

Quick Guide for Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 For Schools, Childcares, and Programs for Children and Youth

8/24/2021

This guidance was developed by the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH) for local use. It will be posted at <http://sfcdcp.org/school>

Summary of Changes from the 5/19/2021 Version

- Specified that most outdoor exposures are not considered close contacts regardless of masking status
- Updated definition of close contacts
- Quarantine guidance updated to include a modified quarantine for in school activity
- Updated testing recommendation for close contacts
- Added testing recommendation for close contacts who are vaccinated
- Refer to [TK-12 Schools](#) and [Programs for Children and Youth](#) for return to school guidance.

Scenario	Action	Communication
Child or staff has symptoms of COVID-19	Send home. Request COVID-19 test or documentation from a healthcare provider. For children with symptoms, give the family “Parent Handout: Symptom and Exposure Check/Returning to School after Symptoms”	None needed.
Child or staff had close contact with someone with confirmed COVID-19.	<p><u>Non-vaccinated child or staff:</u></p> <p>Send home with instructions to quarantine*</p> <p>Request COVID-19 test</p> <p><u>Vaccinated child or staff:</u></p> <p>Monitor for symptoms for 14 days, consider testing 3-5 days following exposure</p> <p>Do not need to quarantine if no symptoms develop</p> <p>If new symptoms of COVID-19 develop they should be sent home with instructions to test</p>	Optional notification letter to staff and families of children at the school or program.

Child or staff has **confirmed COVID-19 infection**

Notify the **SFDPH Schools/Childcare Response Team** at cases.schools@sfdph.org or (628) 217-7499

Send home with [instructions to isolate](#) at home for at least 10 days after symptoms started or from time of positive test.

Send unvaccinated close contacts home to quarantine*

Recommend testing for close contacts

Clean and disinfect spaces where the person with COVID-19 spent significant time.

Only non-vaccinated close contacts need to quarantine. The remainder of a class or cohort may continue in-person activities.

Close contacts:

- Inform staff and families of children who are close contacts in-person or by phone.
- [Close Contact Advisory-Under 18 Quarantine Instructions - Under 18](#), or [Close Contact Advisory-Adult Quarantine Instructions](#)

All other staff and families:

- [General Exposure Advisory-Under 18](#) or [General Exposure Advisory-Adult](#)

Translations online at

sfcdcp.org/school and sfcdcp.org/i&q

Definition of close contact for schools, childcare, and programs for children and youth

A close contact is anyone who stayed within 6 feet of someone with COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes over the course of a day. An infected person can spread COVID-19 starting 2 days before they have any symptoms or test positive.

In schools, childcares and programs for children, it may be difficult to know who has had close contact. People should be considered close contacts when the program is reasonably sure that they spent at least 15 minutes within 6 feet of the infected person during the course of a day. People are not considered close contacts simply because they were in the same group or cohort. If the program cannot determine this or does not know, the person should not be considered a close contact.

*Quarantine guidance for close contacts

Exception for outdoor activities:

Children and youth who have close contact with person with COVID-19 outdoors at a school, childcare, or program for youth and children are only required to quarantine if they are *unvaccinated*, and the close contact occurs EITHER:

- during a high-contact sport/dance OR
- while stationary and unmasked (e.g., while eating a meal or singing in a chorus)

High contact sports and dance are activities with frequent or sustained contact within 6 feet (in many cases, face-to-face contact) between participants and high probability that respiratory particles will be

San Francisco Department of Public Health

“Quick Guide for COVID-19 in Schools, Childcares, and Programs for Children and Youth”

Updated 8/24/2021. Online at <https://sfcdcp.org/CovidSchoolsChildcare>

transmitted between participants—for example, football, basketball, soccer, lacrosse, water polo, and partner dancing. For clarity, quarantine is only required if the cumulative time spent within 6 feet of the case was at least 15 minutes; regardless of the duration of the activity.

Schools:

Modified quarantine –

Students in TK-12 schools who are not fully vaccinated for COVID-19 and have close contact in an indoor classroom setting at school can leave quarantine to attend school if both the student and the infected person were wearing face masks during the close contact and all the following are met:

- They remain asymptomatic
- Continue to wear a face mask while at school
- Undergo twice weekly COVID testing with negative results; antigen testing is recommended but PCR testing is acceptable
- Avoid all out of classroom activities including extracurricular activities and out of school programs

The duration of modified quarantine is 10 days. **Modified quarantine is only applicable for TK-12 students.** Staff should follow standard quarantine guidance.

Standard quarantine – All unvaccinated adults must undergo a 10-day standard quarantine. For unvaccinated students, if one of the parties was unmasked during exposure, the close contact should quarantine from all activities for 10 days. This can be shortened to 7 days if testing was conducted after Day 5 and is negative. Monitoring of symptoms should continue for 14 days total regardless of timing of return to school.

Childcare and Programs for Youth and Children

A 10-day quarantine should be used for **childcare and programs for youth and children.** This can be shortened to 7 days if testing was conducted after day 5 and is negative. Close contacts should monitor for symptoms for 14 days after the last date of exposure.

Quarantine summary for unvaccinated individuals:

TK-12 School		
Student	Case and Contact wore masks for duration of exposure time	Modified quarantine allowing immediate return to classroom
	Case OR Contact were unmasked for any duration during exposure	Standard 10-day quarantine with option to shorten to 7 days if a negative test obtained after Day 5
Staff	Standard 10-day quarantine with option to shorten to 7 days if a negative test obtained after Day 5	
Childcare and Programs for Youth and Children		
Standard 10-day quarantine with option to shorten to 7 days if a negative test obtained after Day 5		
Calculating quarantine: The last day of exposure is considered Day 0. Return to school for 10 day quarantine is on Day 11. Return to school for 7 day quarantine is on Day 8.		
Continue to monitor for symptoms for 14 days total in all close contact scenarios		

San Francisco Department of Public Health

“Quick Guide for COVID-19 in Schools, Childcares, and Programs for Children and Youth”

Updated 8/24/2021. Online at <https://sfcdcp.org/CovidSchoolsChildcare>

Considerations for vaccinated individuals:

If a close contact is fully vaccinated for COVID-19, they don't have to quarantine as long as they don't have symptoms.

- They should consider making an appointment to be tested 3-5 days after their last close contact. CDC and SFDPH now recommend this because the delta variant can sometimes infect fully vaccinated people.
- They should self-monitor for symptoms for the 14 days after their close contact. If they develop symptoms, they should get tested and stay at home until they get the test result.

Steps to take for confirmed COVID-19 cases

All documents listed below are online at sfcdcp.org/school.

1. Use the [Exposure and Investigation tool](#) to collect the important details about the case BEFORE contacting the Schools/Childcare Response Team.
2. If you can, obtain a copy of the lab report and attach it to *Exposure and Investigation tool*. If your school or program does not have the test result yet, please note the test results are pending. Send the lab report to the Schools/Childcare Response Team when you receive it.
3. Report the case **within 1 hour** by emailing cases.schools@sfdph.org (please put SECURE: in the subject line). An on-call public health professional will get back to you as soon as possible. Non-English-speaking sites may call (628) 217-7499 and leave a voicemail.
4. The Schools/Childcare Response Team may ask you to identify people who had close contact with the COVID-19 case and may have been infected. When interviewing people to determine if they had close contact, and informing them that they may have been exposed, **do not disclose the identity of the person with COVID-19**, as required by law.
5. Use the [List of Close Contacts](#) template to collect details of any close contacts.
6. Email the *List of Close Contacts* to cases.schools@sfdph.org **within 24 hours**.
7. Communicate to your school community **within one business day** as indicated in the [Quick Guide](#). SFDPH has developed standard notification letters for schools. Translations are at sfcdcp.org/CovidSchoolsChildcare.
 - [Close Contact Advisory — Children and Youth under 18](#)
 - [Close Contact Advisory — Adult](#)
 - [General Exposure Advisory — Children and Youth under 18](#)
 - [General Exposure Advisory — Adult](#)
 - [Notification of an school member in quarantine for exposure to COVID-19](#)