



## **Kent County Public Schools COVID-19 Guidance for Families and Staff**

Updated February 28, 2022

*KCPS recognizes how quickly the following recommendations are changing and will refer to the most recent guidance from the Maryland Health Department (MDH) and the CDC guidelines.*

**[COVID-19 Guidance for Maryland Schools, Interim Guidance for Isolation and Quarantine, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)**

### **Q1: What is COVID-19?**

A: Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a mild to severe respiratory illness caused by a virus that can spread from person to person.

### **Q2: What are the [symptoms of COVID-19](#)?**

A: People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported, ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing
- New Onset of Severe Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Vomiting or diarrhea

### **Q3: Will contact tracing continue to take place?**

A: We will no longer contact trace close contacts to identify students and staff for quarantine due to COVID-19 exposures unless it is related to family members living in the same household or a school outbreak.

### **Q4: What are the criteria for screening my child at home?**

A: See below:

**Question:** Since last in school, have the child/student had any of the following symptoms?

**Symptoms Check**

- Temperature 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher when taken by mouth;
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Diarrhea or vomiting

If **YES**, your child should stay home.

**Q5: Who should I communicate with at the school if I have COVID-19 related questions?**

A: The school health nurse.

**Q6: How can I best protect myself and others?**

**Vaccination and masks/face coverings are foundational strategies to prevent the transmission of COVID-19.**

- Get vaccinated
- Wear a mask.
- Social distancing
- Avoid crowds and poor ventilation places
- Wash your hands often
- Cover cough and sneezing when not wearing a mask
- Clean and disinfect
- Monitor your health daily
- Stay home when sick and getting tested

**Q7: What happens if my child feels sick at school and the symptoms are COVID-19 related?**

A: A student who shows COVID-19 symptoms during the school day will be moved to the specific room pre-designated for medical-related isolation until they can be picked up as soon as possible by a family member or emergency contact with further guidance from the school nurse. These rooms will be cleaned according to CDC guidelines and school nurses will wear the recommended PPE.

**Q8: What happens if my child needs to see the nurse, and this is not COVID-19 related?**

A: Your child will be able to visit the school nurse for non-related COVID-19 issues. Some children visit the nurse routinely for health-related issues such as diabetes or ADHD medication. Students that do not exhibit symptoms will continue to report to the health room.

**Q9: If my child is home with COVID-19, how will the attendance be coded beginning with Quarter 2?**

A: A student home with COVID-19 or in quarantine will be marked with an absence code until documentation is provided to the attendance office.

The student that is too ill to complete assignments due to COVID-19 will be coded M for Medical Exclusion, code 17. The student that completes their assignments will be coded with a VO. This is a present code.

Teachers will continue to post assignments in Schoology or provide paper packets. A tutor will communicate with the family and provide weekly support while the student is home. Students who complete assignments and meet expectations for working with the tutor will be coded VO.

**Q10: What happens if I test positive for COVID-19?**

A: Everyone, regardless of vaccination status.

- Stay home for 5 days from the date of symptom onset if symptomatic or the date of the positive test if no symptoms. Day 1 is considered the first full day after symptoms started in symptomatic persons or the first full day after the person tested positive if asymptomatic.
- After 5 days, with no symptoms or if symptoms are improved with no fever for at least 24 hours without medication, you may return to school/work.
- Continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days.
- If you have a fever, continue to stay home until your fever resolves.

**Q11: What happens if I was exposed to COVID-19?**

A: If you:

**Have been boosted**

OR

Completed the primary series of **Pfizer or Moderna vaccine within the last 5 months**

OR

Completed the primary series of **J&J vaccine within the last 2 months**

OR

Have been confirmed of COVID-19 within the **last 90 days** (i.e. tested positive using a viral test).

- Wear a mask around others for 10 days.
- Test on day 5, if possible.
- If you develop symptoms, get a test and stay home.

If you:

Completed the primary series of **Pfizer or Moderna vaccine over 5 months ago and are not boosted**

OR

Completed the primary series of **J&J over 2 months ago and are not boosted**

OR

Are **unvaccinated**

- Stay home for 5 days after the last close contact with the person with COVID-19 (Day 1 is considered the first full day after the date of last close contact).
- After that, continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days.
- Test on day 5 if possible.
- If you develop symptoms, get a test and stay home.

**Q12: If a student, educator, or other school staff member is a laboratory-confirmed case of COVID-19, how will families be notified?**

A: Each school provides notification of COVID-19 confirmed cases to staff and parents.

**Q13: What physical distancing measures should schools use for students and staff?**

A: For schools, CDC guidance recommends maintaining at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms, combined with indoor mask-wearing to reduce transmission risk. When it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of at least 3 feet, it is especially important to layer multiple prevention strategies. A distance of at least 6 feet is recommended between

students and teachers/staff, and between teachers/staff who are not fully vaccinated.

**Q14: Will my school continue to provide the layered cleaning strategies used during the last school year?**

A: Yes.

**Q15: Are masks required on the school bus:**

A: Masks are optional

**Q16: Should children and adults wear masks while in school?**

A: Masks are optional. According to the CDC, masking indoors is one of the best ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

*NOTE:* Masks should not be worn by children under the age of 2 years and anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a face covering without assistance.

**Q17. Will students eat in the cafeteria?**

A: Yes. If the school cannot provide physical distancing measures for students, it is recommended that the school cohort students by assigning seats for each table. This will aid in contact tracing and serve as a preventative measure.

**Q18: How is an outbreak defined?**

A: Effective January 1, 2022, the Maryland Department of Health has identified new K-12 Outbreak Definitions for a classroom/cohort outbreak and for a school-wide outbreak. The revised definitions are:

**Classroom/cohort outbreak definition:**

Three or more laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases among students/teachers/staff in a specified group with onsets (or, if asymptomatic, collection dates) within a 14-day period, and who are epidemiologically linked in the school setting, but not household contacts.

**School-wide outbreak definition:**

Five or more cohorts with cases from separate households that meet the classroom/cohort outbreak definition that occurs within 14 days; **OR** 5 percent or more unrelated students/teachers/staff have confirmed COVID-19 within a 14-day period [minimum of 10 unrelated students/teachers/staff].