Alameda County Public Health Department:  
Confirmed COVID-19 and SARS-CoV-2 Positive Testing Process for Schools and Extracurricular Programs  
Updated July 28th, 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/students are present</th>
<th>Schools:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <em>Per the California Department of Public Health guidance</em>, schools MUST notify the Alameda County Public Health Department (ACPHD) of any 1 (one) case of COVID-19 among any student or employee who was present at the site within the 10 days preceding the positive test for COVID-19. Reports must be made within 24 hours of becoming aware of the positive case(s). See below for further details.*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If student are NOT present (Ex. District/central offices, Admin/Operations bldgs)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<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>
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</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 (District/school COVID Liaison) *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: COVID Liaison and School contact information, location information, and date of exposure (the date the positive case was on campus while
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 at the school (e.g., a common class or staff member, bus ride, or other common exposures outside of school).

CDPH defines a school outbreak as 3 or more confirmed or probable cases of staff or students occurring within a 14-day period who are epidemiologically linked in the school, are from different households, and are not contacts of each other in any other investigation cases indicating that transmission likely occurred in the school 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 – unless they are fully vaccinated, in which case they will be instructed to self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days. Some close contacts may be eligible for a Quarantine options – see options in Appendix E below.

Identify and manage close contacts who are STUDENTS:

Sometimes an entire classroom or group should be considered close contacts. In these cases, all unvaccinated students (and classroom/program staff) should quarantine (see Appendix E for Quarantine options). This would happen if:

- The students 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 (ex: P.E, drama, presentations)
- Students are not wearing masks consistently.
- 6 feet of distance is not maintained

Sometimes schools 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 COVID Liaison will be able to tell who a close contact is because they work onsite and observe who spends 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 students  
| - 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](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/contact-tracing/close-contacts.html).  
| **All unvaccinated** Close Contacts must quarantine (see Appendix E for Quarantine options) for 10 days according to the [ACPHD quarantine guidance](https://www.acphd.org) and the [Health Officer Order](https://www.acphd.org) for quarantine also available in multiple languages.  
| **Fully vaccinated** students and staff who are close contacts are not required to quarantine or be excluded from work if all of the following are true:  
| - 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)  
| - Have had NO symptoms since the recent COVID-19 exposure  
| 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. Please see Appendix A for the Exposure letter template and Appendix C for the Quarantine FAQ and please see Appendix E for Quarantine Options.  
| 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](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/clinical-information.html) and let them know the date when they can end isolation/return to work. |
Table 1. Definition of Frequently Used Terms

- **Medical Evaluator** is defined as a Physician, Nurse Practitioner, or Certified Physician Assistant

- **SARS-CoV-2** is the virus that causes COVID-19

**Close contact:**
- A student, 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 student, 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 student, or staff.

**Note:** In some school, or sports 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](#). You will also find this infographic at the end of this document in Appendix B.

**Quarantine** is used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others. Frequent Asked Questions (FAQ) about Quarantine can be viewed [here](#). Please see Appendix E for the Quarantine options. You will also find this FAQ at the end of this document in Appendix C.

**Note:** Definitions from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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 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 1: A student, or staff member exhibits COVID-19 symptoms, answers yes to a health screening question, or has a temperature of 100°F (37.8°C) or above.</th>
<th>Action:</th>
<th>Additional Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Send the student, or staff member home.</td>
<td>Communication: n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Isolate student, or staff member in a separate room or designated area, away from other children, students and staff, pending pick up from the facility.</td>
<td>Contact Tracing: n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Advise the staff member, or the parent/guardian of the student to contact their healthcare provider and to consider SARS-CoV-2 testing.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Advise symptomatic staff member, or parent/guardian of symptomatic student to follow isolation instructions, unless COVID-19 is ruled out by a Medical Evaluator. Isolation instructions can be found here.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Refer symptomatic individuals to find community testing here.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Advise the staff member, or the parent/guardian of the student to share their test results with the school administrator as soon as possible:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o If positive: follow Actions in Scenario 3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o If negative: follow Actions in Scenario 4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Table 2. Protocols

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Group/School Remains</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Scenario 2:** A student or staff is exposed to someone positive for  | **Non-vaccinated student, or staff member:**  <br>• Send the student, or staff member home.  <br>• Advise the staff member or parent/guardian of the  | **Communication:**  <br>n/a  
**Contact Tracing** n/a |
| SARS-cov-2 in their household or in the community.                      | student to follow quarantine instructions for a minimum of 10 days* (see Appendix E for Quarantine options).  <br>• If the student 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.  <br>• Advise the staff member or parent/guardian of the student to contact their healthcare provider and to consider SARS-cov-2 testing.  <br>• Refer individuals to find community testing resources here. |                      |
|                                                                         | **Fully vaccinated student, or staff member**  <br>• No need to quarantine but self monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for the full 14-days after last exposure. |                      |
### Scenario 3:
A student, or staff member tests positive for SARS-cov-2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Send student, or staff member home if notification comes while on campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Complete the Schools Portal for Outbreak Tracking (SPOT) <a href="#">Intake Form</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Advise the SARS-cov-2 positive student, or staff member to isolate. Isolation instructions can be viewed <a href="#">here</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Perform contact tracing to identify close contacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Advise <strong>unvaccinated close contacts and household members</strong> of the SARS-cov-2 positive student, or staff member to follow quarantine instructions for a minimum of 10 days,* to contact their healthcare provider and to consider SARS-cov-2 testing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If the student or staff member has regular <strong>close contact</strong> with anyone at <a href="#">high risk for severe disease</a>, then 14 days of quarantine is required. Quarantine instructions from ACPHD can be viewed <a href="#">here</a>. Please provide these quarantine instructions to the individuals who must quarantine.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fully vaccinated close contacts do not need to quarantine but should self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days after last exposure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Complete and send template exposure letter to close contacts (see Appendix A).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consider school wide notification of a known case on premises.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact Tracing:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Use definition of Close Contact to identify who may have been exposed to the SARS-cov-2 positive person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If unable to reliably determine who was a close contact, then the entire cohort (example: classroom, sports team) should be advised to quarantine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Close contacts quarantine for at least 10 days from date of last exposure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• School remains open</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Note that though a quarantine period of 10 days is the minimum required, 14 days of quarantine is still the safest option.*
### Table 2. Protocols

| Action |  
| --- | --- |
| • Find community testing resources [here](#).  
• Properly clean and disinfect classroom and primary spaces where the SARS-CoV-2 positive student or staff member spent significant time (>15 minutes). Cleaning and disinfecting guidance can be found [here](#). |  
|  
**Scenario 4:** A student, 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 school or the program before the 10 days of isolation have passed. |  
They may return if:  
• The student, 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 student, or staff member consults a medical professional for evaluation. The medical evaluator will need to provide a letter indicating that (1) the student, 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 student, or staff member to consult a medical evaluator, then **they must obtain a SARS-CoV-2 negative test result indicating that a molecular test or a PCR was performed.**  
| 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:</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Cohort/Stable Group/School Remains</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Student, 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. | **If No SARS-CoV-2 test, they may return if:**  
- The student, 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 student, 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 student, or staff member’s symptoms are **NOT** due to COVID-19.*  | **Communication:** n/a  
**Contact Tracing:** n/a  
*Note: The program is not allowed to require disclosure of the alternative diagnosis.* |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario 6:</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Cohort/Stable Group/School Remains</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| While a student, or staff member is in quarantine following exposure to a case, they receive a negative test result for SARS-CoV-2. | **If the student or staff member has not had symptoms, gets tested and the SARS-CoV-2 test is negative:**  
- 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](#) (See Appendix E for Quarantine options).  
**For those who do not develop symptoms:**  
- For students testing is recommended but not required. | **Communication:** n/a  
**Contact Tracing:** n/a |
Table 2. Protocols

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<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>
Frequently Asked Questions

1. What should a school or extracurricular program do while a sick student, or staff member is waiting for SARS-CoV-2 test results or if they are not being tested?

In this situation, a school cohort/stable group, or extracurricular program should close if there is strong clinical suspicion that the person undergoing testing will test positive for SARS-CoV-2. All members of the same cohort/stable group should be told to self-quarantine until test results are available. It is advised that you quarantin the cohort/stable group and close contacts if:

- There is a known exposure to a confirmed case, and the suspected case has two of the following symptoms:
  - Fever (measured or subjective)
  - Chills
  - Rigors
  - Myalgia
  - Headache
  - Sore throat
  - Nausea or vomiting
  - Diarrhea
  - Fatigue
  - Congestion or runny nose

- There is a known exposure to a confirmed case, and the suspected case has one of the following symptoms:
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath
  - Difficulty breathing
  - New olfactory disorder
  - New taste disorder

Please refer to the close contact definition above for determining exposure. If the student or staff member has highly specific symptoms of COVID-19, please call the department of public health for a consult. Email safelearning@acgov.org or call Alameda County Public Health Department (ACPHD) at 510-268-2101 with any questions that you may have. Closing decisions should be made in consultation with ACPHD.
2. **Does a sibling of a child who is home with COVID-19 symptoms need to Quarantine?**

   No, not necessarily. If the student that is home with symptoms meets the above criteria for a strong clinical suspicion of a positive case than yes, the sibling of the student and all close contacts should quarantine. However, if the student that is home does not meet the above criteria for a strong clinical suspicion of a positive case, then the siblings does not need to quarantine.

3. **How long does someone need to quarantine if someone else in their household is COVID-19 positive?**

   If the COVID-19 positive person is not able to isolate from the rest of the household, the rest of the household must complete an Extended Quarantine. Household members will continue to be exposed to the COVID-19 person as long as he or she is infectious – until eligible for release from isolation. The last day of isolation for the COVID-19 positive person is then the last day of exposure for the rest of the household, and they will have to quarantine 10 days from that point. (See graphic in Appendix)
Appendix A: Exposure Letter Template

Template Letter for STAFF, or for PARENT or GUARDIAN of student. To be placed on school/facility/program letterhead

Date: Click or tap here to enter text.

Dear: Click or tap here to enter text.

Click or tap here to enter text. May have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 who was present at Click or tap here to enter text., from the dates of Click or tap here to enter text.. We are working closely with the Alameda County Public Health Department (ACPHD).

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

- **Stay home and do not have any visitors. You or student** will be under home quarantine through the dates of Click or tap here to enter text. Quarantine is for at least 10 days after the date of exposure at Click or tap here to enter text., unless there is regular **Close Contact** with someone at high risk for severe disease, then 14 days of Quarantine after the date of last exposure is required. View the quarantine FAQ here for quarantine instructions.

- **Monitor yourself or the student** for fever or COVID-19 symptoms through the dates of Click or tap here to enter text. Please monitor for:
  
  o Fever (Alameda County defines a fever as greater than 100°F/37.8°C)
  
  o Cough
  
  o Shortness of breath
  
  o Any other symptoms such as chills, body aches, fatigue, sore throat, headache, runny nose or nasal congestion, loss of taste or smell, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea. More information about symptoms can be viewed here.

- **If** Click or tap here to enter text. becomes sick, has a fever, or develop any of the symptoms listed above, please contact your healthcare provider to see if testing for SARS-CoV-2 is recommended.

- **Even if no symptoms are developed,** ACPHD recommends that teachers, school, or program staff obtain SARS-CoV-2 testing 4-10 days following exposure.
If you or the student test NEGATIVE for SARS-CoV-2, you must still stay in home quarantine for a minimum of 10 days through the dates of... 

o If you or student test POSITIVE for SARS-CoV-2, follow isolation instructions and stay home and away from others for 10 days with at least 24 hours of symptom improvement.

o More information about what to do if you are sick with COVID-19 symptoms can be viewed here.

o Parents and guardians of students are advised to discuss the pros and cons of testing with the child’s healthcare provider.

If required urgent medical attention, please call the healthcare facility where you will be seen BEFORE you leave home and tell them that you may have been exposed to COVID-19. If you have a medical emergency and you need to call 911, notify the dispatcher that you may have been exposed to COVID-19.

**PEOPLE AT HIGHER RISK OF SEVERE COVID-19 INFECTION**

Older adults and people with serious medical conditions like heart disease, diabetes, lung disease, or a weakened immune system may become seriously ill with COVID-19.

If is in a higher risk group, please review the CDC guidance here.

If you have any questions, please call the Alameda County Public Health Department at 510-268-2101.
Appendix B: Isolation Infographic


**When Can I Leave Isolation?**

**Tips**

I think or know I have COVID-19, and I have symptoms. When can I leave isolation?

You can be around others after:

- 10 days since your symptoms first appeared and
- 24 hours with no fever and
- Your COVID-19 symptoms have improved.

If I do not have any symptoms, do I need to complete isolation?

Yes! Some people who test positive for COVID-19 never develop any symptoms, but it is still possible to spread the virus to others. Stay at home and stay away from others until 10 days have passed since your positive test.

I’m fully vaccinated, do I need to complete isolation?

Yes! Vaccines are not 100% effective at preventing COVID-19. There will be a small percentage of fully vaccinated people who either develop symptoms due to COVID-19 or test positive but never have symptoms.

Day zero (0) is your first day of symptoms or the day you were tested.

On day 11 you can leave isolation.*

*You do not need a negative test to leave isolation or return to work.

*A small number of people should isolate for 20 days when told to do so by their doctor.
Appendix C: Quarantine FAQ

Appendix D: Extended Quarantine

Appendix E: Quarantine Options (these quarantine options may only be used in school settings)

Quarantine recommendations for unvaccinated students for exposures when both parties were wearing a mask, as required in K-12 indoor settings. These are adapted from the CDC K-12 guidance and CDC definition of a close contact.

When both parties were wearing a mask in the indoor classroom setting, unvaccinated students who are close contacts (more than 15 minutes over a 24-hour period within 0-6 feet indoors) may undergo a modified 10-day quarantine as follows. They may continue to attend school for in-person instruction if they:

I. Are asymptomatic;
II. Continue to appropriately mask, as required;
III. Undergo at least twice weekly testing during the 10-day quarantine; and
IV. Continue to quarantine for all extracurricular activities at school, including sports, and activities within the community setting.

Quarantine recommendations for: unvaccinated close contacts who were not wearing masks or for whom the infected individual was not wearing a mask during the indoor exposure; or unvaccinated students as described above.

For these contacts, those who remain asymptomatic, meaning they have NOT had any symptoms, may discontinue self-quarantine under the following conditions:

V. Quarantine can end after Day 10 from the date of last exposure without testing; OR
VI. Quarantine can end after Day 7 if a diagnostic specimen is collected after Day 5 from the date of last exposure and tests negative.

To discontinue quarantine before 14 days following last known exposure, asymptomatic close contacts must:

I. Continue daily self-monitoring for symptoms through Day 14 from last known exposure; AND
II. Follow all recommended non-pharmaceutical interventions (e.g., wearing a mask when around others, hand washing, avoiding crowds) through Day 14 from last known exposure.

If any symptoms develop during this 14-day period, the exposed person must immediately isolate, get tested and contact their healthcare provider with any questions regarding their care.