



JACKSON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT COVID-19 School Quarantine Guidance

CDC and MDHHS Guidance as of 8/23/2021

Isolation: Separates people with an infectious disease like COVID-19 from people who are not sick.

Quarantine: Separates people who were exposed to an infectious disease to see if they become sick.

Isolation Guidance for a COVID-19 positive case:

- Individuals who are positive with COVID-19 (regardless of vaccination status) must [isolate](#) for 10 days before returning to school
- If the student was at school during their contagious period (48 hours before symptom onset or before positive test), schools and the JCHD need to conduct contact tracing to notify exposed individuals

Quarantine Guidance for School Close Contacts:

The Local Health Department will work with the school to help determining which close contacts should quarantine. Close contacts are individuals who were within 6 feet of an infected person for 15+ minutes over a 24 hour period (with some exceptions at school noted below). In general, people at schools should quarantine if they were identified as a close contact AND:

- The infected and/or the exposed individual were not wearing masks
- The exposure occurred during a high risk activity such as lunch, athletics, choir, or band (unless masks were worn by both the infected person and the close contact)
- Both the infectious and the exposed were wearing a mask, but were within 3 feet of each other

Individuals who were identified as a close contact but do not need to quarantine at home includes:

- People who are [fully vaccinated](#). Schools can contact the health department for more information on who qualifies as fully vaccinated.
- Individuals exposed in the K-12 setting who were 3 to 6 feet away from the infectious individual AND both the infectious and the exposed individual were wearing a mask.

CDC [mask guidance](#) for quarantine in the K-12 setting:

- If both COVID positive case and close contact consistently and correctly wear masks, then:
 - Contacts spaced 3 feet or more do not have to quarantine*, but should monitor themselves for symptoms for 14 days.
 - Contacts spaced less than 3 feet for more than 15 minutes over a 24 hour period, should quarantine for at least 10 days**.
- One individual is wearing a mask or both are not wearing masks (the close contact or the individual who is COVID+)
 - Contacts spaced less than 6 feet apart for more than 15 minutes over a 24 hour period should quarantine for at least 10 days*.

If the close contact is fully vaccinated against COVID-19, they do not need to quarantine, [but are recommended to get tested 3-5 days](#), with or without symptoms, and must isolate for 10 days if the test is positive. Vaccinated close contacts still need to be notified of their exposure, even though they do not need to quarantine. It is also recommended that individuals who have had an exposure wear a mask during their [monitoring period](#) in case there is a breakthrough infection.

*Based upon CDC Guidance for [COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools](#) and is subject to change if there is continued spread of COVID-19 in the schools and community.

**JCHD recommends a 10-14 day quarantine, but will work with schools to implement other quarantine options as described the CDC - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

Examples of Close Contacts in the Schools

Many factors affect what a close contact is and this needs to be determined on a case by case basis with help from the local health department. In many instances, close contacts will be recommended to quarantine from school.

A close contact might be:

- ***If the contagious individual were a teacher:*** If the contagious teacher was not keeping at least 3* feet away from students while teaching (i.e., walking around while lecturing, doing a lot of one on one, face to face instruction), the entire class may be considered contacts, and may need to quarantine.
 - If the teacher is not wearing appropriate face covering, the spread of droplets and aerosol is greater, and the recommendation may be for students who were within 6 ft to quarantine
- ***Classmates sitting or often within 6* feet*** of the contagious individual, one or both unmasked, unless it only occurred less than 15 minutes in a 24 hour period.
 - This would typically be the one to two rows of students sitting closest to the contagious individual.

- **Lunch mates** of student if sitting within 6* feet of contagious individual.
 - This is a higher risk time as face coverings cannot be worn while eating.
- **Playmates on the playground or in gym** within 6* feet of the contagious individual unless interactions are consistently kept very brief (not over 15 minutes cumulatively) or masks are worn
- **Sports teammates/opposing teammates** within 6* feet of the contagious individual unless interactions are consistently kept very brief (not over 15 minutes cumulatively) or masks are worn
- **Classmates or others that had interactions** with the contagious individual lasting over 15 minutes, or for a total of 15 minutes in a 24 hour period in confined areas (such as bathrooms, office room, etc.), where distancing of 6* feet is difficult (3 feet if masked).

Exposures outside of the school setting: the standard close contact definition of being within 6 feet of an infected person for 15+ minutes over a 24 hour period, regardless of mask status, applies. Individuals who are a close contact should quarantine for at least 10 days.

These recommendations are based upon the CDC Guidance for [COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools](#) and is subject to change if there is continued spread of COVID-19 in the schools and community. Guidance for schools is based on the data from the previous school year, and has been made to accommodate the need for children to have continuity in their in-person education, **and may change**.

*Public health authorities may determine that distances beyond 6 feet can still result in high-risk exposures based on other considerations and circumstances in each particular case.

COVID-19 Prevention Strategies

The Jackson County health Department recommends a multi-layer prevention strategy approach to protect students, staff, teachers, and community members from COVID-19, including:

- [Promoting Vaccination](#)
- [Consistent and Correct Mask Usage](#)
- [Physical Distancing](#)
- [Screening to promptly identify cases, clusters, and outbreaks](#)
- [Ventilation](#)
- [Handwashing & respiratory etiquette](#)
- [Staying home when sick](#)
- [Contact Tracing, in combination with isolation and quarantine](#)
- [Cleaning and disinfection](#)

Email jchdcovid@mijackson.org with your questions. This email box will be monitored Monday-Friday. Call **517-788-4420** Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm