

# Managing confirmed or suspected COVID-19 at school

What to do if a student or staff member has:

**COVID-19  
symptoms**

**Close contact with a  
confirmed COVID-19 case**

**Confirmed  
COVID-19**

Has the individual  
had close contact  
with a person who  
has COVID-19?

...YES...



**Send home.** Exclude  
from in-person  
instruction/work for at  
least 10 days,\* recommend testing  
5-7 days after exposure, and share  
quarantine guidance.



**Send home.** Exclude from  
in-person instruction/work  
for at least 10 days,\* and  
share isolation guidance. Notify Local  
Health Department (LHD) and begin  
contact tracing.

NO/UNKNOWN

Is there documentation from  
a health provider that the  
symptoms are typical of an  
underlying chronic condition?

...YES...

Are the symptoms the same  
as what is documented as the  
baseline for the underlying  
chronic condition?

...YES...



**May continue  
in-person  
instruction/work.**

NO

NO



**Send home and recommend testing;**  
follow below steps based on test status/result.

**No Test Result**

May return to in-person instruction/work **EITHER:**  
► 10 days from date of symptom onset if fever-free  
without medication for 24 hours **OR**  
► After healthcare provider has confirmed an alternative  
named diagnoses (e.g., strep throat)

**Positive Test Result**

Exclude from in-person instruction/work for  
at least 10 days\* and share isolation guidance.  
Notify Local Health Department (LHD)  
and begin contact tracing.

**Negative Test Result**

May return to in-person instruction/work after  
24 hours fever-free without medication  
**and** improving symptoms.



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## How long must a student or staff member be excluded from in-person instruction or work?

Students or staff members with a confirmed positive COVID-19 test or who have been identified as a close contact must be excluded from in-person instruction/work consistent with isolation and quarantine guidance. This is typically at least 10 days but may vary based on the circumstances or local health department guidance.

**The local health department will determine isolation and quarantine periods for an individual based on many factors including:**

- ▶ The start and stop of symptoms if they have symptoms
- ▶ The date of their lab test if they are a case without symptoms
- ▶ The date of the last exposure if they are a contact who doesn't have symptoms

Contact your [Local Health Department](#) for exact periods of exclusion.

**Once the individual has completed the isolation or quarantine period, they can return to in-person instruction or work if they have been fever-free for 24 hours without medication AND show an improvement in symptoms.**



## Who is a close contact?

A close contact is someone who spent a total of **15 minutes** or more over a **24-hour period** within **6 feet** of a person who tested positive for COVID-19, while they were contagious. The person is considered a close contact whether or not masks were worn. [See full CDPH guidance.](#)



## What communication is needed with the school community?

- ▶ Notify **Individuals** if they had **potential exposure** within the school setting.
- ▶ Notify the **School Community** when there is a **confirmed** COVID-19 case.



## When will an entire school campus or in-person classroom be closed?

▶ **School campuses** may remain OPEN for in-person instruction unless there are 3 or more outbreaks on a school campus. Closing a school campus is recommended based on the number of cases and stable groups impacted, and through consultation with the local health officer.

▶ An **in-person classroom** may remain OPEN unless there is a confirmed COVID-19 infection, in which case all close contacts will be excluded from campus for at least 10 days. This could include the entire stable group.

In some situations, (e.g., when seating charts are used, face covering is well adhered to, and teachers or staff have observed students adequately throughout the day), contact tracing and investigation may be able to determine **more precisely** whether each stable group member has been exposed. In this situation, those who were not close contacts could continue with in-person instruction.