



Guidance for P-12 Schools when a student or staff member has COVID-19 symptoms or a positive COVID-19 test

What to do when a student or staff member develops COVID-19 symptoms

If the student/staff is at school when symptoms begin, the student/staff should immediately be sent home. The student/staff should be placed in isolation at home.

One of the following three criteria must be met before the student/staff can return to school:

1. A note from the student/staff's medical care provider with an alternative diagnosis is provided OR
2. The result of a negative diagnostic COVID-19 test is provided OR
3. There have been at least ten days since the onset of COVID-19 symptoms.

Symptomatic individuals that attend or work at a school, along with their household members, will be offered a free point-of-care diagnostic COVID-19 test through the Chautauqua County Health Department as long as supplies are available from New York State.

What to do when a student tests positive for COVID-19

The student/staff should remain in isolation per public health order. All of the following three criteria must be met before the student/staff can return to school:

1. At least ten days after COVID-19 symptom onset or ten days from their first positive test if asymptomatic AND
2. Fever-free for at least **72** consecutive hours without the use of fever-reducing medication AND
3. Symptoms are improving.

What to do with classmates or staff members in contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case

It is important to understand that protective measures such as maintaining 6 feet of physical distance and masking while in the classroom are practices aimed at **reducing the risk of infection**. However, having these practices in place **does not necessarily** mean that a classroom will be exempt from quarantine in the event of a positive COVID-19 case. Factors such as duration of exposure and ventilation also impact risk. Even with protective practices, the following quarantine rules generally apply but are subject to change based on the case by case analysis by the Chautauqua County Health Department who will provide guidance:

- Close contacts are required to quarantine for 14 days. A close contact is defined by NYSDOH as an individual who has been within 6 feet of a positive COVID-19 case for 10 consecutive minutes or more during a time the case was infectious.
- Contact tracers may make recommendations for quarantine based on other factors, including duration, proximity, and presence of symptoms.
- Persons under quarantine who develop symptoms should be tested for COVID-19. If the test result is positive, the student or staff member will be placed in isolation per public health order. If test result is negative, the student or staff member will continue in quarantine for the full 14 days.