are encouraged to work with local health departments for test-to-stay implementation and use.

**Test to Stay:** recommended regular testing (e.g. every other day) following exposure using PCR, school-based antigen or at-home tests. This program may be adapted based on local needs.

*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.*

### **Symptom Monitoring**

For 10 days following exposure:

- Watch for [symptoms](#), such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other COVID-19 symptoms.
- If symptoms develop, get tested immediately and isolate until receiving test results. If they test positive, then follow [isolation](#) recommendations.

## **School Testing Opportunities and State Support**

### **MI Safer Schools Testing Program**

MDHHS is providing schools antigen testing supplies free of charge through the [MI Safer Schools Testing program](#). Schools and individual school districts can request antigen test kits through the MI Safer Schools: [School Antigen COVID Test Ordering form](#). Questions about test supply orders or any other school testing related questions can be sent directly to MDHHS at [MDHHS-COVIDtestingsupport@michigan.gov](mailto: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 online, grocery stores and pharmacies. MDHHS has some at-home tests that will be available to schools through the MI Backpack Home Test program. 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. School districts can indicate their interest in participating in this program by completing the following survey:  
<https://forms.office.com/g/is9FYDMRzn>

## 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 Staying up to date with Vaccines](#)
- [COVID-19 Guidance for Safe Schools \(American Academy of Pediatrics\)](#)
- [MDHHS Mask Up, Mask Right](#)

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