

COVID-19 Health and Safety Information for New York City Nonpublic and Charter Prekindergarten (Pre-K) to Grade 12 Schools

Nonpublic schools and charter schools that are not located in a New York City (NYC) Department of Education school building must adhere to New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) [Interim NYSDOH Guidance for Classroom Instruction During the 2021-2022 School Year](#) and should review the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools](#) and New York State Education Department (NYSED) [Health and Safety Guide for the 2021-2022 School Year](#) for recommendations on mitigation strategies in schools.

This document provides information on testing and how to handle confirmed or possible cases of COVID-19 in nonpublic and charter schools not co-located in an NYC Department of Education school. The document also includes instructions on how to identify close contacts, sample daily health screening questions and instructions for use, and sample letters to communicate with families about potential COVID-19 exposures in school. Please refer to [NYS Interim Guidance](#) for detailed information on physical distancing, face masks and ventilation.

For information, guidance and resources on COVID-19, visit nyc.gov/health/coronavirus.

COVID-19 Prevention Measures

All administrators, teachers, staff, students and visitors should be reminded to continue to follow key COVID-19 prevention measures:

- **Vaccination:** Vaccination is the best way to prevent COVID-19. We urge schools to promote vaccination, which will help keep schools open, students in classrooms and their school community safe.
- **Stay home if sick:** Mild symptoms such as a runny nose or backache have been mistaken for other illnesses and have turned out to be COVID-19. Encourage students, parents, guardians, teachers and other staff to:
 - Monitor their own and students' health and stay home if sick (even if their symptoms are mild) or have recently tested positive for COVID-19.
 - Call the school to report any illness or positive test results for COVID-19.
- **Physical distancing:** Maintain at least 3 feet of distance between students in classrooms and at least 6 feet between students and staff and between staff who are not fully vaccinated. Maximize physical distance between people as much as possible when moving through the food service line and when masks are removed for eating and drinking (especially indoors). Use additional spaces outside of the cafeteria for mealtime seating to help facilitate distancing.
- **Wear a face mask:** Per NYS [Commissioner's Determination](#), any person over age 2 (including all students, teachers, administrators, other staff, contractors and visitors)

must wear a well-fitting mask over their nose and mouth at all times when indoors in Pre-K to 12 school buildings, regardless of vaccination status, except while actively eating or drinking. Please see the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's (Health Department) [FAQ About Face Masks](#) for more information.

- **Practice healthy hand hygiene:** Wash hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available; clean frequently touched surfaces regularly; avoid touching your face with unwashed hands; and cover cough or sneezes with their arm, not their hands.

Testing

- The NYSDOH issued a [Commissioner's Determination on COVID-19 Testing](#) that details requirements for screening, diagnostic testing and return-to-school testing.
- Pre-K to 12 schools are required to offer **screening testing** to unvaccinated students on a weekly basis in geographic areas, such as NYC, identified by the CDC as having moderate, substantial, or high [transmission rates](#).
 - The NYC Department of Education (DOE) is providing COVID-19 screening testing services to any schools requesting services.
 - Nonpublic schools should contact onpscovidtesting@schools.nyc.gov to request testing services.
 - Charter schools should submit a ticket through the [NYC DOE Charter Office Help Desk](#) to request testing services.
- Schools must have the capacity (either directly on-site or via referral) to provide **diagnostic testing** for any students, teachers or other staff, who, regardless of vaccination status and community level of transmission, have COVID-19 symptoms or were recently exposed to someone with COVID-19.
- Schools can visit nyc.gov/covidtest to find testing sites. Many sites offer testing at no cost, regardless of immigration or insurance status. Remind staff, parents and guardians to let you know right away if staff or students receive a positive diagnostic test result.

Handling a Case or Possible Case of COVID-19 and COVID-19 Exposures in Your School

Community

Definitions

- The **infectious period** is when someone with COVID-19 may potentially spread the virus to others.
 - The **start date** of the infectious period is two days before the person had their first symptom or two days before their positive COVID-19 test date if they did not have symptoms.
 - The **end date** of the infectious period is 10 days after the person had their first symptom or 10 days after their COVID-19 test date if they did not have symptoms.
 - The test date is the date when the sample for the test was taken, not the date when the test results were reported to the provider or patient.
- In NYC, a **close contact** is defined as someone who has been within 6 feet for 10 or more minutes over a 24-hour period of someone who has COVID-19 during their infectious

period, regardless of face mask use or the presence of plexiglass or other barriers.

- **Exception:** Per NYS guidance, in the classroom setting, students sitting 3 to 6 feet from a student with COVID-19 do not need to quarantine if they and the student with COVID-19 wore masks correctly and consistently. This exception applies only to students and not to staff.
- Other people may be considered close contacts in certain situations, such as when physical distancing cannot be consistently monitored or maintained (such as on the school bus, younger children who are unable to remain 6 feet apart and wear masks, and during some sports and recreational activities).

Reporting to New York State

- All schools are required to complete the daily [New York State School COVID-19 Report Card](#) between the hours of 7 a.m. and 4 p.m. on each operational day of the school year. This is a daily report to NYS of all COVID-19 testing and positive test results.

Best practices for handling confirmed and possible COVID-19 cases:

Student Shows Symptoms of COVID-19 While at School

All schools should have an area designated for students who are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, such as the nurse's examination or medical room. This room can be used for other purposes when not holding a student with COVID-19 symptoms. The space must be thoroughly cleaned after holding a student who had symptoms of COVID-19. Schools should follow these steps when a student shows symptoms of COVID-19 during the school day:

1. A student showing one or more symptoms of COVID-19 (including fever, chills, new cough, new loss of taste or smell, and new shortness of breath) should go to or be escorted by a staff member to the designated area. Both the student and staff member should wear a well-fitting mask over their nose and mouth.
2. Clean and disinfect the area or classroom where the student was as soon as possible.
3. Call the student's parent or guardian for pick up.
4. When the parent or guardian arrives, have a staff member escort the student to the entrance for pick-up, advise them to take the student to visit a health care provider and get tested for COVID-19, and [provide information on the closest testing site](#).
5. The student can return to school when they fulfill the criteria for returning to school (see "[Criteria for Returning to School After Having Symptoms](#)" below).

Staff Member Shows Symptoms of COVID-19 While at School

Schools should follow these steps when a staff member shows symptoms of COVID-19 during the school day:

1. The staff member immediately notifies the principal that they are not feeling well and are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.
2. The school advises the staff member to get tested for COVID-19 as soon as possible and [provides information on nearby testing sites](#). If the staff member needs to wait for

transportation assistance, the staff member should leave the building, stay away from others, and wear a mask.

3. Clean and disinfect the area or classroom where the staff member was as soon as possible.
4. The staff member can return to school when they fulfill one of the criteria for returning to school (see [“Criteria for Returning to School After Having Symptoms”](#) below).

Student or Staff Member Calls Out Sick With COVID-19 Symptoms

Should a student or staff member call out sick because they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, the person should remain at home until they fulfill the criteria for returning to school after having symptoms. Individuals who were vaccinated against COVID-19 within the past three days may experience post-vaccination symptoms such as fatigue, fever, headache and/or chills. The students and staff member should stay home and may return to school when they fulfill the [below criteria](#).

Criteria for Returning to School After Having COVID-19 Symptoms (Not for People Identified as Close Contacts)

The table below outlines the criteria for returning to school for any individual that has symptoms of COVID-19:

If the individual received a positive COVID-19 diagnostic test ¹	If the individual received a negative COVID-19 diagnostic test ²	If the individual was not tested for COVID-19	If the individual was vaccinated against COVID-19 within the past three days
<p>They can return to school when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> At least 10 days have passed since their symptoms started <input type="checkbox"/> They have been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine and <input type="checkbox"/> Overall symptoms are improving 	<p>They can return to school when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> They have been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine and <input type="checkbox"/> Overall symptoms are improving 	<p>They can return to school when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> At least 10 days have passed since their symptoms started <input type="checkbox"/> They have been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine and <input type="checkbox"/> Overall symptoms are improving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> If the only symptoms are fatigue, headache, chills, low grade fever (temperature between 99.6°F and 100.3° F) or muscle or joint pain, they can return to school if symptoms resolve within two days. If symptoms persist beyond three days, manage as a potential COVID-19 infection (exclude them from school). <input type="checkbox"/> If symptoms include cough, shortness of breath, runny nose, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, fever, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea, manage as a potential COVID-19 infection (exclude them from school).

¹A positive diagnostic test may be molecular test (such as a PCR) or antigen test.

²A molecular test (such as a PCR) is required to rule out COVID-19 if a person has symptoms. An antigen diagnostic test or antibody test is not acceptable for this purpose.

Student or Staff Member Calls Out Because Someone in Their Household Has COVID-19

In most cases, all people living with someone who has COVID-19 are close contacts and, if they are not fully vaccinated or were confirmed with COVID-19 in the last three months, must quarantine. If the student or staff member cannot avoid close contact with the person who has COVID-19, they will need to extend their quarantine using the day after the infected person ends isolation as their Day 1. See "[Quarantine for Students and Staff Identified as Close Contacts to Someone with COVID-19](#)" below for further information on when and how long close contacts need to quarantine.

Confirmed Cases (Positive Diagnostic Test)

In the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case, the principal or designee should:

1. Confirm the person had a positive diagnostic test for COVID-19 (a molecular test, such as a PCR or antigen test) and **not** an antibody test (see [COVID-19 Testing: Frequently Asked Questions](#) for more information). Schools may ask the parents, guardians or staff to send a copy of the test result through a secure method to the appropriate school administrator.
 - a. Provide information to the individual about how to isolate safely at home and when they may return to school (see the NYC Health Department's [What to Do If You Have COVID-19](#) and [COVID-19: Understanding Quarantine and Isolation](#)). The person needs to isolate if they test positive for COVID-19, whether or not they have symptoms or are fully vaccinated.
2. Determine whether the person was at school during their infectious period, potentially exposing others to COVID-19.
3. If the persons attended school during their infectious period, identify everyone who was a close contact of the person with COVID-19 during the person's infectious period (see [Appendix A](#)).
4. Report all new COVID-19 cases and information on close contacts to the NYC Health Department via the online [COVID-19 Facility Exposures form](#), which will also enroll them in the NYC Test & Trace Corps assistance and monitoring program. If the NYC Health Department determines that additional follow-up is needed, you will be contacted with instructions.
 - a. Fully vaccinated individuals who are considered close contacts should be included in the close contacts spreadsheet.
5. Exclude all close contacts from school unless they meet an exception to quarantine, as described below. Inform them that they must stay home and quarantine (separate from others, including household members) for 10 days from the date of their last exposure to the person who has COVID-19. For more information, see NYC Test & Trace's [How to Separate Safely at Home: Tips for People Diagnosed with or Exposed to COVID-19](#). Some close contacts have the option to shorten quarantine to 7 days if certain conditions are met. See "[Quarantine for Students Identified as Close Contacts](#)"

[to Someone with COVID-19](#)” below for further instructions.

6. Communicate to families, students and staff about the confirmed case.
 - a. Do not reveal the name of the person with COVID-19 or share other identifying information, such as personal information (such as age, address or phone number), grade or classroom, or information about the symptoms the person may have had. Likewise, you should not reveal the name or any identifying information about the people identified as close contacts. This information is confidential and should only be shared with the NYC Health Department staff assisting in the investigation. Maintaining confidentiality will help encourage other people to disclose when they have COVID-19.
 - b. The NYC Health Department has template letters that schools can adapt to notify parents and guardians of students about possible exposures to COVID-19 and quarantine requirements for their children. Schools may wish to inform parents and guardians whose children were not close contacts that there was someone with COVID-19 in school. Template letters for both scenarios are available in [Appendix D](#).

Quarantine for Students and Staff Identified as Close Contacts to Someone With COVID-19

Whether a close contact needs to quarantine and the length of quarantine depends on their vaccination status, whether they recently had COVID-19 (positive diagnostic test) and recovered, whether they have symptoms of COVID-19 (and if so, the type of symptoms) and COVID-19 testing.

Close contacts should continue daily symptom monitoring through Day 14. If symptoms occur, they should isolate themselves, contact their health care provider, get tested for COVID-19 and must not attend school.

When and For How Long Close Contacts Need to Quarantine		
	The close contact has COVID-19 symptoms	The close contact does <u>not</u> have COVID-19 symptoms
The close contact is fully vaccinated¹ <u>or</u> recovered from confirmed COVID-19 in the past three months²	<p>The close contact must quarantine for 10 days and is encouraged to get tested for COVID-19.</p> <p>In some cases, the close contact may be given the option by NYC Health Department or NYC Test & Trace staff to quarantine for only seven days if the close contact gets tested for COVID-19 on Day 5 or later and receives a negative test result,³ depending on their symptoms.</p>	<p>The close contact does not need to quarantine and can attend school. They are encouraged to get tested for COVID-19.</p>

<p>The close contact is not vaccinated</p>	<p>The close contact must quarantine for 10 days and should get tested for COVID-19.</p>	<p>The close contact must quarantine for 10 days and is encouraged to get tested for COVID-19.</p> <p>In some cases, the close contact may be given the option by NYC Health Department or NYC Test & Trace Staff to quarantine for only seven days if the person is tested for COVID-19 on Day 5 or later and receives a negative test result.³</p>
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¹ Fully vaccinated means it has been at least two weeks since someone got their second dose of a two-dose vaccine (such as the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccines) or two weeks since they got their single-dose vaccine (such as the Johnson & Johnson/Janssen vaccine). People who completed a COVID-19 vaccination series with a vaccine that has been authorized by the World Health Organization (WHO) for emergency use are also considered fully vaccinated. Visit extranet.who.int/pqweb/vaccines/covid-19-vaccines for a list of vaccines authorized by the WHO. Someone who got only a single dose of a two-dose vaccine or who got the final dose in a vaccine series less than two weeks ago is not considered fully vaccinated.

² This applies to anyone who had confirmed COVID-19 (meaning they had a positive PCR or other molecular test or antigen test) in the past three months and recovered. Three months is measured from the date a person first had COVID-19 symptoms or if they had no symptoms, the date of their first positive diagnostic test.

³ The test must be a molecular test (such as a PCR test) or antigen test performed in a doctor’s office, clinic or other testing site. Home and antibody tests are not acceptable.

It is recommended that schools require proof of vaccination or previous positive test from individuals who are exposed but exempt from quarantine. Schools that plan to request voluntary submission of documentation of COVID-19 vaccination status should use the same protocols used to collect and secure other immunization or health status information from students.

Additional Guidance on Identifying Close Contacts, Quarantine and Isolation

- Call the NYC Health Department at 866-692-3641 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday for consultation with an epidemiologist if you have questions about test results or quarantine. For assistance using the COVID-19 Facility Exposure form, please contact facilities@health.nyc.gov.
- A note from the NYC Health Department is not needed for students or staff to return to school. Such notes are not provided by the NYC Health Department.
- It is strongly recommended **not** to require negative a COVID-19 test result after isolation, as a person may test positive for COVID-19 for many weeks or months after infection even though they are no longer contagious.

- Contacts of someone in quarantine do not need to stay home unless the quarantined person develops symptoms of COVID-19 or tests positive for COVID-19 (becomes a case).
- Quarantine is not required following domestic or international travel. All travelers, [domestic](#) and [international](#), should follow all CDC travel recommendations, which include a recommendation to be fully vaccinated prior to travel and, if not fully vaccinated, to quarantine following travel.
- Schools should work with bus companies to arrange for assigned seating on buses to facilitate identifying close contacts. If a person with confirmed COVID-19 rode in or drove a school bus during their infectious period, all children and staff who were close contacts on the bus with that person will need to quarantine for 10 days. If it is not possible to identify close contacts, everyone on the bus would be considered a close contact even if they were wearing masks and taking other precautions.
- If there are multiple confirmed cases of COVID-19 in different classrooms, follow the above guidance about excluding any students or staff who are close contacts. A school considering whether to close should first discuss options with the NYC Health Department, which will work with the school to keep it open, whenever possible.
- The NYC Health Department’s decision to close a school is based on various factors including the number of cases over time and their distribution across grades and classrooms, the size of the school, the ability of the school to exclude people who need to be isolated and quarantined in a timely manner, adherence to NYC Health Department guidance, and cooperation with the NYC Health Department.

Daily Health Screening

- The following best practices are offered to schools who choose to implement a daily health screening. Screening should be conducted prior to entering school facilities, and ideally at home, to make sure that people do not report to school if they have or may have COVID-19. In addition, individuals should be reminded to go home (following appropriate protocols) if they start to feel unwell during the day.
 - Train staff, parents and guardians to use the daily health screening tool in the morning before leaving home and inform them how to notify the school if they do not pass the screening.
 - Provide clear instructions to those who do not pass the screening, including directions not to come to school that day and steps to take before returning to school.
 - Assure staff and families that personal health information will be kept confidential.
 - Call parents and guardians if a student is absent to learn whether the child has COVID-19 symptoms and if anyone in the household has COVID-19.
 - Inform parents and guardians about your COVID-19 protocols so they know what to expect.
 - Designate a staff person to review the incoming reports of COVID-19 health screenings and to attest that they are completed.

- Schools should not keep records of student, staff and visitor health data (for example, the specific temperature data of an individual), but may maintain records that confirm individuals were screened and the result of such screening (for example, pass/fail, cleared/not cleared). Any paper questionnaires that are collected for purposes of completing the daily screening attestation requirement must be immediately shredded to protect people’s health information.

A sample daily health screening tool and instructions for use are found in [Appendices B](#) and [C](#).

The NYC Health Department may change recommendations as the situation evolves.

10.7.21

Appendix A: Identifying Close Contacts and Submitting Information to the Health Department

Checklist:

- Confirm that the person with COVID-19 was on site during their infectious period (see the example below).
- Identify people who had close contact with the person with COVID-19 during their infectious period.
- Notify close contacts of their exposure **without disclosing the identity of the person who has COVID-19 or other identified contacts.**
 - Close contacts who have no COVID-19 symptoms and who fall into one of the quarantine exception categories (fully vaccinated or having had COVID-19 in the last three months) do not need to quarantine and can come to school.
 - Close contacts who do not fall into one of the exception categories should quarantine according to “[Quarantine for Students and Staff Identified as Close Contacts to Someone with COVID-19.](#)”
- Submit information on close contacts to the NYC Health Department and [NYC Test & Trace Corps](#) using the [COVID-19 Facility Exposures form](#).
 - The contact list for the individual who has COVID-19 should include people’s first and last names, phone numbers, and date of last contact with the person. Dates of birth and addresses may be helpful but not necessary to include.
 - If you have trouble submitting the contact list using the COVID-19 Facility Exposure form, contact the NYC Health Department for help at facilities@health.nyc.gov.

Example - Calculating the infectious period:

A student first experienced symptoms on April 21. This means, the start of their infectious period is **April 19** (two days before their symptoms started) and the end of their infectious period is **May 1** (10 days after their symptoms started).

April 19	April 20	April 21	April 22	April 23	April 24	April 25	April 26	April 27	April 28	April 29	April 30	May 1
Start of infectious period		Student first had symptoms										End of infectious period

Appendix B: Sample Daily Health Screening Questions

1. Have you experienced any symptoms of COVID-19, including a fever of 100.0 degrees F or greater, a new cough, new loss of taste or smell or shortness of breath that started in the past 10 days?*
 - No. *Go to the next question.*
 - Yes, and I have received a negative result from a COVID-19 molecular test since the onset of symptoms **and** have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of medicine. *Go to the next question.*
 - Yes, and I am not in the category above. *No further screening is needed. The person may not enter the building.*

2. In the past 10 days, have you gotten a positive result from a COVID-19 diagnostic test? Please note that 10 days is measured from the day you were tested, not from the day when you got the test result.
 - No. *Go to the next question.*
 - Yes. *No further screening is needed. The person may not enter the building.*

3. Are you considered fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by CDC guidelines?¹ Please note that to be considered fully vaccinated by CDC guidelines, two weeks must have passed since you received the second dose in a two-dose series or two weeks must have passed since you received a single-dose vaccine.
 - Yes, I am considered fully vaccinated. *The person should skip question 4 and may enter the building.*
 - No, I am not considered fully vaccinated. *Go to the next question.*

4. In the past 10 days, have you been told you are a close contact of someone who tested positive for COVID-19 or has someone in your household tested positive for COVID-19?
 - No. *The person may enter the building.*
 - Yes, and I am returning from quarantine on Day 8 with proof of a negative diagnostic COVID-19 test performed on Day 5 or later. *The person may enter the building.*
 - Yes, and I have recovered from confirmed COVID-19 (positive diagnostic test) within the past 3 months. *The person may enter the building.*
 - Yes. *No further screening is needed. The person may not enter the building.*

*New onset of symptoms not attributable to a known chronic condition.

Appendix C: Best Practices to Operationalize Daily Health Screenings

Remote Health Screening Questionnaire

Encourage all individuals (students, staff, and visitors) to pre-screen themselves remotely before entering a school building. For example, create an auto-generated email or survey that enables a response or set up an automated phone line that allows staff and families to indicate “yes” or “no.” Individuals can then be asked to provide the results of their screening by showing an email on their smartphone, providing a printout of results or by monitoring phone responses. Families should support students as needed and make sure students have proper documentation for morning entry.

For students who travel via school bus, families should complete the screening, including checking their child’s temperature, prior to the child boarding the school bus. Bus personnel will not be conducting screenings of children prior to boarding the bus. Designated staff should check for completion of student health screening at school entry. Students who lack the screening clearance will need to be supported in completing this screening process at the school, particularly young children.

For morning student drop off, every effort should be made to ensure that student health screenings are completed prior to families dropping off their children to school, especially for younger students. The screening results are valid until midnight of the same day.

Paper Copy of Health Screening Questionnaire

If individuals are not able to pre-screen using the online tool, they should print and complete the health screening questionnaire at home. Schools can provide copies of the health screening questionnaire, as necessary.

In-Person Health Screening at School

Any individual who needs to complete the health screening in-person should answer the health screening tool prior to entry. Schools should determine the best way to implement on-site screening for students using either the online health screening tool or paper copies of the screening questionnaire.

The following are best practices for in-person screening at school:

- Maintain physical distance.
 - People awaiting screening must maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from others.
 - Incorporate physical distancing (maintaining at least 6 feet between screeners and others) or physical barriers to minimize the screener’s and screened person’s exposure to each other during the screening.
 - Staff should stay at least 6 feet from each other and students.
- Screeners and screened people (except for children under 2 years old) must wear a face mask if they can medically tolerate one. If the person being screened cannot medically

tolerate a mask, consider a reasonable accommodation, such as having the person complete a written screening survey rather than an in-person screening.

- Screen in a location that is not a confined space (for example, do not use a small office with a closed door). If possible, perform screenings outdoors.
- Conduct screenings in a way that prevents others from hearing what is being said and to minimize others from observing screenings.

Supporting Students With In-Person Health Screenings

For students who arrive at school without a completed screening and are unable to respond to the health screening questions, the school should try to contact a family member for support with screening. However, if a parent or guardian is unable to be contacted, the school should ask the student about their well-being (for example, “How are you feeling today?”).

In the event that contact with the family was not possible prior to the student's entry, once the student is in class the school should conduct outreach to the family to complete the screening and remind the family that the screening must be conducted at home before the student leaves for school.

Student Pick Up

If the student has symptoms of COVID-19, the guardian of the student must be immediately contacted and advised to pick up the child. If the guardian cannot be reached, the school must contact the emergency contacts.

Failing a Health Screening: Students

Any student who fails their health screening (for example, answers yes to any of the [health screening questions above](#)) should be escorted to the school’s designated area and must be picked up by a family member, or, for students being dropped off, sent home with a family member prior to entering the building, if possible.

If a student fails the health screening question #1 (symptomatic without a negative test):

- The student should be escorted to the school’s designated area for family pick up.
- Students in the designated area must wear a face mask and sit at least 6 feet away from other students and staff members.
- Family should seek medical attention and testing for COVID-19.
- The student may return to school when they fulfill one of the [Criteria for Returning to School After Having Symptoms \(not for close contacts\)](#).

If a student fails the health screening question #2 (positive diagnostic test for COVID-19):

- The student should be escorted to the school’s designated area for family pick up.
- Students in the designated area must wear a face mask and sit at least 6 feet away from other students and staff members.
- Family should seek medical attention, if necessary, and the student should stay home for 10 days from when their symptoms began or, if they had no symptoms, from the

date they were tested.

- The student may return to school when they have isolated for 10 days, been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of medication **and** their overall symptoms are improving.

If a student fails the health screening question #4 (close contact):

- The student should be escorted to the designated area for family pick up.
- Students in the designated area must wear a face mask and sit 6 feet away from other students and staff members.
- Family should seek medical attention as needed.
- Students must follow "[Quarantine for Students and Staff Identified as Close Contacts to Someone with COVID-19](#)" guidelines.

Failing a Health Screening: Staff and Visitors

Any staff or visitor who fails their health screening must be refused entry to the school facilities. Instructions on what to do, including not coming to school that day, and when they can return to the school building should be provided.

Appendix D: Sample Letters

Sample Letter for Close Contacts

[insert date]

Dear Parent or Guardian,

The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYC Health Department) asked me to send this letter to let you know your child may be a close contact of a person diagnosed with COVID-19 at *[insert name of school]*. A close contact is someone who has been within 6 feet for 10 or more minutes over a 24-hour period of someone who has COVID-19, regardless of face mask use or the presence of plexiglass or other barriers. You may also be contacted by the NYC Health Department or NYC Test & Trace Corps. All calls are confidential. You will not be asked for any private financial information or your Social Security number, or to take control of or download software to your phone, tablet or computer. You may ask the person calling you to provide a code to enter into the [Validate My Tracer](#) tool to confirm they are a Contact Tracer.

The possible exposure happened on *[insert date(s)]*. Unless your child meets one of the exceptions to quarantine (described below), they must stay home (quarantine) for 10 days from *[insert date]*, even if they do not feel sick. Your child can leave home only to visit a health care provider, to get a COVID-19 test or in an emergency. In some cases, close contacts may be given the option by NYC Health Department or NYC Test & Trace staff to quarantine for only seven days if the close contact gets tested for COVID-19 on Day 5 or later and receives a negative test result, depending on their symptoms. **You should continue to monitor your child for fever or other COVID-19 symptoms for 14 days after their exposure.**

If your child is told they can quarantine for only seven days, you should provide a negative test result to the school for your child to return on prior to completing 10 days of quarantine. People quarantining for 10 days do not need a doctor's note, negative laboratory test result, or any other documentation to return to school following quarantine or isolation. Likewise, if your child develops COVID-19, they do not need documentation to return to school once they completed isolation (usually 10 days).

Exceptions to Quarantine

If your child meets one of the following criteria, they are **not** required to quarantine and may attend school:

- Your child is fully vaccinated (more than two weeks following receipt of the second dose of a two-dose vaccine or more than two weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine) **and** shows no symptoms of COVID-19 since the current exposure; **or**
- Your child has had COVID-19 in the past three months (positive diagnostic test) and recovered **and** shows no symptoms of COVID-19 since the current exposure. Three

months is measured from the date they first had COVID-19 symptoms or, if they had no symptoms, the date of their first positive diagnostic test.

Proof of vaccination or of a prior positive test may be required. The school will provide instructions on how to submit documentation to the school, if needed.

People who are fully vaccinated and are exposed to COVID-19 should still get tested for COVID-19 three to five days after exposure even if they don't have symptoms. They should also wear a face mask indoors in public for 14 days following exposure or until their test result is negative, and should monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days following exposure. If they experience symptoms, they should wear a mask at all times, isolate themselves from others, be evaluated for COVID-19 (including getting tested) and inform their health care provider of their vaccination status at the time of COVID-19 evaluation and testing.

COVID-19 Testing

Testing is important even if your child does not feel sick because some people with the COVID-19 have no symptoms but can still spread the virus to others. For information on testing, call your child's health care provider or see [COVID-19 Testing: Frequently Asked Questions](#). Visit nyc.gov/covidtest or call **311** to find a testing site. Testing is offered at no cost at many sites and available regardless of immigration status.

Symptoms of COVID-19

Talk to your child's provider if your child has [symptoms](#) that could be from COVID-19. If your child does not have a provider, call **311**. People with COVID-19 have reported a wide range of symptoms. Symptoms may appear two to 14 days after exposure to the virus. Common symptoms include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, muscle or body aches, headache, loss of taste or smell, and sore throat. Most people with COVID-19 have mild to moderate symptoms and recover on their own. Some people have no symptoms at all. Less commonly, COVID-19 may lead to pneumonia, other severe complications, hospitalization or death. Visit nyc.gov/health/coronavirus for more information on symptoms and what to do when sick.

In rare cases, some children have developed multisystem inflammatory syndrome (MIS-C), a health condition associated with COVID-19 that can result in serious illness. Symptoms may include fever lasting several days, red or pink eyes, swollen hands and feet, rash, diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal pain, red cracked lips or a red bumpy tongue that looks like a strawberry. Contact your child's health care provider immediately if your child develops any of these symptoms.

Sincerely,

[insert school administrator name]

Sample Letter for Child Who Was Not Exposed

[insert date]

Dear Parent or Guardian,

I am writing to let you know someone in **[insert name of school]** has been diagnosed with COVID-19. Currently, we do not think that your child was exposed because they were not a close contact of the person with COVID-19. A close contact is someone who has been within 6 feet for 10 or more minutes over a 24-hour period of someone who has COVID-19, regardless of face mask use or the presence of plexiglass or other barriers. Parents and guardians of children who may be close contacts are being notified.

If your child feels well, you do not need to do anything and your child can continue their usual activities. If you are concerned or your child does not feel well, talk to your child's health care provider. If your child does not have a provider, call **311**. You can also have your child tested for COVID-19. For information about testing, call your child's health care provider or **311**, or visit nyc.gov/covidtest. Testing is offered at no cost at many sites and available regardless of immigration status.

To learn more about COVID-19, visit nyc.gov/health/coronavirus.

Sincerely,

[insert school administrator name]