



2021-2022 Summary of Guidance for K-12 Schools

This guidance is dated 1/13/2022 and is subject to change based on new recommendations from MDHHS, CDC, local trends, or new information regarding COVID-19.

Recommendations..... 2

Requirements 2

What to do if someone is sick..... 3

What to do if someone tests positive (isolation) 5

Close contact guidance for the K-12 community (when to quarantine or isolate): Universal Masking in Place..... 6

Quarantine Decision Making for Students and School Staff 6

Quarantine Notes 8

Close contact guidance for the K-12 community (when to quarantine or isolate): Without Universal Masking..... 9

Quarantine Decision Making for Students and School Staff 9

Quarantine Notes11

COVID-19 Vaccination 12

Resources and Notes..... 12

Appendix..... 13



GENESEE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Recommendations

This guidance involves responsive and layered prevention strategies to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission to students, staff, and the greater community. Local school districts should implement preventive strategies based on an ongoing assessment of the current situation, including levels of community transmission of COVID-19, the variants in our community, known levels of school-associated transmission or outbreaks, and vaccination rates of staff and students.

Prevention strategies include staying home when sick, vaccination, consistent and correct mask use, physical distancing, regular screening, and testing when appropriate, ventilation, handwashing, contact tracing, and isolation and quarantine compliance. GCHD works with schools to monitor COVID-19 cases, local trends, and outbreaks, and to provide situation-specific guidance. GCHD encourages schools to prioritize in-person instruction while implementing available preventive measures to reduce transmission.

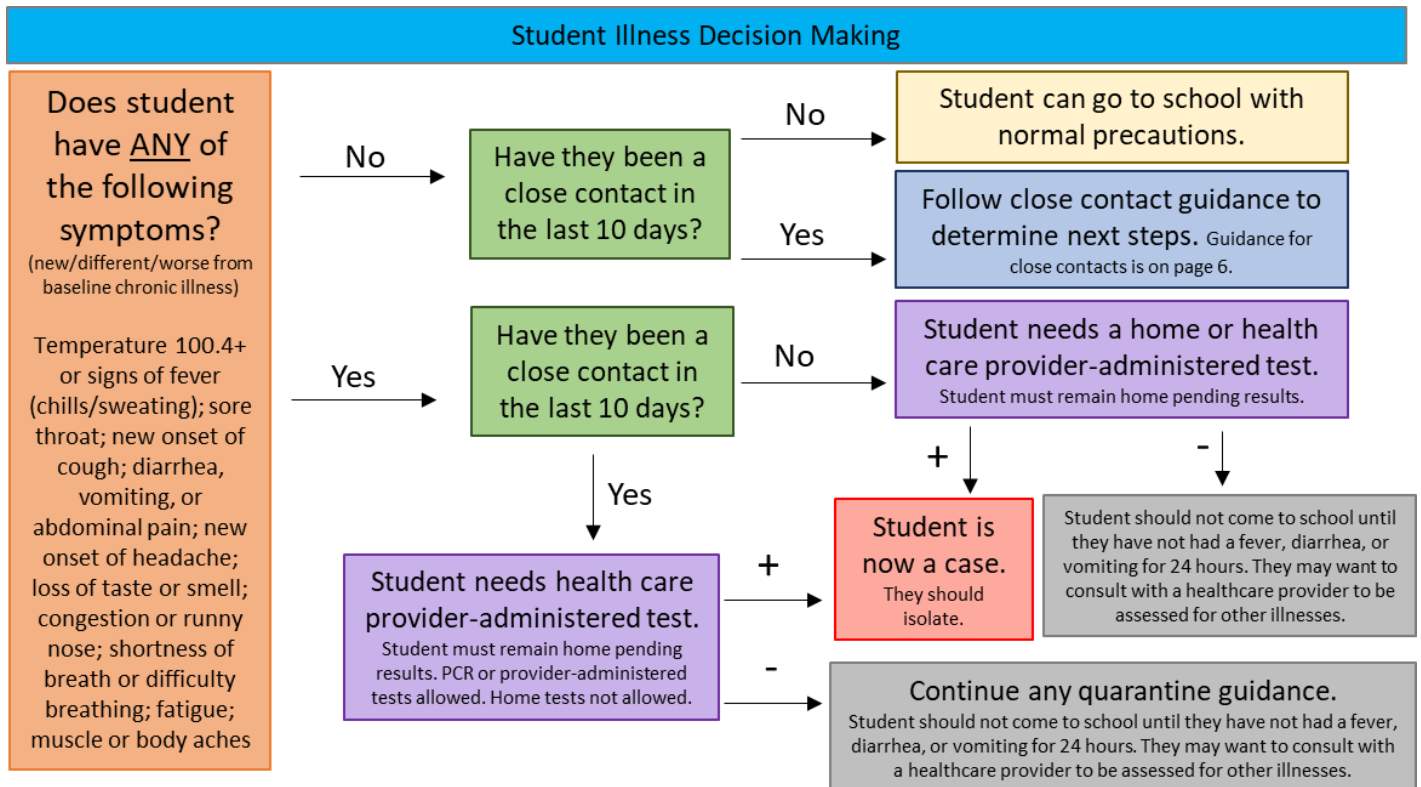
Requirements

- Effective January 13, 2021, the Health Department has issued a local public health order for Genesee County educational institutions and settings.
- There is a current [CDC \(federal\) order](#) that requires face coverings on school bus transportation.
- Positive COVID-19 cases (confirmed or probable), unvaccinated close contacts, and symptomatic household members, whether vaccinated or not, must be excluded from school based on the [Michigan Public Health Code: 333.5201](#) and the [Michigan Administrative Code](#) (starting on p. 5).
- Case notification to the Health Department and contact tracing is required by the [Michigan Public Health Code](#).
- Schools must also follow the MDHHS Order [Reporting of Confirmed and Probable Cases at Schools](#), which requires schools to post data about case counts on their websites. In addition, standard school infectious disease policies mandate requiring students and staff to stay home when sick.



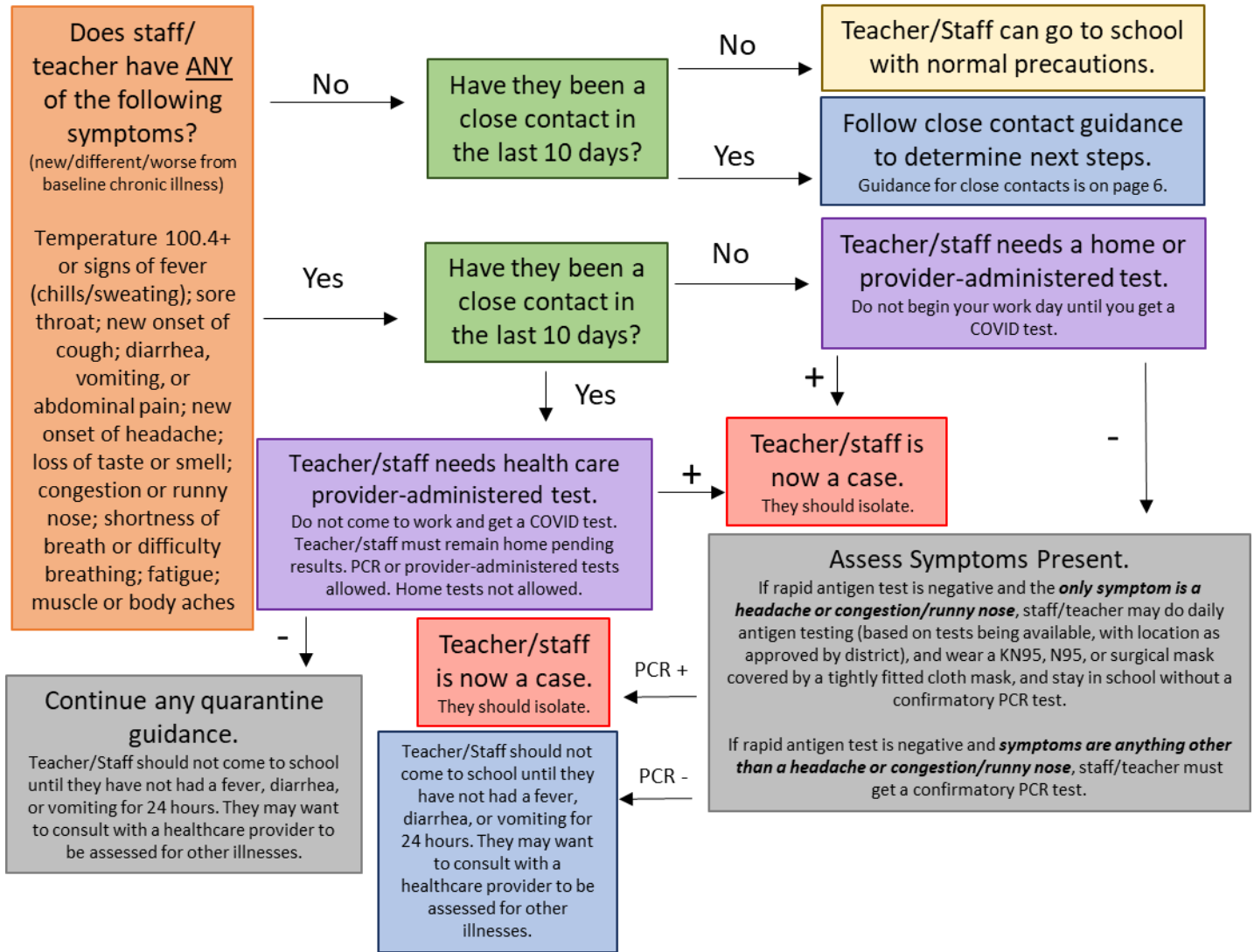
What to do if someone is sick

Here is a general overview of guidance for students and staff. Additional next steps for each situation may need to be discussed with GCHD. Additionally, when cases are at “high” levels as defined by the CDC, “close contact” may be adjusted to reduce the tracing burden on Educational Institutions.





School Staff/Teacher Illness Decision Making





What to do if someone tests positive (isolation)

Here is a general overview of guidance for students and staff, regardless of vaccination status.

- Isolate at home for at least 5 days after symptom onset
 - Day 0 is the day symptoms started or test sample was collected. See calendar in the appendix for how to count days after testing positive.
- On day 5, does case have no symptoms or symptoms are resolving?
 - If yes, can stop isolation on day 6. But must continue to wear a well-fitting mask around others through day 10.
 - If no, should NOT stop isolation - continue isolating until symptoms resolve or 10 days have gone by since tested positive or first developed symptoms. If case has a fever, continue to isolate until fever goes away (24 hours fever-free with no medication).
 - "Resolving symptoms" means symptoms have gotten noticeably better. Some symptoms (like fatigue and loss of taste and/or smell) may last a longer time.
- GCHD strongly recommends that neither students nor staff return to school if they are still feeling ill. It is safest to take a rapid antigen test on day 5 of isolation and return only if it is negative.
- Must continue to wear a mask around others for another 5 days, including at home.
 - When a student or staff returns to school between days 6 and 10, it is recommended that they wear a KN95, N95, or surgical mask, and not a cloth mask.
 - If a student or staff returns on Day 6, they must wear a mask at all times except while eating. While eating they should be in a separate room from the usual cafeteria and seated at least six feet from any other people present in the room. They can participate in extra-curricular activities to the extent that they can do so while wearing a mask. If they cannot wear a mask (e.g., while swimming or wrestling), they cannot participate until day 11.
- Those who cannot wear a mask for any reason, including a medical waiver, during days 6-10 cannot return to school until day 11.



Close contact guidance for the K-12 community (when to quarantine or isolate): Universal Masking in Place

The guidance below applies to all members of the K-12 community (students, staff, teachers, etc.) regardless of where the exposure took place. See “quarantine notes” on [page 8](#) for important clarifications.

Quarantine Decision Making for Students and School Staff

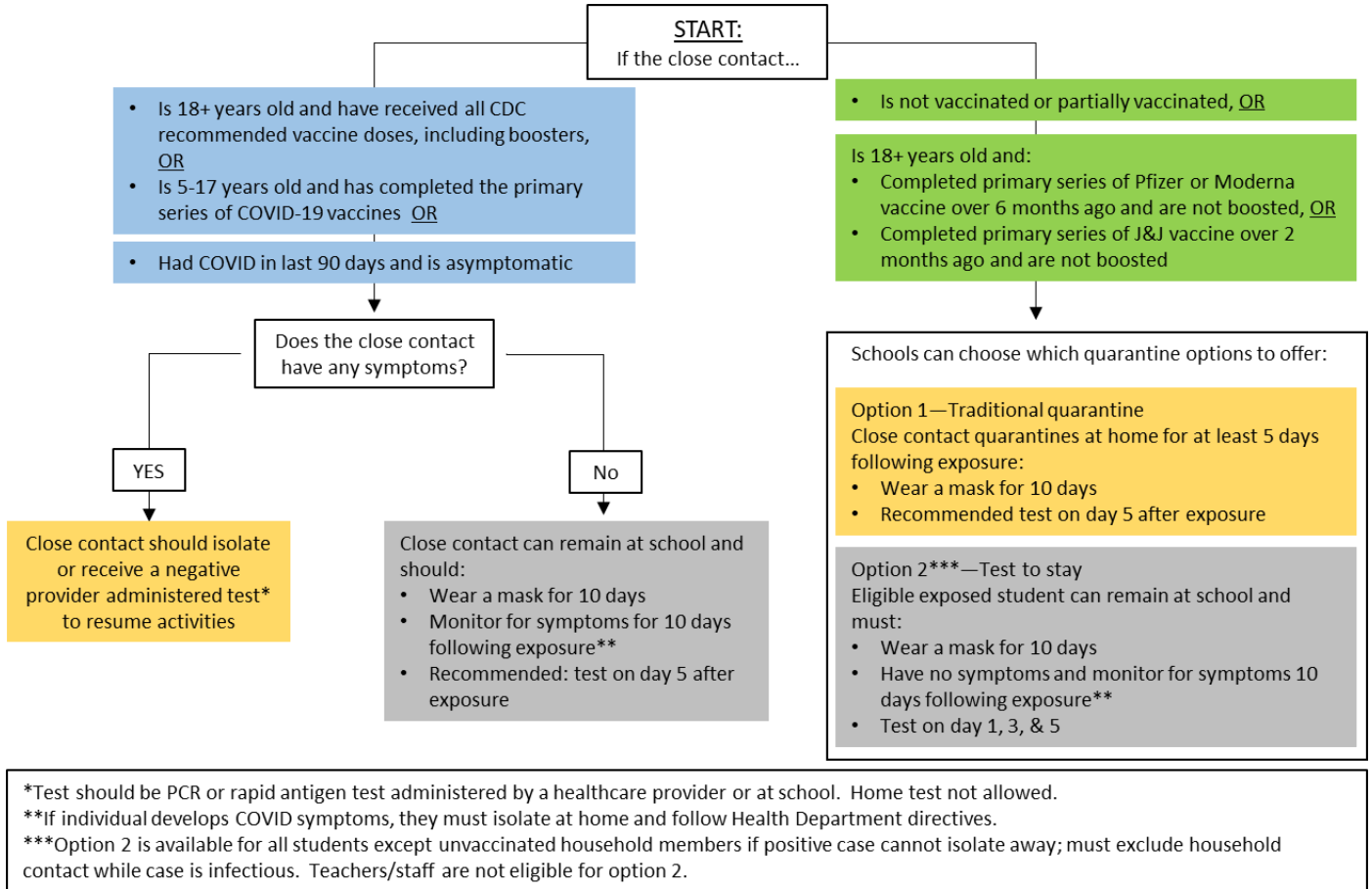
Here is a general overview of guidance for those in the K-12 community with universal masking in place who were potentially exposed to someone with COVID-19. Guidance for close contacts depends on exposure setting, vaccination status, and how far away the individual was from a positive case. For a person with a medical mask waiver, follow the pathway for schools with no masking requirements.

- If exposed in a lower-risk school setting no contact tracing is required. This includes most in-school contacts, including classrooms, buses, and most extra-curricular activities. Send a general notification letter to the class or school that individuals should closely monitor symptoms for 10 days; they do not need to follow the guidance on the chart below. No additional contact tracing required. If it is not specified below, it can generally be considered a lower risk setting.
- If exposed in a higher-risk school setting (see list below): complete contact tracing and follow the guidance on the chart on the next page for close contacts. If you have questions about higher-risk settings, please reach out to GCHD.
 - High-risk extracurriculars (e.g., basketball, ice hockey, wrestling; unmasked theater, band, and choir): follow the guidance on the chart below.
 - Classes or school events where masks are not/cannot be worn, e.g., lunch or classes where students with disabilities cannot be masked if within 6 feet for 15 total minutes or more in a 24-hour period, follow the guidance on the chart below.
 - Household contacts of a positive case: follow the guidance on the chart below.
 - Outbreaks: if part of outbreak class/group, follow the guidance on the chart below.
 - When a teacher has been in school for several days while infectious: if less than 6 feet apart for 15 total minutes or more in a 24-hour period, follow the guidance on the chart below.



For High-Risk Exposures Only, You Need to Do Contact Tracing

Follow the Flow Chart to Identify Next Steps



Yellow means stay home Grey means remain at school

Note: For testing on days 1, 3, & 5, days of testing may vary. For example, if day 3 falls on a Saturday, testing would only occur days 1, 5, and 6. If day 3 falls on Sunday, the student would be tested days 1, 4, and 5. If day 5 falls on a weekend or holiday, the student must be tested on the first day back, even if day 7. Students must obtain three negative tests within in the seven days following exposure.



GENESEE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Quarantine Notes

- Additional steps for each situation may need to be discussed with Health Department staff. In all situations, Health Department guidance may change according to the specific circumstances or when necessary to control a large or ongoing outbreak.
- Staff are only eligible for 5-day quarantine and are not eligible for test to stay.
- Individuals doing test to stay, and during days 6-10, can participate in all activities, including sports and aftercare, and must mask at all times except while eating. In situations where it is unsafe to wear a mask or a mask cannot be worn during active participation (e.g., swimming, wrestling, band), that student cannot participate in that activity until day 11.
- Schools can choose to treat a “lower risk” situation using “higher risk” guidelines based on their own judgment. Schools cannot choose to treat a “higher risk” situation using “lower risk” guidelines. Schools that are unsure how to proceed should reach out to GCHD.
- Outside of a school setting, close contacts are anyone who was within 6 feet of a positive case for a total of 15 minutes or more in a 24-hour period. Positive cases should notify their non-school close contacts.
- Individuals should continue to limit unnecessary activities and closely monitor for symptoms for a full 10 days after an exposure, being particularly mindful around those who may be immunocompromised, whether by age or a medical condition.
- Unvaccinated household contacts that are able to isolate away from their positive household member during that persons infectious period (10 days) are able to return to school immediately, if asymptomatic, and test on days 1, 3, and 5 after last exposure. Unvaccinated household contacts that are not able to isolate away from their positive household member during that persons infectious period must be excluded while the case is infectious, and can return to school (if asymptomatic) on day 11, and test on days 11, 13, and 15 and wear a mask for 10 days.



Close contact guidance for the K-12 community (when to quarantine or isolate): Without Universal Masking

The guidance below applies to all members of the K-12 community (students, staff, teachers, etc.) regardless of where an exposure took place. See “quarantine notes” on [page 11](#) for important clarifications. This guidance also applies to staff and students in a universal-masking school who have medical mask waivers.

Quarantine Decision Making for Students and School Staff

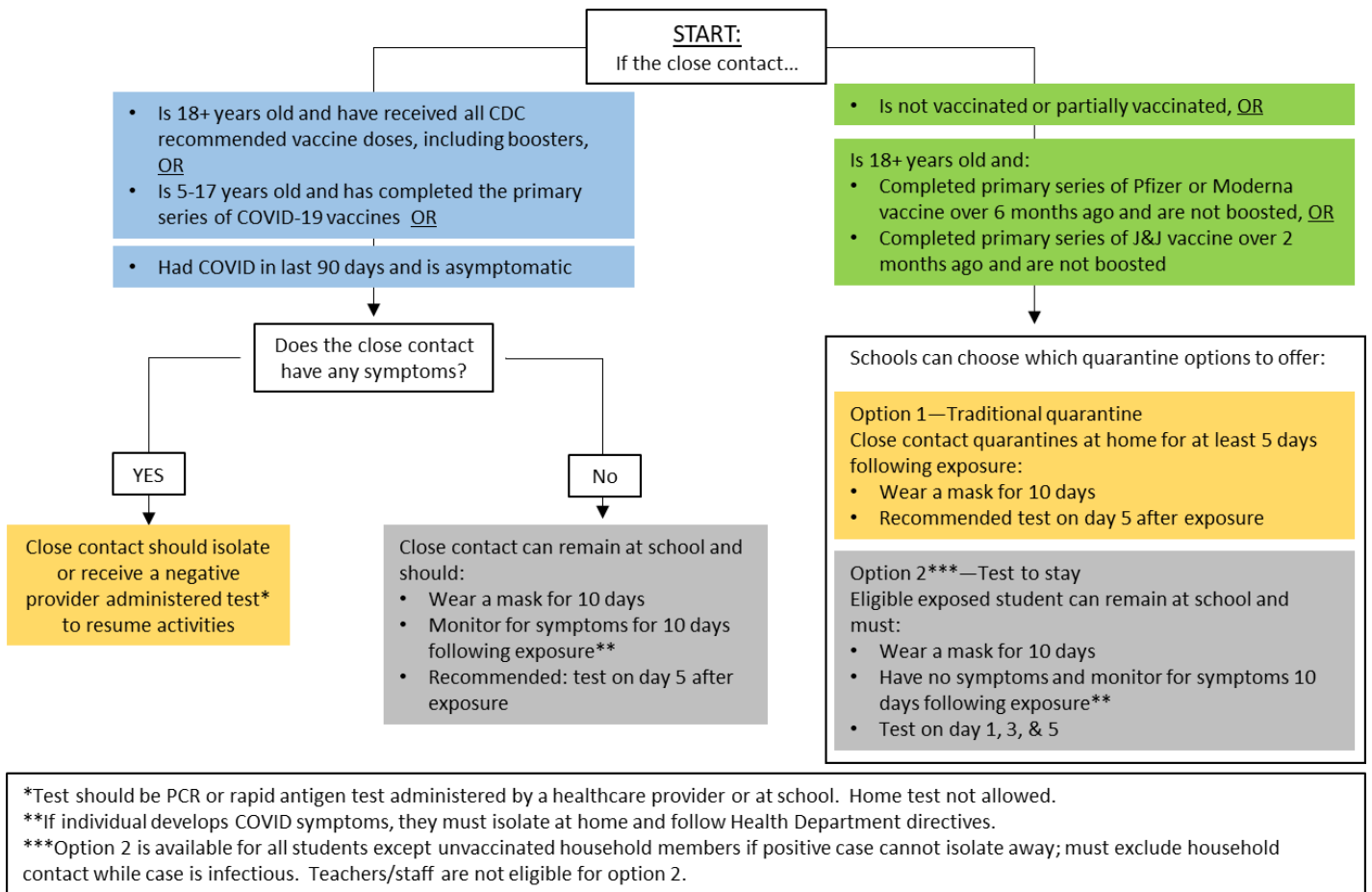
Here is a general overview of guidance for those in the K-12 community without universal masking in place when potentially exposed to someone with COVID-19. Guidance for close contacts depends on exposure setting, vaccination status, and how far away the individual was from a positive case.

- A close contact is defined as:
 - A masked student (or staff member) and unmasked student (or staff member) within 6 feet of each other for 15 minutes or more over the course of a 24-hour period in a classroom setting
 - Two unmasked students (or staff member) within 6 feet of each other for 15 minutes or more over the course of a 24-hour period in a classroom setting
 - Two masked students (or staff member) are not considered close contacts to each other in a classroom setting
 - Household contacts of a positive case: follow the guidance on the chart below.
 - When an unmasked teacher tests positive and was in school for a full day during their infectious period, the entire class is considered exposed. Children who are fully vaccinated are not considered a close contact.



GENESEE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Follow the Flow Chart to Identify Next Steps



Yellow means stay home

Grey means remain at school

Note: For testing on days 1, 3, & 5, days of testing may vary. For example, if day 3 falls on a Saturday, testing would only occur days 1, 5, and 6. If day 3 falls on Sunday, the student would be tested days 1, 4, and 5. If day 5 falls on a weekend or holiday, the student must be tested on the first day back, even if day 7. Students must obtain three negative tests within in the seven days following exposure.

Note: Both options 1 and 2 above require that an exposed student wear a mask in school for the 10 days after their exposure. If a student is unable/unwilling to wear a mask for the 10 days after exposure, they must quarantine at home for 10 days.



GENESEE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Quarantine Notes

- Additional steps for each situation may need to be discussed with Health Department staff. In all situations, Health Department guidance may change according to the specific circumstances or when necessary to control a large or ongoing outbreak.
- Staff are only eligible for 5-day quarantine and are not eligible for test to stay.
- Individuals doing test to stay, and during days 6-10, can participate in all activities, including sports and aftercare, and must mask at all times except while eating or unless it is unsafe (e.g., swimming). If a mask cannot be worn in a particular activity, that student cannot participate in that activity until day 11.
- Outside of a school setting, close contacts are anyone who was within 6 feet of a positive case for a total of 15 minutes or more in a 24-hour period. Positive cases should notify their non-school close contacts.
- Individuals should continue to limit unnecessary activities and closely monitor for symptoms for a full 10 days after an exposure, being particularly mindful around those who may be immunocompromised, whether by age or a medical condition.
- Unvaccinated household contacts that are able to isolate away from their positive household member during that persons infectious period (10 days) are able to return to school immediately, if asymptomatic, and test on days 1, 3, and 5 after last exposure. Unvaccinated household contacts that are not able to isolate away from their positive household member during that persons infectious period must be excluded while the case is infectious, and can return to school (if asymptomatic) on day 11, and test on days 11, 13, and 15 and wear a mask for 10 days.



Which test can be used? (Regardless of School Masking Policy)

In almost all circumstances, rapid antigen tests and PCR tests are both acceptable options for testing.

You can use rapid antigen tests on symptomatic or asymptomatic individuals.

Some situations may specifically require a PCR test. A PCR test is needed when:

- Confirming a positive rapid antigen test result for someone who is asymptomatic if confirmation is necessary.
- Confirming a negative rapid antigen test result for someone who is symptomatic.
- In this situation, another option is to have a medical evaluation to identify a different diagnosis other than COVID-19. The different diagnosis would either need a laboratory confirmation of that diagnosis, or a clinical diagnosis with a negative COVID-19 test.

Some situations may specifically require a rapid antigen test. A rapid antigen test is needed when:

- Confirming that someone is no longer contagious on day 5 of isolation or later after having COVID. A PCR should not be used for 90 days after a COVID-19 diagnosis.

Additional testing notes:

- Some situations require provider-administered tests. This means a test given by a health care provider or at school. At-home tests are not acceptable in these situations.
- Most at-home rapid antigen test results are not reported to the Michigan Disease Surveillance System (MDSS) except for certain at-home tests that include an app. To ensure that tests are appropriately captured, schools should report any positive at-home antigen test results to the Health Department.

COVID-19 Vaccination

GCHD recommends all eligible individuals get vaccinated against COVID-19.

All eligible individuals who have had COVID previously should still get vaccinated and boosted. They just need to wait until their isolation is complete – in most cases, they do not need to wait 90 days to get vaccinated.

Find a GCHD vaccine clinic near you by visiting <https://www.gchd.us/vaccinescheduler/> or by calling us at 810-344-4800. See even more COVID-19 vaccine options by visiting <https://www.vaccines.gov/search/>.

Resources and Notes

- [Michigan MI Safe Start Map \(mistartmap.info\)](https://michigan.gov/mistartmap)
- [MDHHS K-12 School Opening Guidance \(michigan.gov/coronavirus\)](https://michigan.gov/coronavirus)
- [GCHD COVID-19 General Webpage \(gchd.us\)](https://www.gchd.us)
- [CDC Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools \(cdc.gov\)](https://www.cdc.gov)



Appendix

How to Count After Testing Positive						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Day-2 Contagious period starts	Day-1	Day 0 You get a positive test result or start having COVID symptoms. Start isolation.	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
Day 5 If no symptoms or symptoms are resolving, this could be the last day of isolation*.	Day 6 If no symptoms or symptoms are resolving, done with isolation**.	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10	Day 11 Kids age 0-4 can return

*GCHD recommendation: take a rapid antigen test on this day to determine next steps
 **Continue to wear a well-fitting mask when around others (including household members) until day 11. If you cannot wear a mask, continue to isolate until Day 11.