Alameda County Public Health Department: 
Confirmed COVID-19 and SARS-CoV-2 Positive Testing Process for Child Care Programs

Updated December 29th, 2021

Purpose of this Guidance

The purpose of this document is to provide instructions for reporting a positive case or possible outbreak to the Alameda County Public Health Department and to provide instructions for what to do in either situation.

STEP 1: CONFIRMATION OF A COVID-19 (+) CASE

• It is best to obtain medical documentation of a positive case but not absolutely necessary. Make a report as soon as you have credible reason to believe you have a confirmed COVID-19 case. Do not delay reporting in pursuit of documentation.

STEP 2: WHEN TO REPORT A POSTIVE CASE TO ACPHD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If children are present</th>
<th>Child Care:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Notify the ACPHD immediately of any confirmed case of COVID-19.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If children are NOT present (Ex., Admin/Operations bldgs)</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• In accordance with Cal/OSHA, AB 685, and California Department of Public Health (CDPH) reporting requirements, employers are required to report workplace-related outbreaks to ACPHD. An outbreak at a non-healthcare or non-congregate setting workplace is considered 3+ cases within a 14-day period, among employees who do not live in the same household.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STEP 3: HOW TO REPORT A COVID-19 (+) CASE TO THE ALAMEDA COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The individual responsible for reporting positive cases (Preschool Director, Child Care Program Owner,) must follow the steps below for reporting a positive case.

1. Complete the Schools Portal for Outbreak Tracking (SPOT) Intake Form.
   a. Before completing this form, be sure to have the following information handy: Child care program contact information, location information, and date of exposure (the date the positive case was on campus while contagious).

2. You should receive your SPOT login information within 48 hours of submitting your Intake Form.
3. Once you receive your login information, **report the case in the SPOT system within 24 hours**.
   a. Be sure to have all the necessary information (LINK – for SPOT entry fields) for the positive case and a list of the COVID-19 case’s **close contacts** ready to input into the form. **In accordance with HIPAA Privacy and Security Rules**, all the information provided in SPOT will remain confidential. Note the information you provide will **NOT impact immigration status**.
   b. Please see STEP 4: Identify and Manage Close Contact Section below for more information.

4. For more information about how to report a case in SPOT, please visit [Schools | COVID-19 | Alameda County Public Health](acgov.org)

5. For questions about the process above or next steps, please reach out to COVIDOB@acgov.org

If an **Outbreak** is suspected, please use the same reporting process listed above and ACPHD will investigate, in collaboration with the site, to determine whether the cases had a common exposure in the child care program (e.g., a common class or staff member, bus ride, or other common exposures outside of school).

CDPH defines a childcare outbreak as 3 or more confirmed or probable cases of staff or children occurring within a 14-day period who are epidemiologically linked in the child care program, are from different households, and are not contacts of each other in any other investigation cases. Indicating that transmission likely occurred in the child care setting.

### **STEP 4: Identify and Manage Close Contacts**

**CLOSE CONTACT DEFINITION:**

**Close contacts** are people who had

1. A total of ≥15 minutes over a 24-hour period within 6 feet of a COVID-19 positive person when that person was contagious, *even if both people were wearing masks*;
   
   **OR**

2. Unprotected direct contact for any length of time with an infected person’s sneeze, saliva, or cough.
CONTAGIOUS PERIOD DEFINITION:

COVID-19 (+) cases are contagious 2 days before the start of COVID symptoms through 10 days after symptoms began. If the COVID-19 (+) case has no symptoms, they are considered contagious from 2 days before the date that the test was collected through 10 days after.

- It is very important to understand who to count as a close contact because that person may become infected with COVID-19 and could infect other people at the site.
- Close Contacts will be quarantined – given orders to stay at home for 10 days or 7 days and release on day 8 if one has a negative COVID test and is asymptomatic (test must occur on day 5 or later). unless they are fully vaccinated, in which case they will be instructed to self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days. CDC recommends testing 5-7 after exposure.

Identify and manage close contacts who are CHILDREN:
Sometimes an entire classroom or group should be considered close contacts. In these cases, all unvaccinated students (and classroom/program staff) should quarantine. This would happen if:
- The children do not have designated seat assignments and it is difficult to determine who had close contact with the positive case.
- There is movement in the class and contact cannot be determined
- Children are not wearing masks consistently.
- 6 feet of space is not maintained
Sometimes program staff are able to tell who is a close contact and an entire classroom will NOT be considered close contacts. This would happen if:
- Seating charts are used and 6 feet of distance is consistently maintained.
- Teachers or staff have observed students adequately throughout the day

Identify and manage close contacts who are STAFF:
Sometimes the child care program will be able to tell who a close contact is because they work onsite and observe those who spend time together, but an interview with the COVID-19 (+) person is often necessary. Ask about time spent < 6 feet apart from anyone for 15 or more minutes.
Think about:
- Staff who work with the same group of children
Meetings
- Break times and eating together
- People who have shared close spaces to socialize together

For help on how to identify close contacts, see [CDC instructions](#).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>All unvaccinated</strong> Close Contacts must quarantine. There are two quarantine options. The first is a release from quarantine on day 11 with no test, if asymptomatic. The second quarantine option is a release on day 8 if a test is taken on or after day 5 and the result is negative and asymptomatic. <a href="#">ACPHD Quarantine Guidance</a> and the <a href="#">Health Officer Order</a> for quarantine also available in multiple languages.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fully vaccinated</strong> children and staff who are close contacts are not required to quarantine or be excluded from work if all of the following are true:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o They are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 (≥2 weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or ≥2 weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Have had NO symptoms since the recent COVID-19 exposure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fully vaccinated people should watch for symptoms for 14 days and get tested 5-7 after exposure</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Prepare an exposure letter to send** to parents and staff who are identified as close contacts. Provide the date for when the quarantine period begins and ends. Templates exposure letters [10 Day Quarantine Option (acgov.org)](#) and [10 Day Quarantine and Shortened Quarantine Options (acgov.org)](#)

Tell all close contacts (whether vaccinated or unvaccinated) to monitor themselves closely for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days after their last exposure. They should report immediately if they start having symptoms of COVID-19 and should be told to contact their health care provider.

If any close contacts develop symptoms or test COVID-19 (+), they have to isolate. Give them [instructions for isolation](#) and let them know the date when they can end isolation/return to work.
# Alameda County Public Health Department Protocols for the Onset of COVID-19 Symptoms, and for Close Contact with an Individual Testing positive for SARS-CoV-2 in a School, Child Care Setting, or Extracurricular Setting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Table 1. Definition of Frequently Used Terms</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Medical Evaluator is defined as a Physician, Nurse Practitioner, or Certified Physician Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• SARS-CoV-2 is the virus that causes COVID-19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Close contact:**
- A child or staff who was within **6 feet of a COVID positive person for 15 minutes or longer** (including multiple shorter periods in the same day that add up to 15 minutes) **EVEN IF** both people were wearing masks. **AND**
- A child or staff who had a brief but direct exposure to the COVID positive person’s respiratory droplets. For example, the sick person coughed directly on the child or staff.

**Note:** In some child care situations, it may be challenging to determine if individuals have met these criteria, and an entire classroom, or group may need to be considered *exposed*. This is especially true if the time together was spent indoors.

- **If you need help determining who was a close contact or whether to consider a whole group exposed, please reach out to COVIDOB@acgov.org.**

**Isolation** separates people who are infected with a contagious disease from people who are not infected. An infographic that explains isolation can be viewed [here](https://example.com/isolation).

**Quarantine** is used to keep someone *who might have been exposed to COVID-19* away from others. [How Long Should I Stay in Quarantine](https://example.com/quarantine).

**Note:** Definitions from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
### Table 2. Protocols for the Onset of COVID-19 Symptoms, and for Close Contact with an Individual Testing Positive for SARS-CoV-2 in a School, Child Care Setting or Extracurricular Setting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Primary Action</th>
<th>Additional Action</th>
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</table>
| **Scenario 1:** A child or staff member has COVID-19 symptoms. | **Action:**<br>• Send the child, or staff member home.<br>• Isolate child or staff member in a separate room or designated area, away from other children and staff, pending pick up from the facility.<br>• Advise the staff member, or the parent/guardian of the child to contact their healthcare provider and to consider SARS-CoV-2 testing.<br>• Advise symptomatic staff member, or parent/guardian of symptomatic child to follow isolation instructions, unless COVID-19 is ruled out by a Medical Evaluator. Isolation instructions can be found [here](#).<br>• Refer symptomatic individuals to find community testing [here](#).<br>• Advise the staff member, or the parent/guardian of the child to share their test results with the school administrator as soon as possible:<br>  o If **positive**: follow Actions in Scenario 3<br>  o If **negative**: follow Actions in Scenario 4 | **Communication:** n/a  
**Contact Tracing:** n/a |
### Table 2. Protocols

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Cohort/Stable Group/School Remains</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| Scenario 2: A child or staff is exposed to someone positive for SARS-cov-2 in their household or in the community. | Non-vaccinated child or staff member:  
- Send the child or staff member home.  
- Advise the staff member or parent/guardian of the child to follow quarantine instructions  
- If the child or staff member has regular close contact with anyone at high risk for severe disease, then 14 days of quarantine is required. Quarantine instructions from ACPHD can be viewed [here](https://www.acphd.org).  
- Advise the staff member or parent/guardian of the child to contact their healthcare provider and to consider SARS-cov-2 testing.  
- Refer individuals to find community testing resources [here](https://www.acphd.org).  

Fully vaccinated child or staff member  
- No need to quarantine but self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for the full 14-days after last exposure. [CDC recommends testing 5-7 after exposure](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/testing/testing-recommendations.html). | Communication: n/a  
Contact Tracing n/a  
*Note: 10 day or 7-day quarantine required but 14 days is still the best practice.* |
### Scenario 3:
A child or staff member tests positive for SARS-cov-2.

#### Action:
- Send child or staff member home if notification comes while on campus.
- Complete the Schools Portal for Outbreak Tracking (SPOT) [Intake Form](#).
- Advise the SARS-cov-2 positive child or staff member to isolate. Isolation instructions can be viewed [here](#).
- Perform contact tracing to identify close contacts.
- Advise **un-vaccinated close contacts and household members** of the SARS-cov-2 positive child or staff member to follow quarantine instructions* For close contacts who have regular close contact with other people at high risk, then 14 days of quarantine is required. Quarantine instructions from ACPHD can be viewed [here](#). Please provide these quarantine instructions to the individuals who must quarantine.

Fully vaccinated close contacts do not need to quarantine but should self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days after last exposure. CDC recommends testing 5-7 days following exposure.

#### Communication:
- Complete and send **template exposure letter** to close contacts [Close Contact Letter Template - 10 Day Quarantine Option (acgov.org)](#) and [Close Contact Letter for 10 Day Quarantine and Shortened Quarantine Options (acgov.org)](#).
- Consider program wide notification of a known case on premises.

#### Contact Tracing:
- Use definition of Close Contact to identify who may have been exposed to the SARS-cov-2 positive person.
- If unable to reliably determine who was a close contact, then the entire cohort (example: classroom, sports team) should be advised to quarantine.
- Close contacts quarantine*
  Program remains open

*Note: 10 day or 7-day quarantine required but 14 days is still the best practice.
**Table 2. Protocols**

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<tr>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Find community testing resources <a href="#">here</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Properly clean and disinfect classroom and primary spaces where the SARS-CoV-2 positive child or staff member spent significant time (&gt;15 minutes). Cleaning and disinfecting guidance can be found <a href="#">here</a>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Scenario 4:**
Child or staff member is isolated because of COVID-19 symptoms. While they are isolating, they receive a negative test result for SARS-CoV-2 and want to return to the child care program before the 10 days of isolation have passed.

They may return if:

- The child or staff member is feeling better (symptoms do not have to be completely resolved), **AND**
- There have been at least 24 hours with no fever, without taking medicines to lower a fever, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin), **AND**
- The child or staff member consults a medical professional for evaluation. The medical evaluator will need to provide a letter indicating that (1) the child or staff member’s symptoms are **NOT** due to COVID-19*, **AND** (2) the SARS-CoV-2 test was negative (), **BUT**
- If it is not possible for the child or staff member to consult a medical evaluator, **then they must obtain a SARS-CoV-2 negative test result.**

**Communication:** n/a

**Contact Tracing:** n/a

*Note: the program is not allowed to require disclosure of the alternative diagnosis*
### Table 2. Protocols

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario 5: Child or staff member has been isolated because of symptoms and wants to return to the program before 10 days have passed without a SARS-CoV-2 test.</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If <strong>No SARS-CoV-2 test</strong>, they may return if:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The child or staff member is feeling better (symptoms do not have to be completely resolved), <strong>AND</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• There have been at least 24 hours with no fever, without taking medicines to lower a fever, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin), <strong>AND</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The child or staff member consults a medical evaluator to determine the significance of their symptoms. The medical evaluator will need to provide a letter indicating that the child or staff member’s symptoms are <strong>NOT</strong> due to COVID-19*.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication:</strong> n/a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contact Tracing:</strong> n/a</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Note: The program is not allowed to require disclosure of the alternative diagnosis.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario 6: While a child or staff member is in quarantine following exposure to a case, they receive a negative test result for SARS-CoV-2.</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The child or staff member must continue to follow quarantine instructions. Quarantine instructions from ACPHD can be viewed here.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>If the child or staff member has not had symptoms, gets tested and the SARS-CoV-2 test is negative:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• They must remain in quarantine for 10 days because they may develop symptoms and/or become infectious to others at any time during these 10 days. However, if they are in regular close contact with anyone at high risk for severe disease, then 14 days of quarantine is required. Quarantine instructions from ACPHD can be viewed here.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>For those who do not develop symptoms:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• For children testing is recommended but not required.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication:</strong> n/a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contact Tracing:</strong> n/a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Advise Parents to discuss the pros and cons of testing with their child’s healthcare provider.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• For teachers and staff ACPHD recommends testing for SARS-CoV-2 4-10 days after the last exposure to the COVID-19 case</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RELEVANT DOCUMENTS SECTION

When Can I Leave Isolation (acgov.org)
How Long Should I Stay in Quarantine (acgov.org)
Close Contact Letter Template - 10 Day Quarantine Option (acgov.org)
Close Contact Letter for 10 Day Quarantine and Shortened Quarantine Options (acgov.org)
Guidance for Close-Contact Positive Person in Household (acgov.org)