

## COVID-19 Fact Sheet

### Guidelines for Quarantine After Exposure in a K-12 School Setting

With sustained COVID-19 transmission continuing across our state, schools and public health systems must adapt to ensure the continued development of students is accompanied by protections for the overall health and well-being of students, teachers, and staff in our communities.

The below guidance can be used to address COVID-19 exposures in K-12 in-person learning environments. This guidance is informed by recent studies and pilot evaluations, including the [Ohio Schools COVID-19 Evaluation](#), which indicate that the risk of COVID-19 transmission in schools may be limited with strict adherence to [prevention measures](#) in a monitored environment.

Students and adults possibly exposed to COVID-19 in K-12 schools may continue to attend in-person school, if the following conditions are met:

- The school has documented [COVID-19 prevention policies](#), including universal mask wearing, strategies to maximize distance between students, hand-washing, identification and management of students exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, and routine environmental cleaning and disinfection protocols.
- The exposure occurred **within a classroom environment** or while on required school transport (e.g., school bus).
- The person with COVID-19 and any associated contacts were wearing face masks that covered their nose and mouth **at all times**.
- Distancing between students is maximized in classroom and other settings, ideally a 6-foot distance, but 3 feet is acceptable.
- They remain symptom-free.

**The above guidelines only apply to exposures occurring in classroom settings.** Students should not attend in-person school or participate in organized sports or extracurriculars if their COVID-19 exposure occurred somewhere other than the classroom.

Anyone who is not required to quarantine due to exposure occurring in a classroom setting under the school-based exposure guidance is permitted to participate in organized sports activities and extracurricular activities as long as they remain symptom-free and follow applicable guidance.

Anyone who is a close contact possibly exposed in the classroom should self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days following exposure. Any contact who develops symptoms should be isolated away from other students and adults and evaluated for COVID-19. Testing for SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) may be recommended in coordination with the local health department, school, healthcare provider, or parents or guardians.

Close contacts who continue to attend in-person K-12 school and/or to participate in activities should also follow normal [protocols for quarantine](#) when they are not in the K-12 classroom or participating in activities. This includes staying home and, if possible, staying away from [people who are at higher risk severe illness](#) from COVID-19.

To minimize the risk of introduction of COVID-19 into the classroom setting, students and their parents or guardians should be advised to restrict their activities outside of the classroom, including gatherings with individuals outside of their household and activities where face masks cannot be safely or effectively worn.

*Updated March 18, 2021.*

For additional information, visit [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov).

For answers to your COVID-19 questions, call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).

**Your mental health is just as important as your physical health. If you or a loved one are experiencing anxiety related to the coronavirus pandemic, help is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call the COVID-19 CareLine at 1-800-720-9616.**