



Catholic Schools

UPDATED ISOLATION AND QUARANTINE PROCEDURES – 08/27/21

All individuals must remain at home when sick or experiencing any symptoms to minimize the chance of spreading COVID-19. Families are obligated to report COVID-19 diagnoses, COVID-19 symptoms or close contact cases to their school office.

Students and staff need to isolate or quarantine under the following circumstances:

- A positive COVID test
- Potential COVID symptoms without a test or awaiting test results

POSITIVE CASES

Any individual who tests positive for COVID-19 must isolate for a minimum of 10 days from the earlier of the symptom onset date (for symptomatic cases) or the date of a positive test result (for asymptomatic cases), regardless of vaccination status. In addition, they must be fever-free for at least 24 hours with a 75 percent decrease in COVID-like symptoms before returning to school.

There is no opportunity to test out of isolation for a positive case.

Symptomatic individuals: A symptomatic individual is considered a positive case unless symptoms last less than 24 hours, they receive an alternative diagnosis from their doctor, or they receive a negative COVID-19 PCR test.

- If symptoms last less than 24 hours, the individual can return to school as long as they are fever-free for at least 24 hours with a 75 percent decrease in symptoms before returning to school.
- If symptoms last 24 hours or longer the symptomatic individual can return to school after they have experienced a 75 percent decrease in symptoms and have one of the following:
 - A negative COVID-19 PCR test
 - An alternative diagnosis from their doctor
 - Quarantined for 10 days from symptom onset
- If symptomatic individual subsequently receives a positive COVID-19 test result, please follow the **Positive Case** instructions above.

Note: All confirmed positive COVID-19 cases and close contacts of confirmed positive cases involving students or school staff must be reported by school personnel via the [updated OCS Intake Form](#) to the Archdiocesan Case Management Team, who will process the case and report to the local health authorities when applicable.

CLOSE CONTACTS

Students and staff within a K–12 school that maintained a minimum of 3 feet of distance from the confirmed case and were properly masked during an exposure are not considered close contacts and, therefore, do not need to quarantine after exposure to a positive case. Outside of the school environment, a close contact is defined as someone who was within 6 feet of a confirmed positive case, whether masked or unmasked, for at least 15 minutes cumulatively during a 24-hour period.

Note: The quarantine rules are the same as last year; however, if you follow the protocols within our operating framework (i.e., 3 feet of distance and masked while indoors), students and staff will not be considered close contacts, for now.

Do Not Need to Quarantine

- Individuals, regardless of vaccination status, who were masked at the time of close contact and maintained a minimum of 3 feet of physical distancing from the COVID-positive individual while in school are not considered close contacts and do not need to quarantine if they remain asymptomatic.
- Vaccinated individuals do not need to quarantine if they are a close contact and remain asymptomatic. If the individual becomes symptomatic, follow the guidelines for **symptomatic individuals** outlined above.

Need to Quarantine

- Unvaccinated individuals who were masked but did not maintain at least 3 feet of physical distancing from the COVID-positive individual in school must quarantine.
- Unvaccinated individuals that were not properly masked at all times while exposed to the COVID-positive individual (within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes within a 24-hour period) must quarantine.
- Vaccinated individuals who become symptomatic must quarantine immediately and follow the guidelines for **symptomatic individuals** outlined above.

Once it is established that a close contact must quarantine, there are two quarantine options:

- Quarantine for 10 days from the last date of exposure to positive case, at which point they can return to school so long as they remain asymptomatic.
- Quarantine for 7 days and obtain a negative COVID-19 PCR test no earlier than 6 days after the last date of exposure to the positive case and within 48 hours of returning to school/work.

Need to Quarantine – Complicated Quarantines

Unvaccinated individuals who are close contacts to COVID-positive household members, including siblings, parents, etc., are considered close contacts and must quarantine as follows:

- **If the close contact CANNOT isolate from the positive case the close contact must:**
 - Initially quarantine for the same 10-day period of the positive case (see **Positive Cases** above noting that there must be a cessation of symptoms before concluding the isolation period).
 - After completion of the initial 10-day period, the household member close contact must choose one of the following two additional quarantine options:
 - Quarantine for an additional 10 days after the previous 10-day period (20 days in total). As long as they remain asymptomatic, they can return to school after the additional 10-day period without a test.
 - Quarantine for an additional 7 days after the previous 10-day period (17 days total) and obtain a negative COVID-19 PCR test no earlier than 6 days into the 7-day quarantine period and within 48 hours prior to returning to school.

Example: Mom tests positive and cannot isolate from her child since they live together. Mom is subject to a 10-day isolation period (per the **Positive Case** instructions above) during which time she is potentially contagious and could expose her child to COVID-19. As such, the child also quarantines for that 10-day period. Once the Mom's 10-day isolation period is complete, the child would need to quarantine for an additional 10 days without a test **or** quarantine for 7 days and obtain a negative COVID-19 PCR test result on/after the sixth day. Therefore, the child's total quarantine period would be either 10 days + 10 days **or** 10 days + 7 days (with a negative PCR test).

- **If the close contact CAN isolate from the positive case** then the quarantine period for the close contact is determined as outlined in the **Need to Quarantine** section above.

Example: Mom can completely isolate from the child (e.g., by domiciling somewhere else); hence, the child is not subject to a **complicated quarantine** and would just be subject to a regular **close contact** quarantine as noted on page 2. However, please note that if other family members subsequently test positive and they have not been isolated from the close contact, then the quarantine time periods for the close contact reset and begin anew from that positive test date.

If you have questions about quarantine guidelines, please contact Grant Hougo at ghougo@archchicago.org.

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