



COVID-19 School Health Policy

Developed collaboratively with labor unions, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), and NYC Test + Trace Corp (T2), this policy provides guidance for schools regarding:

- Thresholds for school opening and closure during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Staying healthy while at school
- Daily health screenings for students and school-based staff
- Temperature screenings
- Isolation Rooms
- What to do if a student or staff member shows signs of COVID-19 while at school
- Outreach to the Situation Room

Thresholds for School Opening and Closure During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The health and safety of students and staff are of the utmost priority when considering opening schools for in-person instruction. The New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) has worked closely with DOHMH to determine thresholds for opening and, if necessary, closing schools as a result of an increase in positive cases within school communities.

Thresholds and triggers for opening and closing are subject to change, with guidance from the DOHMH, New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In order to continuously monitor levels of COVID-19 positivity rates in school communities, the DOE currently conducts mandatory in-school testing on a weekly basis for a random selection of in-person staff and students in all school buildings that are open for in-person instruction. Students in grades 3K, PreK, and Kindergarten are excluded from random testing. More information on random COVID-19 testing at schools can be found [here](#).

Staying Healthy While at School

In partnership with the DOHMH, the NYCDOE has established comprehensive health and safety protocols and is emphasizing the core four measures for students and staff:

- Maintaining a distance of at least 6 feet from other adults, and from students when feasible;
- Washing and sanitizing hands regularly;
- Wearing a face covering;
- Staying home when sick, after being in close contact with a person with COVID-19, or if someone in your household is exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms.

Physical distancing guidelines and mandatory use of face coverings must be enforced for all individuals while on school property. [A face covering](#) is any well-secured cloth or disposable mask that covers a person's nose and mouth. A face covering with an exhalation valve or vent cannot be used on school property as exhalation valves allow unfiltered exhaled air to escape to others.

Face shields are not appropriate substitutes for face coverings. Please see [Guidance Regarding Use of Face Coverings for Students Participating in Blended Learning](#) for more information.

Daily Health Screenings

Students and school-based staff cannot report to school based on the results of the following questions in the NYCDOE's daily health screener:

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 lab-confirmed negative result from a COVID-19 diagnostic test (not a blood test) since the onset of symptoms AND have not had symptoms for at least 24 hours. Go to the next question.
 - Yes, and I am not in the category above. No further screening is needed. The employee/guest may not enter the building.
2. In the past 10 days, have you gotten a lab-confirmed positive result from a COVID-19 diagnostic test (not a blood test) that was your first positive result OR was AFTER 90 days from your previous diagnosis date?¹ 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 employee/guest may not enter the building.
3. Are you considered fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by CDC guidelines OR were you recently (within the past three months) diagnosed with COVID-19 and finished isolation in the past 90 days² AND you have not traveled internationally in the past 10 days? 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.³

¹ The 90 day count should start from your symptom onset date or, if you had no symptoms, the 90 days should start from your positive test date.

² The 90 day count should start from your symptom onset date or, if you had no symptoms, the 90 days should start from your positive test date.

³ Until CDC has additional data from vaccine trials, NYS DOH has stated that anyone who has been fully vaccinated will have up to 90 days where they would be exempt from quarantine if exposed or traveled domestically. This 90 day cap may be extended as more vaccine trial data becomes available.

- No, I am not considered fully vaccinated. Go to the next question.
 - No, I am considered fully vaccinated or was diagnosed with COVID-19 in past 90 days BUT I have traveled internationally in the past 10 days. The employee/guest can skip question 4 and must answer question 5.
 - Yes. The employee/guest does not need to answer questions 4 and 5 and may enter the building.
4. To the best of your knowledge, in the past 10 days, have you been in close contact (within 6 feet for at least 10 minutes over a 24 hour period) with anyone who is currently diagnosed with COVID-19 or who has been told they have symptoms of COVID-19? Clinical staff who were in appropriate PPE are not considered close contacts in these scenarios.
- No. Go to the next question.
 - Yes. No further screening is needed. The employee/guest may not enter the building.
5. In the past 10 days, have you returned from an international destination?
- No. The employee/guest may enter the building.
 - Yes, and I have completed a 7-day quarantine and took a COVID-19 test 3 to 5 days after my arrival in New York and got a negative result OR I have completed a 10-day quarantine. The employee/guest may enter the building.
 - Yes, and I am not in the category above. The employee/guest may not enter the building.

To ensure that staff and students do not report to school if they have or potentially may have COVID-19 or are feeling ill, a health screening, including a temperature check, must be completed by all students, staff, and visitors before entering NYCDOE school facilities. Oral thermometers have been provided to all students' families who have opted into in-person learning; see "Temperature Screenings" for details. This screening should be completed at home and must be completed each day. School-based staff, students, and visitors can complete the health screening in the following ways:

Online Health Screening Tool:

- NYCDOE families/students are encouraged to use [the online health screening tool](#) to pre-screen themselves before entering a NYCDOE building.
 - Upon entering the school facility, families/students will be asked to provide the results of their screening either by showing the email on their smartphone or a printout of the results. Families should support students as needed with this online screening questionnaire and should ensure students have proper documentation for morning entry.

- For students who travel via [school bus](#), families must complete the screening, including checking their child's temperature prior to boarding a school bus to make certain that their child is well enough to ride on the bus and attend school. Bus personnel will not be conducting screenings of children prior to boarding the bus. School site designated staff will be checking for completion of student health screening at 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 our younger students.
- NYCDOE employees are strongly encouraged to use the online tool to pre-screen themselves before entering a NYCDOE building. Upon entering the facility, staff will be asked to provide the results of the screening either by showing the email on their phones or a printout of the results.
 - The screening results for school-based staff are valid until midnight of the same day.
 - School-based staff must show clearance every time they reenter a NYCDOE building.
- The online health screening application can be found at <https://healthscreening.schools.nyc>.

Paper Copy of Health Screening Questionnaire:

- If students are not able to pre-screen using the online tool, schools must provide families with several copies of the health screening questionnaire so families can complete the questionnaire at home.
- If staff are not able to pre-screen using the online tool, staff should print and complete the health screening questionnaire for completion on a daily basis at home.
- A printable version of the health screening questionnaire can be found at https://healthscreening.schools.nyc/docs/DOE_Health_Screening_Questionnaire_04_01_21.pdf.
 - Translated versions are available at the following links: [Arabic](#), [Bengali](#), [Chinese](#), [French](#), [Haitian Creole](#), [Korean](#), [Russian](#), [Spanish](#), and [Urdu](#).

In-Person Health Screening at School:

- **Any person who needs to complete the health screening in-person will undergo a temperature check.**
- If NYCDOE families are unable to pre-screen their child(ren) at home using either the online tool or paper questionnaire, families will need to complete their child's screening in-person at the school building prior to their child's entry.
 - Any student who needs to complete the health screening in-person will undergo a temperature check.

- 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. Young children may require additional support from a staff member.
- If NYCDOE employees are not able to pre-screen themselves prior to coming to work, they will be required to complete an in-person screening assessment prior to entering the building.
 - Any staff member who needs to complete the health screening in person will undergo a temperature check.
 - The screening results for school-based staff are valid until midnight of the same day.
 - School-based staff must show clearance every time they reenter a NYCDOE building.
 - The paper version of the health screening form can be found at https://healthscreening.schools.nyc/docs/DOE_Health_Screening_Questionnaire_04_01_21.pdf.

Supporting Younger Students and District 75 Students with In-Person Health Screenings

For younger students who arrive at school without a completed questionnaire and are unable to respond to the health screening questions, the school should make an effort to contact a family member for support with screening. However, if a parent/guardian is unable to be contacted, the school should check the student's temperature to ensure that it is below 100.0 degrees F and ask the student about their well-being (e.g., "How are you feeling today?").

For District 75 students who arrive at school without a completed questionnaire, the school should make an effort to contact a family member for support with screening. If it is not feasible to contact the student's family member prior to the student's entry, the school should check the student's temperature to ensure that it is below 100.0 degrees F and ask the student about their well-being (e.g., "How are you feeling today?"). In District 75 schools, temperature check alone prior to entry is acceptable if a student is not developmentally able to answer questions regarding their well-being. 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 screener as well as remind the family that the screening must be conducted at home before the student leaves for school.

Student Pick Up

If a student fails a health screening or shows symptoms of COVID-19, the guardian of the student must be immediately contacted and advised to pick up the child. The student must be taken to the appropriate room, as listed in this policy, to wait for the guardian to arrive. If the guardian cannot be reached, the school must contact the emergency contacts on the student's Blue Card. Failure of the guardian or emergency contact to pick up the student in a timely manner does not warrant

a report to the New York State Central Registry (SCR), unless accompanied by additional concerns or suspicions regarding the student's safety which would require that a report be made in accordance with [Chancellor's Regulation A-750](#).

Failing a Health Screening: Students

Any student who fails their health screening (i.e., answers yes to any of the questions below) should be escorted to a designated room per the guidance below and must be picked up by a family member, or, for students who are dropped off, sent home with a family member prior to entering the building, if possible.

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?

- The student should be escorted to the Isolation Room for family pick up.
- Students in the Isolation Room must wear a face covering and sit six feet away from other students and staff members.
- Family should seek medical attention.
- Principal calls the Situation Room at 212-393-2780.
- Student must immediately isolate for 10 days.

In the past 10 days, have you gotten a lab-confirmed positive result from a COVID-19 diagnostic test (not a blood test) that was your first positive result OR was AFTER 90 days from your previous diagnosis date?

- The student should be escorted to the Isolation Room for family pick up.
- Students in the Isolation Room must wear a face covering and sit six feet away from other students and staff members.
- Family should seek medical attention.
- Principal calls the Situation Room at 212-393-2780.
- Student must immediately isolate for 10 days.

To the best of your knowledge, in the past 10 days, have you been in close contact (within 6 feet for at least 10 minutes over a 24 hour period) with anyone who is currently diagnosed with COVID-19 or who has been told they have symptoms of COVID-19?

- If the student is exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms, the student should be escorted to the Isolation Room for family pick up.
- If the student is not exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms, the student should be escorted to the non-instructional space or room [used for students who attend in-person school on the incorrect day](#). The student should be picked up by family.
- Students in both rooms must wear a face covering and sit six feet away from other students and staff members.
- Family should seek medical attention as needed.
- Principal calls the Situation Room at 212-393-2780.

- Students must quarantine for 10 days from last exposure if deemed a close contact with anyone who tested positive for COVID-19.

In the past 10 days, have you returned from an international destination?

- If the student is exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms, the student should be escorted to the Isolation Room for family pick up.
- If the student is not exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms, the student should be escorted to the non-instructional space or room [used for students who attend in-person school on the incorrect day](#). The student should be picked up by family.
- Students in both rooms must wear a face covering and sit six feet away from other students and staff members.
- The student must follow the [New York State Travel Advisory requirements](#), including getting a COVID-19 test, before being able to return to school.

Failing a Health Screening: School-Based Staff

Any employee who fails their health screening will be refused entry to the building by the School Safety Agent/NYCDOE Safety Officer. Please see [Personnel Memorandum No. 2](#) for further information about excused leaves for employees for COVID-related reasons.

Operationalizing Health Screenings

Principals must have procedures in place to ensure that everyone who enters the building each day has passed the health screening at home or prior to entry to the school building. Any person who needs to complete the health screening in-person will undergo a temperature check. As per NYS Education Department (NYSED) [guidance](#), schools should have a designated staff person to review the incoming reports of screening by staff and parent/guardian and to attest that they are completed.

To operationalize this guidance please note the following:

- Per [NYSDOH](#), schools are prohibited from keeping records of student, faculty, staff, and visitor health data (e.g., the specific temperature data of an individual), but are permitted to maintain records that confirm individuals were screened and the result of such screening (e.g., pass/fail, cleared/not cleared).
- Any questionnaires that are collected for purposes of completing the daily screening attestation requirement must be immediately shredded to protect student, faculty, staff, and visitor health data.

Temperature Screenings

Temperature Checks for In-Person Health Screenings



Anyone needing to complete a health screening in-person at a school must undergo a temperature check.

Random Temperature Checks

As an added precaution in addition to at-home daily health screenings, schools will be instituting random temperature checks upon entry using [hand-held non-touch thermometers](#) and [wall-mounted thermometers](#).

Taking Temperatures At School

Designated school staff, with the assistance of School Safety Agents, will be checking the temperatures of any students, staff, and visitors entering in the building who need to complete an in-person health screening, as well as checking temperatures at random.

- Face coverings and gloves must be worn by designated staff taking temperature
- Any student presenting with a temperature of 100.0 degrees F or higher from a temperature check must be assessed by the nurse or health professional in the Isolation Room. The student must stay in the building's Isolation Room until picked up and the principal should call the Situation Room at 212-393-2780.
- School-based staff members with a temperature of 100.0 degrees F or higher will be directed to leave the building. The school should advise the staff member to visit a doctor and get tested for COVID-19. The principal should call the Situation Room 212-393-2780.
- NYCDOE-contracted Community Based Organizations providing early childhood services must continue to conduct daily health checks and align with NYCDOE and DOHMH issued guidance that pertains to their program and setting.

Thermometers

In order to support with temperature screenings both at home and at school, the NYCDOE has provided all schools with the following:

- Oral thermometers for all students:
 - Oral thermometers should be backpacked home along with [this flyer](#) on the first day each student attends school in-person. These thermometers will support families in taking their students' temperature and completing the health screening form prior to arriving at school.
- [Hand-held non-touch thermometers](#) and batteries:
 - These thermometers should be used for individuals who need to complete an onsite health screening as well as for random temperature checks as students and staff enter the building.
 - Non-touch hand-held thermometers are most accurate when used within two inches of a person's forehead and can be acceptably used within three inches.
 - The iHealth PT3 manual can be found [here](#).

- The Finicare IR200 instructions can be [viewed here](#).
- [Wall-mounted thermometers:](#)
 - These thermometers should be used for random temperature checks as students and staff enter the building.
 - These thermometers should be installed using double-sided tape and should be installed by main entrance(s) of the building.

Isolation Room

In order to accommodate a student who may exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, every building must designate space to be used as an Isolation Room. An Isolation Room is a place where a student with suspected COVID-19 symptoms can be safely isolated in the building until they are examined and can be picked up by a guardian. A building's Isolation Room must be large enough to house multiple students while maintaining physical distancing requirements of six feet. Each building must also designate a second space as a Back-Up Isolation Room, which can be used for other purposes until needed. Multiple students are permitted in the Isolation Room as long as they maintain physical distancing requirements of six feet and are wearing face coverings. Principals can view [this deck regarding Isolation Rooms](#).

Isolation Room Staffing

Each building will have an Isolation Room with at least one staff member assigned to supervise the Isolation Room when it is in use. The principal will designate this staff member. The principal (or principals, if on a campus) must provide additional staff to support the supervision of the Isolation Room. For a campus, this can be a shared responsibility during the day. Members of the Building Response Team (BRT) will assist in escorting, monitoring, supervising, and reporting related to the use of the Isolation Room. Please see additional guidance regarding [the Building Response Team during COVID-19](#).

Members of the BRT will support the Isolation Room and the staff member(s) assigned to supervise the Isolation Room. A BRT member (e.g. Incident Assessor or Special Needs Coordinator) is responsible for escorting the student to the Isolation Room. After a staff member contacts the guardian of the student in the Isolation Room, a BRT member (e.g. the Emergency Officer) will be responsible for meeting the guardian at the visitors' entrance where the student will be escorted to be released to the guardian. At the time of pick up, the school will advise the guardian to have the student seen by a doctor and [get tested for COVID-19](#).

The principal, BRT Leader and/or Recorder will ensure that the incident involving the ill student is:

- Reported to the Situation Room by calling 212-393-2780,
- Reported to the Emergency Information Center (EIC) by calling 718-935-3210,
- Documented in OORS.



When and How to Use the Isolation Room

When a student exhibits symptoms of COVID-19, including one or more the following symptoms:

- Fever of 100.0 degrees F or higher or chills,
- New cough,
- New loss of taste or smell,
- New shortness of breath,

BRT members will be activated as determined by the BRT Leader. The student must be escorted to the Isolation Room by a BRT member (e.g. Incident Assessor or Special Needs Coordinator) wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

When the ill student is placed in the Isolation Room, the building nurse will be contacted and will come to the Isolation Room and assess the student. For buildings with a School-Based Health Center, a Health Professional will be contacted to visit Isolation Room and conduct the student's health assessment in the Isolation Room.

The ill student must be assessed by the nurse/health professional in the Isolation Room. Should the nurse/health professional be unavailable at that moment to examine the student, the student must wait in the building's Isolation Room until assessment is complete. The student cannot be released to the guardian until the health assessment is completed.

When an ill student has been picked up and the Isolation Room is empty, the Isolation Room must be closed momentarily for a rapid deep cleaning with disinfectant, so the room may be opened again quickly. A deep cleaning of the Isolation Room must be performed at the end of the day.

The principal/BRT Leader/Recorder will ensure that the incident involving the ill student is:

- Reported to the Situation Room by calling 212-393-2780,
- Reported to the Emergency Information Center (EIC) by calling 718-935-3210,
- Documented in OORS.

Symptoms of COVID-19 While at School

Student Shows Symptoms of COVID-19 While at School

- A classroom teacher or school aide notifies the Main Office/Principal/BRT leader that a student is not well and experiencing one or more COVID-like symptoms, including:
 - Fever of 100.0 degrees F or higher or chills,
 - New cough,
 - New loss of taste or smell, and/or
 - New shortness of breath.
- The Building Response Team is activated.

- The student showing symptoms of COVID-19 will be escorted to the Isolation Room by a designated BRT member (Special Needs Coordinator or Incident Assessor) wearing appropriate PPE.
- The area/classroom where the student was showing symptoms must be cleaned as soon possible. A deep cleaning of the area/classroom must be performed at the end of the day.
- BRT Emergency Officer calls the student’s guardian for pick up.
 - When the ill student is placed in the Isolation Room, the building nurse will be contacted and will come to the Isolation Room and assess the student.
 - Should the nurse/health professional be unavailable at that moment to examine the student, the student must wait in the building’s Isolation Room until assessment is complete.
- The student cannot be released to the guardian until the health assessment is completed.
- Upon arrival of the student’s guardian, the BRT Emergency Officer escorts the student to the visitors’ entrance for pick-up by the guardian, reviews the NYCDOE’s “Sent Home With Symptoms” letter with the guardian, and advises the student to visit a doctor and get tested for COVID-19, and [provides the information of the closest testing site](#).
- The BRT Emergency Officer confirms with the Command Post staff that the student and guardian have exited the building and all guidance has been provided.
- When the ill student has been picked up and the Isolation Room is empty, the Isolation Room must be closed momentarily for a rapid deep cleaning, so the room may be opened again quickly. A deep cleaning of the Isolation Room must be performed at the end of the day.
- The principal, BRT Leader and/or Recorder will ensure that the incident involving the ill student is:
 - Reported to the Situation Room by calling 212-393-2780,
 - Reported to the Emergency Information Center (EIC) by calling 718-935-3210,
 - And documented in OORS.
- The Situation Room will provide the principal with a letter to be disseminated to the school community regarding a student exhibiting COVID-like symptoms during the school day.
 - The school may use any communication platform available to disseminate the letter.
- The principal asks school designee (Parent Coordinator or nurse) to follow up with family on the ill student’s condition on regular intervals.
- The principal and/or designee shares any test results or updates with:
 - The Situation Room,
 - In EIC, and
 - In the OORS report.

School-Based Staff Member Shows Symptoms of COVID-19 While at School

- The ill staff member immediately notifies principal that they are not feeling well and are experiencing COVID-like symptoms.
- Symptoms of COVID-19 include:
 - Fever of 100.0 degrees F or higher or chills,
 - New cough,
 - New loss of taste or smell and/or,
 - New shortness of breath.
- If the staff member was vaccinated against COVID-19 within the past three days, the staff member may be experiencing post-vaccine symptoms which include fatigue, fever, headache, and/or chills. The staff member should go home and can return to work after being fever-free for at least 24 hours.
- If the staff member was not vaccinated against COVID-19 in the past three days, the principal will alert the BRT for awareness and potential support, including temporary coverage of a class, and nurse, if necessary.
- The school will advise the staff member to get tested as soon as possible, if the person is not considered fully vaccinated.
- The staff member goes home.
 - If the staff member does not immediately leave the building and needs to wait for transportation assistance, the staff member may report to the Isolation Room.
 - Any staff member with special health concerns are managed by the BRT Special Needs Coordinator.
- The area/classroom where the staff member was showing symptoms must be cleaned as soon possible. A deep cleaning of the area/classroom must be performed at the end of the day.
- The principal, BRT Leader and/or Recorder will ensure that the incident involving the ill staff member is:
 - Reported to the Situation Room by calling 212-393-2780,
 - Reported to the Emergency Information Center (EIC) by calling 718-935-3210,
 - And documented in OORS.
- The Situation Room will provide the principal with a letter to be disseminated to the school community regarding an unvaccinated staff member having exhibited COVID-like symptoms during the school day.
- The school may use any communication platform available to disseminate the letter.
- The principal and/or designee will follow up with the ill staff member and share any test results or updates with:
 - The Situation Room,

- In EIC, and
- In the OORS report.

Student or School-Based Staff Member Calls Out Sick With COVID-Like Symptoms Or Because Someone In Their Household Is Sick With COVID-Like Symptoms

Should a student or staff member call out sick because they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, the principal must call the Situation Room at 212-393-2780 and await next steps. Individuals who were vaccinated against COVID-19 within the past three days may experience post-vaccine symptoms which include fatigue, fever, headache, and/or chills. The staff member should stay home and can return to work after being fever-free for at least 24 hours.

Criteria for Returning to School After Showing Symptoms

Any individual (student or staff member) showing signs of COVID-19 can only return to school when all the following conditions are met:

- Received a positive COVID-19 test AND
- Isolated for 10 days AND
- The individual has been fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication and overall symptoms are improving.

OR

- Received a negative COVID-19 test since the onset of symptoms (the negative result must have been from a test that tested saliva or used a nose or throat swab, not a blood test) AND
- The individual has been fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication and overall symptoms are improving.

OR

- Never got a COVID-19 test AND
- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms started AND
- The individual has been fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication and overall symptoms are improving.

OR

- Was vaccinated against COVID-19 within the past three days AND
- The individual has been fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication.

If DOHMH or T2 determine the individual is considered a close contact of a positive case, the individual can return to school after 10 days of quarantine without symptoms. The individual must continue daily symptom monitoring through Day 14 and remain symptom free without non-pharmaceutical interventions. Should the individual develop symptoms, the individual must not attend school.



As per the CDC, vaccinated individuals who meet the all of the criteria below are not required to quarantine following an exposure to someone with COVID-19:

- Are fully vaccinated (i.e. more than two weeks following receipt of the second dose in a two-dose series, or more than 2 weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine) AND
- Have remained asymptomatic since the current COVID-19 exposure AND
- Are within 3 months following receipt of the last dose in the series.
 - Until CDC has additional data from vaccine trials, NYS DOH has stated that anyone who has been fully vaccinated will have up to 90 days where they would be exempt from quarantine if exposed or if they traveled domestically. This 90 day cap may be extended as more vaccine trial data becomes available.

Please note that fully vaccinated individuals who are considered close contacts should still be included in the Close Contacts spreadsheet shared by the Situation Room. For more information, please see “Guidance for Vaccinated Close Contacts in Situation Room Cases,” below.

Students in quarantine should participate in remote learning as possible. Staff in quarantine should discuss with their principals whether they are able to work remotely and may be eligible for excused leave if they are unable to work remotely.

Positive COVID-19 Case in School

COVID Response Situation Room

The NYCDOE, T2, DOHMH, and Department of Buildings have collaborated to create the COVID Response Situation Room (the Situation Room). This multi-agency partnership has been developed to support a swift, organized response to COVID-19 cases among students and staff in schools during the 2020-21 school year. The Situation Room will facilitate a multi-agency response to any COVID-19 related incidents at all NYCDOE schools, ensuring that the appropriate interventions take place while effectively and quickly communicating updates to school communities. The Situation Room is a “one-stop shop” for handling COVID-19 cases in schools. It is designed to support principals by providing all essential assistance needed for a potential or confirmed COVID-19 case, including verifying cases, providing communications to be shared with school communities, initiating any investigation or contact tracing as needed, and advising schools on next steps.

Contacting the Situation Room: 212-393-2780

The Situation Room serves as a principal’s primary contact any time a COVID-19 related incident arises in a school involving students or staff, including but not limited to:

- A notice of a positive COVID-19 test result for a staff member or student
- A student or staff member reporting COVID-19 symptoms or sent home with COVID-19 symptoms.



A principal must always contact the Situation Room with alerts or questions related to COVID-19 incidents in a school. To report a COVID-19 incident, a principal must call 212-393-2780. The Situation Room's operating hours are:

- Monday through Friday: 7:00 am to 6:30 pm
- Sunday: 11:00 am to 5:30 pm
- For overnight hours, a principal should email rts@schools.nyc.gov which will be responded to once the Situation Room reopens the following day.

All cases called in will receive a response. Principals are the only staff who should call the Situation Room. Once a call is answered, principals will be asked [specific questions from this Intake Form](#) about the COVID-19 case or event in school, including information about the student or staff member, last known location in the school, and possible close contacts. Individuals who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 will not be considered close contacts and will not be subject to quarantine. The Situation Room will issue automatic notifications to alert other NYCDOE offices.

Guidance for Vaccinated Close Contacts in Situation Room Cases

As mentioned in [Principals Digest](#), vaccinated individuals who are considered close contacts should still be included in the Close Contacts spreadsheet shared by the Situation Room. Test and Trace Corp (T2) will contact the vaccinated individual and confirm vaccination status.

Fully vaccinated individuals who are exposed to COVID-19 and are not required to quarantine should still monitor for any [symptoms of COVID-19](#) for 14 days following exposure. If they experience symptoms, they should isolate themselves from others, be clinically evaluated for COVID-19, including getting tested, if indicated, and inform their healthcare provider of their vaccination status at the time of COVID-19 evaluation/clinical testing.

Self-Reported Positive Case (Unconfirmed Case) In a School

Any student or staff member who self-reports a COVID-19 case while at school will be asked to leave the school, or in the case of a student, a guardian will be called to pick up the student. If a self-reported COVID-19 case occurs after school hours, the principal should call the Situation Room at 212-393-2780 and await next steps (see below for self-reported tests with and without documentation.)

Self-Reported Positive Test With Documentation

- The principal calls the Situation Room at 212-393-2780 and reports the self-reported case.
- The principal submits the lab report, by email to the Situation Room at rts@buildings.nyc.gov and awaits next steps.
- The Situation Room staff will work to confirm the positive test; some case confirmations are able to happen immediately while others may take up to three hours to verify.

- For self-reported positive tests from non-NYC residents, the turnaround time will be longer.

Self-Reported Positive Test Without Documentation

- Principal calls the Situation Room at 212-393-2780 and the Situation Room will advise on next steps.
- Principal will notify the Situation Room upon receipt of any testing documentation.

Confirmed Cases in a School

One Confirmed Case

In the event of a confirmed case:

- The Situation Room will let the principal know of a confirmed case and to activate the COVID-19 protocols.
- The principal notifies BRT, Situation Room, superintendent, and any affected teacher(s).
 - Please see additional guidance regarding [the Building Response Team during COVID-19](#).
- Principal and Situation Room liaison will confirm classroom closures, communications, and timing.
 - The principal must isolate the affected classroom until dismissal; students cannot be sent home early.
 - The principal must include fully vaccinated individuals on the Situation Room's Close Contacts spreadsheet.
- Principal/designee will call the confirmed case in to the EIC.
- The BRT Leader notifies Borough Safety Director.
- The principal will receive letters from the Situation Room and will communicate to all families and students at school about the confirmed case:
 - Families of students who are considered close contacts of the confirmed case must receive a letter stating that their child has been in close contact with a COVID-19 positive individual; this letter gives clear direction to quarantine for 10 days;
 - Families of students who are not considered close contacts must receive a letter stating that there was a confirmed case of COVID-19 at the school but that their child is not considered a close contact and therefore there is no need to quarantine.
- Only affected classrooms will remain closed for 10 days; individuals who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 will not be required to quarantine.

- The Situation Room liaison will follow up with the principal should additional action be needed.

Two or Three Confirmed Cases in a School in Different Classrooms Within Seven Days

- The Situation Room will let the principal know of a confirmed case and to activate the COVID-19 protocols.
- The principal must follow all steps as outlined above under “One Confirmed Case.”
- Only affected classrooms will remain closed for 10 days; individuals who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 will not be required to quarantine.
- Random COVID-19 testing will be increased. On the next regularly scheduled weekly random testing day, 40% of the in-person staff and students at the school will be tested, including those staff who have been vaccinated.
- The Situation Room liaison will follow up with the principal should additional action be needed.

Four or More Confirmed Cases in a School in Different Classrooms Within Seven Days

- The Situation Room will let the principal know of a confirmed case and to activate the COVID-19 protocols.
- The principal must follow all steps as outlined above under “One Confirmed Case.”
- Affected classrooms will remain closed for 10 days; individuals who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 will not be required to quarantine.
- Random COVID-19 testing will be increased. On the next regularly scheduled weekly random testing day, 40% of the in-person staff and students at the school will be tested, including those staff who have been vaccinated.
- The four (or more) confirmed positive cases will trigger an investigation by DOHMH investigators who will interview cases and school administration to try and determine likely sources of infection for the cases. The school remains open during the investigation.
- If there are 4 or more confirmed positive cases in different classrooms within a school that can all be traced to a known exposure within the school, the school will close and all students will move to remote learning for 10 days.

T2 and DOHMH Actions for Confirmed Cases

Scenario	Action Taken
1 confirmed case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The classroom of the positive case remain closed and quarantined for 10 days • Students in the impacted classroom move to remote learning for 10 days • Additional school members are quarantined based on where the exposure was in the school • Individuals who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 will not be required to quarantine
2 or 3 confirmed cases in same classroom within 7 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The classroom of the positive cases remain closed and quarantined for 10 days • Students in the impacted classroom move to remote learning for 10 days • Additional school members are quarantined based on where the exposure was in the school • Individuals who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 will not be required to quarantine
2 or 3 confirmed cases in different classrooms within 7 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classrooms of each case remain closed and quarantined for 10 days • Students in the impacted classrooms move to remote learning for 10 days • Additional school members are quarantined based on where the exposure was in the school • Individuals who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 will not be required to quarantine • Weekly random COVID-19 testing is increased to 40% of the in-person school population, including vaccinated individuals
4 or more confirmed cases in fewer than 4 classrooms within 7 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The classroom of the positive cases remain closed and quarantined for 10 days • Students in the impacted classroom move to remote learning for 10 days • Additional school members are quarantined based on where the exposure was in the school • Individuals who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 will not be required to quarantine • School remains open • Weekly random COVID-19 testing is increased to 40% of the in-person school population, including vaccinated individuals
4 or more confirmed cases in 4 different classrooms within 7 days	<p>DOHMH will initiate an investigation. If the investigation determines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all cases can be attributed to exposure/transmission in school, then: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ DOHMH will interview all cases ○ The classroom of the positive cases remain closed and quarantined for 10 days ○ Students in the impacted classroom move to remote learning for 10 days ○ Additional school members are quarantined based on where the exposure was in the school ○ Individuals who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 will not be required to quarantine ○ School remains open ○ Weekly random COVID-19 testing is increased to 40% of the in-person school population, including vaccinated individuals • All cases are can be attributed to exposure/transmission in school, then: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ DOHMH will interview all cases ○ Entire school (not building) is closed for 10 days ○ All students are moved to remote learning for 10 days ○ Upon reopening, school resumes 20% weekly random COVID-19 testing