

# COVID-19 Response Guidance for Schools, Child Care, Early Learning and Day Camps

## Summary of Changes (New document as of 3/10/2022)

- Combines childcare, camps and K-12 guidance (replacing former guidance in “COVID-19 Response Guidance for Child Care” and “COVID Response Team Guidance for K-12” documents)
- Updated to reflect changes with WA Department of Health (DOH) K-12 Guidance: [Requirements and Guidance to Mitigate COVID-19 Transmission in K-12 Schools, Child Care, Early Learning, Youth Development, and Day Camp Programs \(wa.gov\)](#)

## Symptomatic Persons: When someone develops COVID-like symptoms

Follow the DOH Symptomatic Person Flowchart: [COVID-19 Symptom and Exposure Flowchart for Schools and Child Care](#)

Students with COVID-like symptoms are **required to** wear a mask while waiting to be picked up in an isolation room (a room that is away from the general population). They should be tested for COVID-19.

- If positive or unable to test → follow COVID-19 case guidelines (*isolate for at least 5 days*).
- If negative, they can return once fever-free for 24 hours (*without fever-reducing medication*) and symptoms have significantly improved.

## Positive COVID-19 Cases: When someone tests positive for COVID-19

If someone tests positive for COVID-19, they are **required to** isolate for 5 days and may return on day 6, provided that the case can meet the following criteria:

- No symptoms are present, or symptoms are resolving; AND
- They have been fever-free for the past 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications; AND
- That the person tests negative on day 6 or later
  - OR if the case tests positive or refuses to test, then they are **required** continue to wear a well-fitting mask around others until day 10.
  - Those who do not wear a well-fitting mask or test are **required** to stay home until day 10.

## Household exposures: When someone is exposed to COVID-19 in the home (or reports another high-risk exposure)

When a staff or student is exposed to a COVID-19 case in the household (living in the same house or in frequent contact), the exposed staff or student may attend class as long as they either Test to Stay or wear a well-fitting mask over a 10-day period. Alternatively, staff and students with household exposures may quarantine for 5 days with a negative test, or 10 days without a test. If the exposed staff or student chooses to attend class while testing or wearing a well-fitting mask, then the following criteria must be met:

- No symptoms are present AND
- The person is monitored for symptoms through day 14

Staff and students who have recovered from a confirmed COVID-19 infection in the past 90 days do not need to quarantine or test to stay unless they develop symptoms.

## Classroom or school-related exposures: When 1-2 cases are identified in a classroom or team

Schools and childcares are required to send notification of exposure letters to all staff and students in the positive case’s classroom, teams, and other extracurricular groups. A letter template is available: see [Class Notification of Case Letter](#) (additional languages available on [SRHD’s COVID School Information website](#)).

## COVID-19 Outbreak Response: When an outbreak is identified in a cohort

When COVID-19 is identified in a classroom or a high-contact sports team, additional mitigation measures are required. SRHD recommends Test to Stay while masking. If this combined strategy is not feasible, schools, childcares, and camps may choose any combination of the options described in the table below or leave the decision up to parents.

<b>Response Strategy</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Pros and Cons</b>
<b>Targeted Test to Stay</b>	Students who were in close contact (within 6 ft for a cumulative of 15+ minutes) of the positive cases attend class while testing for COVID-19 throughout a 10-day period. <sup>1</sup>	<p><b>Pros:</b> Able to monitor transmission in close contacts. Conserves testing supplies. Allows students to continue in-person learning.</p> <p><b>Cons:</b> If seating charts are not used and adhered to, it can be difficult to identify close contacts. Contact tracing can be labor intensive. People can still attend class while they may be infectious.</p>
<b>Cohort-Based Test to Stay</b>	All students and staff within the cohort experiencing an outbreak attend class while testing for COVID-19 throughout a 10-day period. <sup>1</sup>	<p><b>Pros:</b> Able to monitor transmission through the whole classroom. Does not require contact tracing. Allows students to continue in-person learning.</p> <p><b>Cons:</b> Requires an adequate supply of COVID-19 tests and staffing to track test results. People can still attend class while they may be infectious.</p>
<b>Mask</b>	Students and staff within the cohort experiencing an outbreak attend class while wearing a well-fitted mask for 10 days.	<p><b>Pros:</b> Prevents COVID-19 transmission: people wearing a cloth or surgical mask have a 56-66% lower odds of testing positive compared to people who do not mask.<sup>2</sup> Allows students to continue in-person learning.</p> <p><b>Cons:</b> Can be difficult to enforce, particularly in athletics and secondary school classrooms. As a standalone measure, it does not monitor COVID-19 transmission within the cohort.</p>
<b>Quarantine</b>	Students and staff within the cohort experiencing an outbreak quarantine at home for 5 days and may return with a negative test and masking through day 10, or 10 days without testing or masking.	<p><b>Pros:</b> Safest method to prevent COVID-19 transmission within a classroom.</p> <p><b>Cons:</b> Students must switch to remote learning.</p>

<sup>1</sup> For more detailed Test to Stay guidance please see [K-12 TestingInSchoolsGuidance.pdf \(srhd.org\)](#). Staff and students who have recovered from a confirmed COVID-19 infection in the past 90 days do not need to test to stay unless they develop symptoms.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/71/wr/mm7106e1.htm>

## K-12 Specific Guidance

### Outbreak Definition

A COVID-19 outbreak in a **K-12 setting** is defined as:

- Multiple probable or confirmed COVID-19 cases comprising at least 10% of students, teachers, or staff within a specified core group OR At least 3 cases within a specified core group meeting criteria for a probable or confirmed COVID-19 case;
- AND Cases have symptom onset or positive test result within 14 days of each other,
- AND Cases were not identified as close contacts of each other in another setting (i.e., household) outside of the school setting
- AND Cases were epidemiologically linked in the school setting or a school-sanctioned extracurricular activity.

### Additional Guidance

SRHD **requires** that staff who have sustained close-together work (less than 3 feet apart) with immunocompromised or medically fragile students<sup>3</sup> for more than 10 minutes in an hour multiple times throughout the day are to wear a mask during the duration of close contact.

SRHD **recommends** additional mitigation measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Additional precautions can include but are not limited to:

- Screening testing upon return from school breaks
- Screening or surveillance testing of high-risk groups
- Masking when within 6 ft of distance of others
- Increase spacing at lunch or meals by offering more lunch periods, having lunches in classrooms as appropriate or offering outdoor seating options for lunches.
- Offer pre-event testing for events that are challenging to reschedule such as homecoming, games, proms or other extracurricular events
- High incidence guidance (required):  
When school-age incidence rates are over 300 cases per 100K (see [COVID School Age | Tableau Public](#)), then schools should implement further prevention measures. One measure is the sibling rule – where siblings of symptomatic students are also sent home until the symptomatic child receives their initial COVID-19 test results.

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<sup>3</sup> Medically fragile or high-risk individuals include but are not limited to the following: Cancer, Chronic (kidney, lung, liver) diseases, Cystic Fibrosis, Diabetes (type 1 and 2), Heart Conditions, HIV infections, Immunocompromised (either due to medication or a medical condition), Physical inactivity, Pregnancy, Sickle cell disease or Thalassemia, organ or blood stem cell transplant, Stroke, Cerebrovascular Disease, Tuberculosis. Disabilities that include (Cerebral palsy, Spinal cord injuries, Down syndrome, individuals that need assistance with self-care).

## Child Care Specific Guidance

### Outbreak Definition

A COVID-19 outbreak in **child care** is defined as:

- Two or more COVID-19 cases who tested positive by a viral test
- AND At least two cases have symptom onsets (or positive test specimen collection dates if asymptomatic) within 14 days of each other
- AND Cases were epidemiologically linked in the child care setting or a child care-associated activity (e.g., field trip)
- AND There is no plausible epidemiological linkage suggesting transmission is more likely to have occurred in another setting (e.g., household) outside of the child care setting.

### Reporting

All cases must be reported to the childcare's licensor and to Spokane Regional Health District. Please report to SRHD using this encrypted and secure webform: <https://forms.office.com/r/82EXF4g5Xb>.

Spokane Regional Health District assures nondiscrimination in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. To file a complaint or to request more information, reasonable accommodations, or language translations, contact 509.324.1501 or visit [srhd.org](http://srhd.org).