



**Close contacts should QUARANTINE for 14 days**  
**Persons diagnosed with COVID-19 should ISOLATE for minimum of 10 days**

## **Quarantine:**

People who are close contacts of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19

- Stay home for 14 days after your last contact with a person who has COVID-19
- Monitor your health: Watch for fever (100.0°), cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19
- If possible, stay away from others, especially people who are at higher risk for getting very sick from COVID-19
- Consult with your healthcare provider
- Even if you test negative for COVID-19 or feel healthy, you should stay home (quarantine) since symptoms may appear 2 to 14 days after exposure to the virus

## **Isolation:**

People who have symptoms of COVID-19 and are able to recover at home

People who have no symptoms (are asymptomatic) but have tested positive for infection with SARS-CoV-2

- Notify your healthcare provider
- Stay home except to get medical care
- Monitor your symptoms. If you have an emergency warning signs (including trouble breathing), seek emergency medical care immediately
- Stay in a separate room from other household members and use a separate bathroom, if possible
- Avoid contact with other members of the household and pets.
- Don't share personal household items, like cups, towels, and utensils
- Wear a cloth face covering when around other people, if you are able to

**Please refer to chart on page 39 for return to campus criteria**



# Reporting and Notification Procedures to Follow Regarding COVID-19 Positive Individuals on Campus

Schools may encounter situations where individuals were on campus and later tested positive for COVID-19.

## Reporting and Notification of COVID-19 Diagnoses

Public health surveillance is the ongoing, systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of health-related data essential to planning, implementation, and evaluation of public health practice. Continued tracking of SARS-CoV-2 infection among children is important to characterize morbidity and mortality.

COVID-19 data can be used to help public health professionals, policy makers, and health care providers monitor the spread of COVID-19 in the United States and support better understanding of illness, disease severity, effectiveness of community interventions, and social disruptions associated with COVID-19 in the U.S. These data help inform U.S. national, state, local, tribal, and territorial public health responses to COVID-19.

## Requirements

- **Notify their local health department when a student or staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19.**
  - » Individual schools should follow their district's policy for notifying their district when a student or staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19.
  - » Districts should notify Austin Public Health when one of their notifying schools falls within Austin-Travis County.
    - Districts should call Austin Public Health at 512-972-5560.
- **Determine when the person with a lab-confirmed COVID-19 case was last on campus.**
  - » Schools should establish procedures that allow school staff to quickly determine when a lab-confirmed COVID-19 individual was last on campus.
    - ◇ All classrooms and school transportation (e.g. buses, vans) should have assigned seating to facilitate the rapid identification of close contacts should the school become aware of a COVID-19 infected individual.
    - ◇ Schools are encouraged to maintain those seating charts in a central location (e.g., central office, shared online site) for ease of availability.
    - ◇ When the school is notified of a COVID-19 infected individual, a designated staff member should review the individual's class schedule and review the seating charts to identify the close contacts of the lab-confirmed COVID-19 individual.
      - Schools should notify the close contacts of their potential exposure to COVID-19 and advise those contacts to quarantine for 14 days from the time of their last contact with the infected individual. The close contacts should not return to campus until the 14-day quarantine period has passed. Refer to page 39 for return to campus criteria.

- ◇ Schools should also follow their district protocols for notifying close contacts.
- **Schools must identify the classrooms and areas** the lab-confirmed COVID-19 individual was in and follow CDC's "Cleaning and disinfecting your building or facility if someone is sick." Schools should, at a minimum:
  - ◇ Close off areas/classrooms used by the person who is sick.
  - ◇ Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
  - ◇ Wait 24 hours before you clean or disinfect the area/classroom. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
  - ◇ Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who is sick, such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment like tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls, and ATM machines.
  - ◇ Vacuum the space if needed. Use a vacuum equipped with high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter, if available.
  - ◇ Continue routine cleaning and disinfection.
  - ◇ If more than 7 days since the person who is sick visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary.
- **Schools must follow all privacy guidelines** when identifying close contacts and notifying individuals of potential exposure to COVID-19.

## Contact Tracing

Contact tracing is used to prevent the spread of infectious disease. In general, contact tracing involves identifying people who have an infectious disease (cases) and their contacts (people who may have been exposed) and working with them to interrupt disease transmission. For COVID-19, this includes asking cases to isolate and contacts to quarantine at home voluntarily. Schools can educate individuals that local health departments may contact close contacts. Contact tracing is conducted by the local health departments upon notification of a lab-confirmed COVID-19 positive case. Schools may be asked by Austin Public Health to provide information and assist in contact tracing efforts.

## When Can a Person who is Quarantining Return to Campus?

When an individual has been sent home to quarantine, they may return to campus after the 14-day quarantine period has ended. If individuals develop COVID-19 symptoms while in quarantine, they should contact their healthcare provider and follow the "When Can a Person who is Isolating Return to Campus?" guidance below.

## When Can a Person who is Isolating Return to Campus?

Current CDC guidance does not support schools requiring testing results as a part of return to school policies. When an individual has been sent home for COVID-19 like symptoms, schools may use the following decision tree for return to campus decisions:

**Individual tested positive for COVID-19 or was clinically diagnosed for COVID-19 and has symptoms**

**Isolate until all three conditions have been met:**

- At least 10 days since symptoms first appeared, **AND**
- At least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication, **AND**
- Symptoms have improved

**Individual tested positive for COVID-19 but has no symptoms**

**Isolate until:**

- 10 days have passed since test
- If individual develops symptoms, follow the guidance for "Individual tested positive for COVID-19 or was clinically diagnosed for COVID-19 and has symptoms"

**Individual tested negative for COVID-19 and has symptoms**

**Stay home until symptoms have improved.**

- Follow specific return guidance from the school district, such as being fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication

**Individual was not clinically evaluated and is monitoring symptoms at home**

**Isolate until all three conditions have been met:**

- At least 10 days since symptoms first appeared, **AND**
- At least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication, **AND**
- Symptoms have improved

**Individual has symptoms and wants to return to campus before isolation period ends**

(1) Individuals may obtain an alternate medical diagnosis from their healthcare provider and follow specific return guidance from the school district and healthcare provider, **OR**

(2) Per TEA guidance, individuals can return to campus before meeting all three isolation conditions **IF** they obtain an acute infection test at an approved testing location (<https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/>) that comes back negative for COVID-19.



## Opening and Closing Schools

The decision to close schools for in-person learning should take into account a number of factors, such as:

- The level of community transmission;
- Whether cases have been identified among students and staff;
- Other indicators that local public health officials are using to assess the status of COVID-19 in their area; and
- Whether student and staff cohorts have been implemented within the school, which would allow for the quarantining of affected cohorts/classrooms rather than full school closure.

Schools may need to temporarily close classrooms or dismiss school for 2-5 days if a student or staff member attended school before being confirmed as having COVID-19. Closures may occur on a classroom, hallway, grade, wing, or building level, depending upon the extent of an outbreak and its associated contacts. This initial short-term dismissal would allow time for the local health officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation impacting the school and for custodial staff to clean and disinfect the affected facilities.

If there is substantial transmission in the local community, local health officials may suggest extended school dismissals (e.g., dismissals for longer than two weeks). This longer-term, and likely broader-reaching, dismissal strategy is intended to slow transmission rates of COVID-19 in the community.

Schools may use the Decision-Making Protocol for Responses to Multiple COVID-19 Cases in a School on pages 41-42 to guide decisions on when to close classrooms and/or schools.