



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Response to a Confirmed Case of COVID-19 and Persons with COVID-19 Symptoms in Schools and Child Care

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This guidance applies to persons with confirmed COVID-19, regardless of whether they have symptoms, and persons with symptoms of COVID-19 (including probable cases who have symptoms and exposure) and is to be implemented by schools and child care programs in collaboration with the local health department (LHD). This guidance is meant to supplement, where necessary, current communicable disease and outbreak investigation processes, current child care and school health services illness management processes, and current LHD COVID-19 response processes. Schools and local health departments should also refer to the CDC guidance, [Considerations for Case Investigation and Contact Tracing in K-12 Schools and Institutions of Higher Education](#).

Communication and Notification

- Schools and child care programs should develop processes to inform staff and parents that they are expected to notify the school or child care program as soon possible about absences due to illness, when a staff person or student/child has tested positive for COVID-19, and when a staff person or student/child has had close contact with a person with confirmed or probable COVID-19;
- Schools and child care programs should communicate to parents the expectation that students/children who become ill at school or child care **MUST** be picked up within a specified period of time;
- Schools and child care programs must follow existing procedures for reporting communicable diseases (COMAR 10.06.01) and notify the LHD when a student/child or staff member has tested positive for COVID-19. Child care programs should also notify their licensing specialist;
- While the LHD should lead the processes of case investigation and contact tracing, schools and child care programs play a key role in obtaining and communicating critical information and should have a plan to collaborate and coordinate with the LHD for case investigation and contact tracing procedures including determining the role of the school or child care administrator, school nurse, and the LHD;
- Schools and child care programs should provide written notification to all identified close contacts. The notification should make it clear that the contact should expect a call from health department contact tracers. The notification may also include the following information:

- When to seek medical care
- How to monitor for symptoms
- Who to contact and how to contact them if they develop symptoms of COVID-19 while under quarantine
- The projected length of quarantine if they remain asymptomatic based on MDH and local quarantine guidance
- Information about local COVID-19 testing sites.

Exclusion, Isolation, Quarantine, and Return to School and Child Care

- If a student/child or staff member develops symptoms of COVID-19 while they are at school or child care, the school or child care program should:
 - Safely isolate the person in the designated isolation area with appropriate supervision;
 - If it is safe to do so, place a face covering/mask on the person if they are 2 years of age or above and not wearing one;
 - If at school, the school health services staff member should don the appropriate PPE and conduct the appropriate determination of the student's condition based on presenting symptoms;
 - Begin the process for the person to vacate the school or child care program as soon as possible;
 - Follow [CDC guidance](#) for cleaning and disinfecting the facility when someone is sick.
- The school or child care program should follow the “Decision Aid: Exclusion and Return for Persons with COVID-19 Symptoms and Close Contacts in Child Care, Schools, and Youth Camps” (attached to this document);
- The school or child care program should also follow the instructions from the LHD for all matters regarding exclusion, isolation, quarantine, and return to school or child care for persons with confirmed or probable COVID-19 and close contacts; and
- If the number of laboratory confirmed cases of COVID-19 meets the definition of an outbreak, the response decisions, including possible classroom or school/child care program closure and recommendations for COVID-19 testing of staff and students/children will be made by the LHD.