



TULARE COUNTY  
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

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Quarantine of exposed persons and early detection of new infections remain important measures to prevent spread of COVID-19. CDC continues to recommend the 14-day quarantine as the most effective timeframe to prevent transmission, but has offered an alternate shortened quarantine option. CDPH has outlined this option for schools in its most recent guidance along with appropriately timed testing.

**Testing and Quarantine of Close Contacts:**

Testing is advised for all close contacts regardless of whether symptoms are present. Close contact is defined as within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes cumulatively within a 24-hour period. In some school situations, this may be difficult to determine so the entire cohort may be considered close contacts with quarantine recommended.

- Testing is recommended at symptom onset or at the end of quarantine if asymptomatic due to the potential for asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic transmission.
- CDPH school guidance advises testing asymptomatic between 5-7 days from last exposure and completing 10 days of quarantine if negative. Testing later in quarantine is preferred, but any testing days 5-10 is considered acceptable.
- A negative result does not shorten the quarantine; a positive result requires an additional 10 days of isolation from symptom onset date (or test date if asymptomatic). If testing is not done, a standard 14-day quarantine is preferred, but 10 days of quarantine is considered acceptable per CDPH school guidance. Persons should continue to monitor for symptoms for 14 days after exposure regardless and isolate/test if symptoms develop.
- Persons should follow all CDPH guidance on face coverings and social distancing.

**Testing and Isolation of Symptomatic Persons / Persons Who Test Positive:**

Testing is advised for anyone with symptoms of COVID-19, particularly in congregate settings where early identification is key in preventing transmission.

- Schools may request a clearance note documenting either a negative test result or that symptoms are due to an underlying chronic condition. If testing is not done or no documentation of chronic condition is provided, students/staff should isolate for 10 days from symptom onset per CDC guidance.
- A positive test result requires 10 days of isolation and may return once CDC criteria met: 10 days have passed since symptom onset date (or test date if asymptomatic), no fever for at least 24 hours, and symptomatic improvement. If negative, may return if no fever for at least 24 hours with symptomatic improvement.
- Retesting for clearance after a positive test is not recommended. Persons do not need to be included in surveillance testing nor quarantine if re-exposed within 3 months after initial infection if they remain asymptomatic. Persons with symptoms should seek care. After 3 months, persons should be re-enrolled in routine surveillance testing.
- Typically, persons who have tested positive may be vaccinated after they have recovered (i.e. CDC isolation criteria).



### Interim Quarantine and Testing Guidance for Vaccinated Persons:

- Persons who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 with a complete series do not need to quarantine after high-risk exposure if ALL criteria met below:
  - ✓ At least 2 weeks have passed since receiving final vaccine dose
  - ✓ Less than 3 months (12 weeks) since receiving final vaccine dose
  - ✓ Remain asymptomatic since the exposure
- Persons should monitor for symptoms 14 days after exposure and isolate/test if symptomatic.
- Persons should still participate in any routine surveillance screening/testing.
- If persons do not meet ALL criteria or it is unclear if criteria are met, the current standard quarantine guidance (i.e. for unvaccinated persons) should be followed.

### Clarification on Contact Tracing and Quarantine for Cohorts and Stable Groups

Per current CDPH guidance: *It may be necessary to consider the entire class or members of the case's stable group exposed, as it can be challenging to determine who may have had contact with the case within 6 feet for at least 15 cumulative minutes in a 24-hour period. In some situations, case investigations may be able to determine individual members of a stable group are close contacts, and allow those who are not identified as close contacts to continue in-person instruction.* (p 36)

This may be reasonable in older groups, but may be particularly difficult to determine in younger age children especially as the criteria is a cumulative 15 minutes within a 24-hour period. Persons who meet time and distance criteria are considered close contacts regardless of face covering use as per the current CDC definition.

At this time, entire cohorts and stable groups **3<sup>rd</sup> grade and under** should quarantine when a case is identified to best prevent further transmission of COVID-19. This includes the adult staff in the cohort or stable group. Quarantine of entire cohorts may also otherwise be necessary when unable to ascertain close contact in certain classroom situations or learning environments as deemed appropriate by school contact tracers or public health investigators. This may change with developing information including new virus variant transmissibility as well as local case rates.

### CDC Update on Masking Fit Recommendations

School staff and educators should be advised of new CDC recommendations regarding effective masking to best protect against COVID-19. This includes information on mask material choice, fitting, and proper use in different situations. Please see CDC website for specific information:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/mask-fit-and-filtration.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/effective-masks.html>



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*Options to Reduce Quarantine for Contacts of Persons with SARS-CoV-2 Infection Using Symptom Monitoring and Diagnostic Testing, CDC.* <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/scientific-brief-options-to-reduce-quarantine.html>

*California Safer Schools for All, K-12 Guidance, CDPH.* [https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/COVID-19/Consolidated\\_Schools\\_Guidance.pdf](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/COVID-19/Consolidated_Schools_Guidance.pdf)

*COVID-19 Vaccines, CDPH.* <https://covid19.ca.gov/vaccines/>