

Protocols for School Students in K-12 School Settings

Riverside University Health System – Public Health

Riverside University Health System – Public Health (RUHS-PH) protocol aligns with California Department of Public Health (CDPH) School Guidance and CDPH Isolation Guidance. For more information on K-12 School Guidance, please refer to [K-12 Guidance 2023–24 School Year \(ca.gov\)](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/2023-24-School-Year-Guidance.aspx).

MASKING:

CDPH strongly recommends that all persons (e.g., students and staff) wear masks in K-12 indoor settings, with consideration of exemptions per [When and Why to Wear a Mask \(ca.gov\)](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/2023-24-School-Year-Guidance.aspx#masking).

- Schools/districts should consider policies that support students who choose to wear a mask, promote awareness, and support campaigns to prevent any possible bullying from masking choice.
- Schools/districts should consider policies for medically fragile staff and students, and the health services offices where students are served day to day.



TESTING:

CDPH has funded school testing programs and subject matter experts available to support decision making, including free testing resources to support testing programs (software, test kits, shipping, testing, etc.).

- Resources for schools interested in testing include: California's Testing Task Force [School Testing for COVID-19 \(ca.gov\)](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/2023-24-School-Year-Guidance.aspx#testing). The Safe School for All Technical Assistance [Email](#); and the [Operational Guidance for K-12 Schools and Early Care and Education Programs to Support Safe In-Person Learning | CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2022/s0929-covid-19-schools.html) which is specific to K-12 schools and early care and education programs.

CASE REPORTING, CONTACT TRACING AND INVESTIGATION:

- Riverside County will continue with the requirement for individual case reporting to ensure continued compliance with Title 17. K-12 schools should refer to California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 17, [§2500](#) and [§2508](#) for reporting requirements.
 *Note that 17 CCR §2500 has been temporarily modified by the [Order of the State Public Health Officer: Revision of Mandatory Reporting of Covid-19 Results by Health Care Providers](#). This order applies to health care providers and laboratories only.
- Schools are encouraged to have a COVID-19 liaison to assist RUHS-PH with activities related to COVID-19.

Additional restrictions may apply during an outbreak or during an increase of local cases.
Please Note: Schools may choose to be more restrictive than the County and the State.

POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST – SYMPTOMATIC

- Positive student to remain in isolation until have not had a fever for 24 hours without using fever reducing medication AND other [COVID-19 symptoms](#) are mild and improving. Student should consider isolating for additional days in order to reduce risk of exposures, in line with the potential infectious period.
- Students should wear a well-fitting mask when sharing indoor airspace for a total of 10 days when around others.
 - Students should avoid contact with people at [higher-risk](#) for severe COVID-19 for 10 days.
- If you have symptoms, particularly if you are at [higher risk for severe COVID-19](#), speak with a healthcare provider as soon as you test positive.

POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST - ASYMPTOMATIC

Asymptomatic persons who test positive for COVID-19 can still spread disease to others.

- Isolation is not required for asymptomatic COVID-19 positive cases; however, testing positive is a marker of contagiousness and student should consider isolation in order to reduce risk of exposures, in line with the potential infectious period
- Students should wear a well-fitting mask when sharing indoor airspace for a total of 10 days when around others. For more information, please refer to [Isolation Q&A \(ca.gov\)](#).
- Students should avoid contact with people at [higher-risk](#) for severe COVID-19 for 10 days.

EXPOSED

- If you have new COVID-19 symptoms, it is recommended to test and mask immediately.
- If you do not have symptoms and are at higher risk of severe COVID-19 infection and would benefit from [treatment](#), you should test within 5 days.
- If you do not have symptoms and have contact with people who are at higher risk for severe infection, you should mask indoors when around such people for 10 days. Consider testing within 5 days after the last exposure date (Day 0) and before contact with higher-risk people.

For further details on testing, see [CDPH COVID-19 testing guidance](#).

DEFINITIONS

Positive Case: a person who has tested positive for COVID-19.

Potential infectious period: The potential infectious period is 2 days before the date of symptoms began or the positive test date (if no symptoms) through Day 10. (Day 0 is the symptom onset date or positive test date).

For more information please refer to: [Public Health Order Questions & Answers: COVID-19 Disease Control and Prevention \(ca.gov\)](#)

Some individuals who are immunocompromised may continue to be able to spread disease longer, for as long as 20 days or longer. For more information, please refer to [People Who Are Immunocompromised | CDC](#).

Exclusion period: Remain in isolation until you have not had a fever for 24 hours without using fever reducing medication AND other [COVID-19 symptoms](#) are mild and improving.

Close Contact: In indoor spaces 400,000 or fewer cubic feet per floor (such as classroom, gymnasium etc.), a close contact is defined as sharing the same indoor airspace for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (for example, three separate 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes) during an infected person's infectious period.

In large indoor spaces greater than 400,000 cubic feet per floor (such as open-floor-plan offices), a close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of the infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period during the infected person's infectious period.

Exposed: an individual that has had close contact with a Positive Case.

Asymptomatic: means there are no symptoms.

Symptomatic: means showing symptoms, or it may concern a specific symptom.

Isolation: Isolation means to separate those infected with a contagious disease from people who are not infected.

Acceptable Testing for Schools: this includes Antigen diagnostic tests* and PCR diagnostic tests.

* Antigen Test Preferred

MORE INFORMATION

- State of California Safe Schools for All Hub: [CA Covid-19 School Readiness Hub](#)
- CDPH COVID-19 Isolation Guidance [COVID-19 Isolation Guidance \(ca.gov\)](#)
- CDPH Masking Communications Toolkit: [When and Why to Wear a Mask \(ca.gov\)](#)
- CDPH SMARTER Plan: [California SMARTER](#)
- Riverside County COVID-19 Treatment Options: [Covid-19 Treatment Options | Riverside University Health System \(ruhealth.org\)](#)
- CDPH Considerations when a Child has Symptoms of Illness in Child Care or School: [Considerations when a Child has Symptoms of Illness in Child Care or School](#)