COVID-19 Toolkit

Please refer to this process for COVID-19 cases in the school setting. A script for notifying parents, letter templates, and the Reporting Directory for staff are enclosed.

Need to Know: *Close Contact* and *Direct Contact* to a positive COVID case are criteria for quarantine.

- Close Contact - to be within 6 feet of a COVID positive individual for at least 15 cumulative minutes.
  Identification starts 2 days before symptom onset or 2 days prior to date of test.
- Direct Contact – embracing, kissing, sharing of eating/drinking utensils.
- **When a housemate tests positive, the student is considered close contact and must quarantine for the duration of the COVID positive case's isolation.**
- Fully Vaccinated - 2 weeks after 2nd dose of Pfizer/Moderna COVID-19 vaccine or 2 weeks after the single dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

Reporting:

All positive **student** COVID-19 cases are to be reported in the COVID-19 Student Form. The cases will be reported to the Health Department weekly by District Nurses. **All** positive **staff** COVID-19 cases are to be reported in the COVID-19 Reporting Directory.

Student Reporting Link ⟶ https://bit.ly/3sn1Tcx

The parents of students that are identified as close contact are to be notified to undergo quarantine.

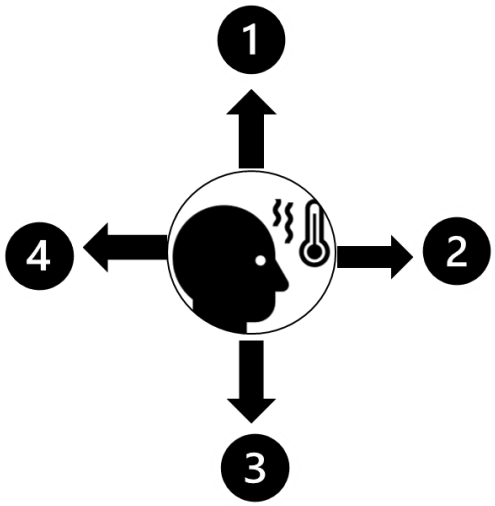
Parents are then to receive notification letters outlining quarantine and testing guidance.

Contact the appropriate school-level nurse for COVID inquiries concerning students.

Facilitating a COVID Case in Students

When the school receives notification of a positive case for a student, the procedure is as follows:

- Determine places in the building the student occupied. Ex: bathroom, classroom, library
- Use the seating chart to identify students who are within 6 feet of the positive case. For example, a student will have 4 close contacts if they sit in the middle of a classroom, but 3 close contacts if they sit in the front, back, or side of the classroom. See diagram.



- Remember, identification begins 2 days before symptoms began in the positive case. If no symptoms are reported, identification begins 2 days before the test date.
  For example:
    - A student tests positive on Wednesday and has no symptoms. You would identify close contacts for Monday and Tuesday.
    - A student tests positive Wednesday but showed symptoms Tuesday. Identification of close contacts includes Monday only.
    - **If age appropriate, ask about vaccination status. Vaccinated students *may* fall under a quarantine exception**.
- Notify Close Contacts, ensuring FERPA compliance, and provide them with the Close Contact Notification. Close contacts are to immediately undergo quarantine and are encouraged to obtain COVID-19 testing. **Refer to this document should parents have additional questions.**
- *Positive students do not have to submit a negative test if they have met return to school criteria.*
- Notify Sandra Robinson of Facilities in a separate email. CC Nurse Jones. Specify locations the COVID case occupied.
- Notifications to parents of scholars not considered close contact are to be sent.
- Prepare to document the number of positive cases and those deemed close contact in the COVID-19 Student Form.
- ***Students who were COVID-19 positive may return to school after:***
    - 10 calendar days are completed from the day symptoms began **OR** 10 calendar days from the date of the positive test if there were no symptoms, **AND**
    - must be fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of a fever-reducing medication.
- ***Students who are identified as close contact may return to school after***:
    - 10 symptom-free calendar days have passed, ***OR***
    - A minimum of 7 symptom free calendar days have been completed ***AND*** a negative test result taken *after day 5*. **This is for the PCR test ONLY.**
    - ***Vaccinated students are exempt from quarantine unless they show symptoms. Testing is recommended 3-5 days after exposure to a positive case*.**

If close contact students develop symptoms at any time during their quarantine, parents are strongly encouraged to isolate their child and obtain COVID-19 testing.

If an educator tests positive for COVID-19, the entire class will be deemed close contact and convert to an alternative form of instruction for a minimum of 10 days as the staff member completes isolation. The general Close Contact notification letter is to be sent to parents. No staff member is to be identified in the letter.

Isolation Room Criteria

Students meeting criteria to enter the isolation room must be dismissed from school and remain at home and receive an alternative form of instruction while under a 10-day cautionary quarantine. Parents should be encouraged to obtain COVID-19 testing for their student.
If a negative COVID-19 test is provided to the school and the student remains fever and symptom -free for at least 24 hours, they may return to in-person instruction upon the school's receipt of the test results.
Parents should monitor their scholar's symptoms and are encouraged to consult their health care provider about possible illness. *If a healthcare provider has provided an alternative diagnosis for student's symptoms, documentation from the healthcare provider is accepted to return to in-person instruction along with negative COVID-19 test results. The illness specific return- to-school guidance will then apply. <u>This ONLY applies to students sent to the isolation room that have NOT been identified as a close contact.</u>*
Students that have been returned to school before submitting a negative test result will be placed in the isolation room until *10 calendar days of quarantine are completed.* The parent will be notified to dismiss the student, and to adhere to outlined protocols.

Students must present with any combination of the signs and symptoms listed below to meet Isolation Room criteria.

1. **<u>FEVER</u> - temperature of 100^{o}F or above. This might be accompanied by chills and sweating.**
2. **NEW COUGH**
3. **Difficulty Breathing**
4. **Sore Throat**
5. **Muscle or Body Aches**
6. **<u>Loss of Taste or Smell</u>**
7. **Vomiting and/or diarrhea <u>with no other symptoms</u> will warrant a consult to the school nurse as this requires clinical assessment.**

Contact the appropriate school-level nurse or Nurse Jones for guidance with student symptoms.

Script for Notifying Parents

Staff, it is imperative that we keep both students' (FERPA) and staff's (HIPAA) medical information confidential. When alerting parents of a positive case in the schools, we might unintentionally reveal confidential medical information. Below is a script to be used when notifying parents of a positive case in schools.

"A positive COVID-19 case has been identified in the school building. Your scholar may have been in close contact with the positive case. In an abundance of caution, scholars will receive instruction at home for 7 days. During this time, you are encouraged to obtain COVID-19 testing for your scholar. Please report to the school if your scholar has tested positive for COVID-19. In the meantime, the facility staff will begin enhanced cleaning procedures."

Facilitating a COVID Case in Staff Members

- Interview the positive staff member to determine close contacts dating back 48 hours of symptom onset. If there are no symptoms, date back to 48 hours prior to the date of the test. That is, anyone he/she would have been ***within 6 feet of for more than 15 cumulative minutes dating back 2 days***. This would be someone he/she was not maintaining social distancing or had direct contact.
- Determine places in the building the staff member occupied. Ex: bathroom, classroom, library
    - Add the COVID Positive educator's information as well as any identified close contacts' information to the Reporting Directory. **Ask close contacts about vaccination status. Vaccinated staff members *may* fall under a quarantine exception, provided they submit proof of full vaccination.**
- Notify Close Contacts, **with respect to employee privacy**, and provide them with the Close Contact Notification. Close contacts are to immediately undergo quarantine and obtain COVID-19 testing. ***Vaccinated staff members are exempt from quarantine unless they show symptoms. Testing is recommended 3-5 days after exposure to a positive case.***
- **Unvaccinated staff members deemed close contact are to quarantine for 10 days.**
- Send a copy/screenshot of the positive test result and vaccination cards of close contacts to Nurse Jones. Use the Encrypt button above the "To" section of the email to send this information.
- Send Nurse Jones the COVID Reporting Directory. CC Amanda Thomas.
- Notify Sandra Robinson of Facilities in a separate email. CC Nurse Jones. Specify locations the COVID case occupied.

COVID positive individuals are to follow their healthcare provider's order for isolation.

Area Superintendents/Chiefs/Department Heads personalize and send letter one below.

Return to Work Guidelines

- ***Staff members who were <u>COVID-19 positive</u> may return to work after:***
    - They follow first their healthcare provider's order for isolation,
    - 10 calendar days are completed from the day symptoms began **OR** 10 calendar days from the date of the positive test if there were no symptoms, **AND**
    - must be fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of a fever-reducing medication.
- ***Staff members who are identified as <u>close contact</u> may return to work after***:
    - 10 symptom-free calendar days have passed, ***OR***
    - A minimum of 7 <u>symptom free</u> calendar days have been completed ***AND*** a negative test result taken <u>*after day 5*</u>. **This is for the PCR test ONLY.**
    - ***Vaccinated staff members are exempt from quarantine unless they show symptoms. Testing is recommended 3-5 days after exposure to a positive case.***

Notification Letters

The following pages contain JPS modified notification letters from Mississippi State Department of Health that should be utilized when communicating COVID-19 cases to parents and staff.
The notification letter sent to parents when a student is placed into an isolation room can also be found below.
Modify them with your letter head, logos, etc. and customize grammar according to your case.

Letter 1- *Group or School Notification* -Letter to notify individuals within a larger group, classroom, or activity of the identification of a COVID-19 positive individual in the setting. These students or staff should do the following:

- □ Monitor for symptoms of fever, cough, etc. twice daily for the next 14 days.
- □ Continue to attend classes unless symptoms develop.
- □ Consult with primary care physician if they develop symptoms to determine need for testing.

SEE LETTER 1 ON NEXT PAGE

Dear Parent,
A student (or teacher/coach) in your child's class (or name the classroom, group, or team) has been diagnosed with COVID-19. The last time the infected person was in the school setting while they were contagious is _____(date).

- The most common symptoms of COVID-19 infection are cough, fever, and shortness of breath; muscle aches, sore throat and fatigue are also common.
- Symptoms usually develop between 2 to 14 days after last exposure.
- Some infected people never develop symptoms.

You should:

- Monitor your child for symptoms, and do temperature checks at least twice daily for 14 days from the date listed above. If your child is considered close contact, you would have been notified and would have received different instructions on your next steps.
- Consult with your child's physician for evaluation and need for testing if your child develops symptoms.

Some children in this classroom may be at higher risk due to close contact (within 6 feet of the infected person for 15 or more minutes). *These children will receive a separate notification*, instructing them to quarantine and not return to school for 10 days after the last exposure. As a reminder, always monitor your child for symptoms and keep your child at home if they are ill for any reason.

Signature

Letter 2- *Close Contact*- Letter to a student or staff member who was likely to have spent 15 minutes or greater (cumulative) at less than 6 feet from the case. These individuals should:

- □ Get tested for COVID-19 (contact provider or see a list of available test sites on the Mississippi Department of Health (MSDH) website at https://msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/-_static/14,21912,874.html.
- □ Remain quarantined at home for at least 10 days after last exposure and monitor for symptoms.
- □ Return to class after 10 days if no symptoms have developed, **OR**
- □ Return to class after **day 7** if tested on or after **day 5** and received **negative results**. *Test results must be provided to the school if the parent chooses the 7-day quarantine.*

Vaccinated individuals are exempt from quarantine unless they develop symptoms. Testing is recommended 3-5 days after exposure to a COVID-19 positive case.

SEE LETTER 2 ON NEXT PAGE

Dear Parent/Teacher/Staff,

You or your child have been identified as a close contact to a case of COVID-19 in the school setting. A close contact is defined as any individual within 6 feet of the infected person for at least 15 minutes or greater (cumulative) while the COVID-19 infected person is contagious. The contagious period is 48 hours before to 10 days after symptoms started (or 48 hours before to 10 days after test if there were no symptoms). Based on this close contact criteria, the following instructions are provided.

For 10 days following potential exposure, you, or your child:

- Will be excluded from the school setting for a minimum of 10 days after last exposure to the case of COVID-19.
- Should remain quarantined at home for 10 days after your (or your child's) last exposure to the case.
- Are instructed to get tested for COVID-19 following your exposure, even if you do not have symptoms. Free testing sites can be found here: **https://msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/_static/14,21912,420,874.html.** Please let your provider know that you have been exposed before you go in for testing.
- Should monitor for symptoms and take your (or your child's) temperature twice a day for a minimum of 14 days from your last exposure.
- If at any point your (or your child's) temperature is 100°F or more, you feel like you are developing fever, or start having any of the symptoms (e.g., fever, cough, shortness of breath or a new loss of taste or smell), contact your healthcare provider for evaluation and retesting if indicated.
- ***Fully vaccinated individuals*** *are exempt from testing and quarantine UNLESS they develop symptoms. You are considered fully vaccinated after 2 weeks have passed since the 2nd dose of Pfizer/Moderna vaccine or 2 weeks have passed since the Johnson & Johnson single dose.* ***Vaccination cards must be submitted to become eligible****.* ***Testing is recommended 3-5 days after exposure to a COVID-19 positive case.***

*The Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) continues to strongly encourage a 14-day quarantine period for close contacts to individuals who have COVID-19, especially household contacts. However, MSDH does provide the following acceptable alternative quarantine option:

Students may return to school following the 7-day quarantine and school exclusion period if no symptoms develop. Students can discontinue quarantine at this time point only if the following criteria are also met:

- No symptoms of COVID-19 at any point during the quarantine period; and,
- Continue to monitor for symptoms for a full 14 days: and,
- Continue to wear masks and practice social distancing at all times for a full 14 days.
- If symptoms develop, immediately self-isolate and seek testing for COVID-19,
- Students who present a negative PCR (3-day test) before day 5 cannot discontinue quarantine early.

Signature

Letter 3- *Positive COVID-19 Case* - Letter to the student or staff who has been diagnosed regarding the requirement for isolation at home for 10 days and requirements for return to class/work.

SEE LETTER 3 ON NEXT PAGE

Dear Parent/Teacher/Staff member,
You have reported to the school that you or your child have recently tested positive for COVID-19. Please see the following instructions:

• You or your child may not return to the school setting until 10 days from the day your symptoms started. If you or your child had no symptoms, you may not return until 10 days from the date of the positive test.
• The individual who tested positive should remain isolated at home for the 10-day period. Stay away from all persons at your home. Do not leave your house, or come in contact with anyone, including the people you live with.
• If you do have household contacts, you must limit exposure to them. Stay in a specific room away from others in your home. Instructions for limiting exposure to your household contacts can be found on the CDC website at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-prevent-spread.html.

• After 10 days you must also be fever-free for at least 24 hours (without fever reducing medication) with improvement of symptoms prior to returning to school.
• During the 10-day isolation period your child may not participate in any extracurricular school activities or sports.
• A negative test will not be required prior to return to school as long as the above criteria are met.
• A note from your physician is not required for return to school.

Signature

Symptoms/Isolation Room Letter - Letter to the student or staff who was placed in the isolation room due to COVID-19 symptoms.

SEE SYMPTOMS LETTER ON NEXT PAGE

Dear Parent,

Your scholar presented with the following signs/symptoms upon their arrival to school or during school hours on __/__/2021.

- ☐ **Temperature of _____ . Temperature at 100^{o}F or above is considered a fever.**
- ☐ **New Cough**
- ☐ **Complaints of Chills**
- ☐ **Complaints of Muscle Pain**
- ☐ **Complaints of Sore Throat**
- ☐ **Difficulty Breathing**
- ☐ **Reports Loss of Taste or Smell**

To maintain the safety of all scholars and staff, those that present with the signs/symptoms mentioned above are isolated and monitored in a comfortable and safe space until their dismissal from school.

***Based on the criteria checked above, you are being notified that your scholar is to remain at home and receive an alternative form of instruction until a negative COVID-19 test is provided to the school and they remain fever and symptom -free for at least 24 hours*. You are encouraged to seek the advice of your healthcare provider concerning illness and COVID-19 testing.**

If your healthcare provider has provided an alternative diagnosis for the symptoms your scholar has presented/reported, documentation must be provided to the school as well as a negative COVID-19 test to resume in-person instruction. Depending on the illness, other return-to- school criteria will have to be satisfied before the return to in-person instruction.

If your scholar was excluded from school due to fever, they must also remain fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of a fever-reducing medication such as Tylenol or Motrin AFTER submitting a negative COVID-19 result to your child's school.

If your scholar tests positive for COVID-19, please notify the school immediately to initiate enhanced safety measures and cleaning procedures.

Signature

COVID-19 Reporting Directory

Name	Date of Last Contact	Area Occupied	D.O.B	Phone Number	Address
*Jane Doe (EXAMPLE)	Report the date last in the building.	Climate&Wellness 123 Building/ 2nd grade hall	1/1/1975	601-555-5555	555 School Drive, Nocity, MS
*					

Only those considered Close Contact with the positive case should also present in this document. Close Contact- to be within 6 feet for at least 15 **CUMULATIVE minutes** with a COVID-19 positive individual. Identification starts 2 days before symptom onset or 2 days prior to date of test.