

# COVID-19 Scenarios in Schools



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## A Toolkit for School Leaders

Planning for COVID-19 Scenarios in Schools

*Updated November 27, 2020*

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## **Introduction:**

This resource was prepared by Central District Health (CDH). This document outlines some critical steps and offers an overview of decision points, but it does not replace medical expertise, epidemiologist knowledge, or practical solutions in local schools. Each school leader will need to continually evaluate the response to outbreak protocols, update plans, and balance health and safety with core instructional needs for schools.

## **Purpose of this Toolkit:**

This toolkit is designed to support school leaders in their shared role in responding to COVID-19-related illness events in schools. This toolkit details specific scenarios and immediate action steps required to respond and communicate when a student or staff member:

- Is exposed to a confirmed or presumptive case of COVID-19
- Becomes ill with COVID-19 symptoms
- Tests positive for COVID-19
- Tests negative for COVID-19
- Does not get tested for COVID-19

Each scenario requires action on behalf of the school and close collaboration with the public health district (PHD). The PHD has authority to make public health decisions, including recommendations for or against isolation and quarantine. This guide is not intended to be the final word for all possible situations; in some situations, a PHD may make recommendations that differ from those contained in this guide.

## **Using This Toolkit:**

This is a resource that school leaders, districts, staff, parents, and students can access and use as the need emerges. However, given the highly technical information contained in this toolkit, being able to apply this guidance in a timely manner as the need arises requires that school leaders:

1. Carefully read this document in its entirety before the need to utilize it.
2. Review each scenario and consider how that scenario would unfold, if realized in their local context. Consider:
  - a. How well the current operational blueprint supports the school's response in this scenario and if updates are needed;
  - b. How this scenario would impact teaching and learning within the school; and
  - c. Which communication tool(s) within this guide would be used and how/how much they would need to be adapted prior to use.
3. Help your staff to understand the content in this toolkit prior to it being needed. The additional stresses related with having positive cases and exposed person(s) in your school community will make it hard for staff to access this information in real time without prior knowledge and understanding

## **Contact Tracing Roles & Responsibilities**

### **School:**

1. Report case to the CDH Call Center at 208-321-2222 or email CDH at [CovidSchools@cdh.idaho.gov](mailto:CovidSchools@cdh.idaho.gov).

CDH recommends schools include all of the following:

- Staff/student info
    - Full name
    - Date of birth
    - Zip code of residence (not school, but of positive case)
  - Last day at school
  - Onset of Symptoms
  - Place of testing (date if available)
2. Perform contact tracing for the school and school related activities (as described in the guide):
    - Notify close contacts and advise of quarantine
      - Notification best practices listed below
  3. Report close contacts to CDH:
    - Use excel file to email or call into the call center

CDH recommends schools include all of the following:

- Name
  - Contact info (parent name and info if a student)
  - Date of last exposure
  - Indicate whether notification been completed
4. School may monitor contacts for illness or ask about illness prior to returning to school from quarantine.
    - Anyone reporting illness while on quarantine should be reported to CDH.
    - When possible, please utilize the decision trees rather than requiring students to provide a "school release letter."

### **Helpful Hints & Reminders for schools:**

- Please do not require quarantine release letters – utilize decision trees (found in this toolkit) when a letter is not available.
- Be patient – if you have an urgent need for call back please note it to the call center operator or in the email.

### **Central District Health:**

1. Confirm Results.
2. Share CDH Investigation details:
  - a. CDH will do investigation and contact tracing for all areas outside of school (ie. home & community).
  - b. CDH will share additional contacts, changes to infectious period, and information relating to the school investigation.
  - c. CDH may not investigate all cases received due to case volume.
3. Provide recommendations, guidance and assistance (investigations, situations, messaging) as requested.
4. CDH will report cases to the schools they identify through routine investigations & monitoring.

CDH **may** provide letters for those individuals CDH is working with (cases and contacts).

CDH **may** monitor contacts received from schools.

### **Contact Tracing Guide for Schools**

#### **Goal of Contact Tracing:**

1. Determine who was in close contact with an individual infectious with COVID while at school/school activities.
2. Notify close contacts and advise of quarantine recommendations.

#### **Close contact:**

Anyone within 6ft for 15 min (cumulative within 24 hours).

- Direct physical contact and sharing of dining utensils are also considered close contacts.

Click [here](#), to find more information.

#### **Infectious Period:**

Begins: 2 days prior to the onset of symptoms (any COVID symptom).

Ends: 10 days after onset (onset is day 0), if 24 hours fever free (without the use of fever reducing medications) and symptom improvement. If asymptomatic, use collection date as onset date.

#### **Areas of Focus for Contact Tracing:**

Daily structure of the following (look at each day during infectious period):

- Transportation to school (e.g. drop-off, walk/bike, bus).
- Classroom and daily flow (e.g. sits in a group of cohorted students, classroom size, moves about the building to different classrooms, desks or seating are spaced six feet apart).
- Communal areas (e.g. does student go to the cafeteria, gym, or other areas where high levels of student mixing occur, do they wait in line for the bus after school, recess or breaks, hallways).
- Extracurricular activities (look at practice, game, event, transportation, sidelines).

Remember 15 minutes is cumulative – did the student have group work in multiple classes, or multiple interactions? 6ft should be measured in settings where possible (tables, buses, pods, etc.) Having predefined measurements and seating charts can improve efficiency with contact tracing efforts.

All close contacts need to quarantine for 14 days from the last exposure (last day of exposure is day 0).

**Quarantine = stay home.**

- Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms.
- Close contacts need to quarantine regardless of receiving a negative COVID test result.
- People in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, and monitor their health.
- Someone on quarantine should not leave the home other than to seek medical attention or testing.
- Someone on quarantine should limit contact with others and not have contact with people outside the household/caregivers.
- Someone on quarantine cannot attend school, daycare, and in most cases work.
- If a student is asked to quarantine, they should not attend extra-curricular activities or events.

**Note:** People who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 within the past 3 months do not need to quarantine.

**Other Information:**

***Isolation***

Isolation is for infectious individuals – those with symptoms and/or a positive test result. The individual isolates while infectious. A person can stop isolation when at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset (or test date if asymptomatic) AND at least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without use of fever reducing medication AND symptoms are improving. Click [here](#) to find more information.

***Contacts Outside of School***

If during the course of your contact tracing investigation you determine COVID exposures in students related to an exposure event outside of school or school activity please notify Central District Health at the call center or email about the exposure. CDH will prioritize and investigate to notify contacts from non-school related exposures impacting students.

***Probable Cases***

This information is how to determine if an individual meets probable case definition (CSTE Interim Case Definition 2020).

**Probable:** Symptomatic people that have epidemiologic risk factors or evidence of infection detected through a non-molecular amplification tests.

**Symptoms:**

At least two of the following:

- fever, chills, rigors, myalgia, headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion or runny nose

OR

At least one of the following:

- cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing or loss of taste or smell

OR

Severe respiratory illness with evidence of pneumonia or ARDS

AND

No alternative more likely diagnosis (i.e. Influenza or Strep Positive)

**Epi Risk Factors:**

Close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19

## **Scenarios**

**About Scenarios:**

Read through the scenarios and terms in this document. Each scenario is an example event that involves a school and CDH's response to a COVID-19 illness at a school. The scenarios share required steps for the school leaders as well as CDH.

**Exposure Scenarios:** Refers to a student or staff member exposed to a person *who* is a confirmed or *presumptive* case of COVID-19.

**Becomes Ill Scenarios:** Refers to a student or staff member who *becomes ill* with COVID-19 *symptoms*, *either* after no *known* contact with a person with COVID-19 *or* after close contact with a person with COVID-19.

**Tests Positive Scenarios:** Refers to one or more student or staff member having a positive COVID-19 *viral* test, including the action necessary if in the same or different cohorts.

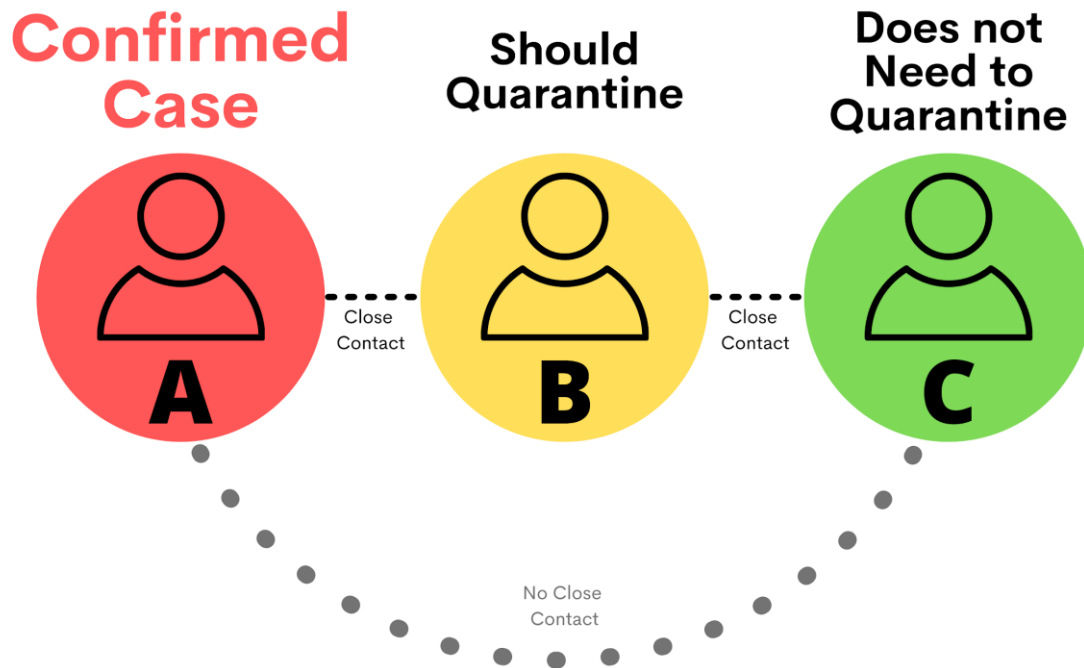
**Tests Negative Scenarios:** Refers to an ill student or staff member who has a negative COVID-19 *viral* test.

**Does not get Tested Scenarios:** Refers to a student or staff member who does not get tested in response to specific event.

### Common Protocols:

Generally, the closer a person is to a confirmed COVID-19 case, the greater the need for *quarantine*:

## General Quarantine Protocol



**Figure 1.** General Quarantine Protocol

As an overall framework:

- People who have tested positive for COVID-19 should isolate.
- Any person who has been in close contact with a person with positive COVID-19 should quarantine.
- Anyone who has been in close contact with someone who was exposed to COVID-19 **does not need** to quarantine.

# GUIDANCE ON COVID-19 EXPOSURE FOR SCHOOLS

## Are you experiencing COVID-19 symptoms? They include:

- » Fever (100.4°F or 38°C) *without having taken any fever-reducing medications, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen.*
- » Cough
- » Chills
- » Fatigue
- » Loss of smell or taste
- » Muscle aches
- » New or unusual headache
- » Congestion or runny nose
- » Sore throat
- » Shortness of breath
- » Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or loss of appetite

(One or more of these symptoms that is a new onset or is an increase in severity)

**YES, I HAVE SYMPTOMS**

### FOLLOW ILLNESS DECISION TREE FOR SCHOOLS

<https://cdh.idaho.gov/pdfs/cd/Coronavirus/Resource%20Docs/schools/Covid-Illness-Decision-Tree-8-31-20-FINAL.pdf>

**Policy of who to contact if exposed/have questions:**

Quarantine yourself for 14 days from exposure date.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

**NO SYMPTOMS**

Have you been in contact with someone who has been diagnosed with or tested positive for COVID-19?

**YES**

**Yes, direct physical contact or close contact**  
(within 6 feet for 15 or more minutes)

**Yes, non-close contact**  
(outside 6 feet or within 6 feet for a brief period of time)

**NO**

Practice physical distancing and good hygiene.

**UNKNOWN**  
Ex: attended an event where someone was positive and deemed infectious, but is unknown.

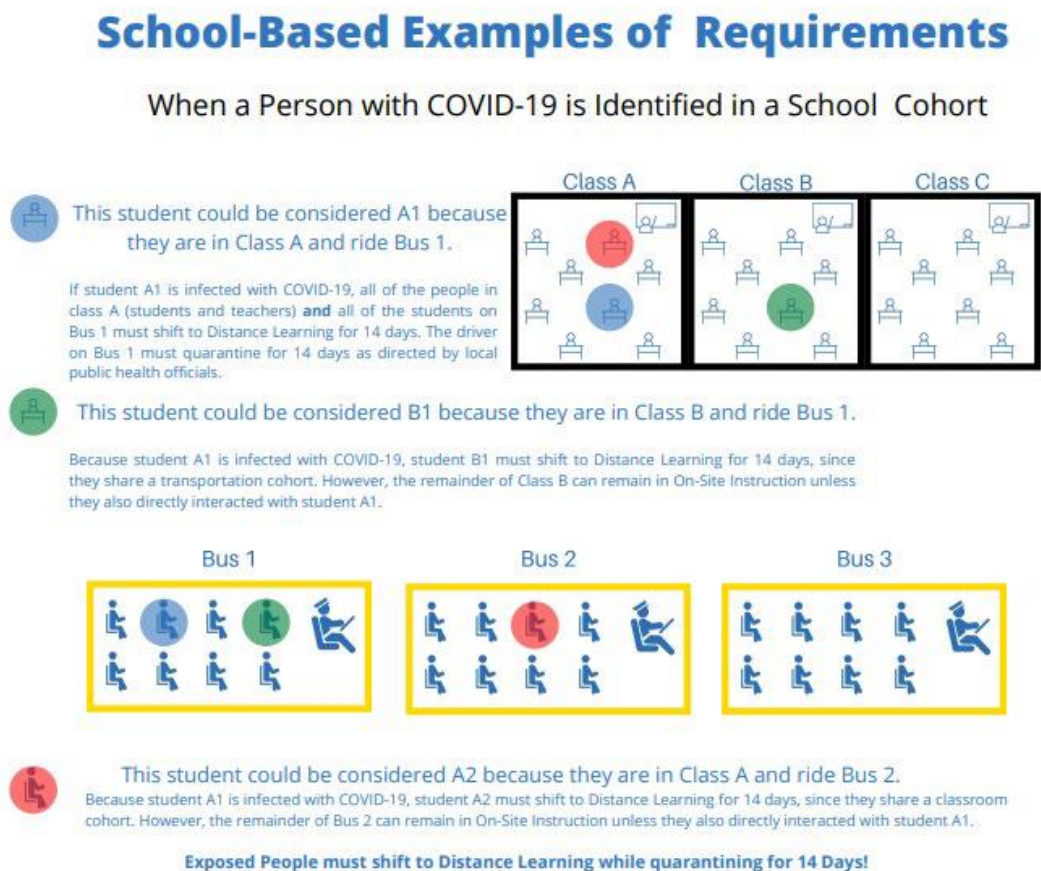
Practice physical distancing, good hygiene, **AND** watch for symptoms.

If physical distancing was practiced among **ALL** participants – watch for signs and symptoms.

If **NOT**, quarantine for 14 days from exposure date.



This framework will need to be applied within an ever-changing local context. The following graphic (figure 2) represents the application of this framework in one possible local context to support school leaders in building the schema necessary to apply this information successfully in their own situation.



**Figure 2.** School-Based Examples of Responses Required

# Illness Decision Tree for Schools

## Q1: Are you experiencing COVID-19 symptoms? They include:

- » Fever (100.4°F or 38°C) without having taken any fever-reducing medications, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen.
- » Chills
- » Cough
- » Fatigue
- » New or unusual headache
- » Muscle aches
- » Congestion or runny nose
- » Loss of smell or taste
- » Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or loss of appetite
- » Sore throat
- » Shortness of breath

(One or more of these symptoms that is a new onset or is an increase in severity)

**YES, I HAVE SYMPTOMS**

**NO SYMPTOMS**

## Q2: HAVE YOU -

**2.1:** Had close contact with a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case?

**2.2:** Travel to or live in an area that is designated Category 3 (Substantial Community Transmission)?

**YES, to 1 or more**

**NO**

Quarantine yourself and contact your healthcare provider (HCP).

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

Stay at home until you are fever free without medication for 24 hours and symptoms improve or resolve per school illness policy.

Have you been in contact with someone who has been diagnosed with or tested positive for COVID-19? (within 6 feet for 15 minutes or more)

**YES**

**NO**

Quarantine yourself for 14 days from last exposure date.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

Practice physical distancing and good hygiene.

If **YES** to 2.1:

Isolate for 10 days from the onset of symptoms.

If **YES** to 2.2 & you received an alternative diagnosis or negative test:  
Follow HCP & school guidance on when to return.

If **NOT tested**:  
Isolate for 10 days from onset of symptoms and follow school return policy.

Anyone who has been identified as a close contact needs to quarantine regardless of symptoms or other illnesses, **EVEN** if you receive a negative test result.

If **YES** to any of these, call:

## Identify Area of Responsibility and Next Steps outlined in Scenarios

The scenario tables offer different examples with critical steps for schools and PHDs. The roles and responsibilities, including communication protocols, from each entity (the school district and PHD) will need to include partnership with the PHD. School and classroom sizes are highly variable across Idaho, and cohort sizes vary. **Schools should strive to maintain small “stable cohorts/pods,” as this will minimize school wide disruptions when a case of COVID-19 is identified in a school. CDH recommends pods being no larger than five during Category 3.** Refer to CDH’s Levels of Community Spread for Schools document as defined by the PHD. Categories were designed for the Idaho Back to School Framework. (See appendix for Levels of Community Spread for Schools Document)

### Scenario Table

The following table summarizes the scenarios in the tables that follow.

<b>Scenario 1</b>	A student or staff member has been <b>exposed to a person with COVID-19</b> <u>within their household</u> . The student or staff member is <u>not</u> currently showing symptoms.
<b>Scenario 2a</b>	A student or staff member <b>becomes ill</b> with COVID-19 symptoms. Ill person has <u>no known COVID-19 contacts</u> in past 14 days.
<b>Scenario 2b</b>	A student or staff member <b>becomes ill</b> with primary COVID-19 symptoms. Ill person was in <u>close contact</u> with someone who had COVID-19 in past 14 days.
<b>Scenario 3a</b>	An ill student or staff member has a <b>negative</b> COVID-19 viral test and has <u>no known COVID-19 contacts</u> in past 14 days.
<b>Scenario 3b</b>	An ill student or staff member with COVID-19 symptoms has a <b>negative</b> COVID-19 viral test. Ill person was in <u>close contact</u> with someone who had COVID-19 in past 14 days.
<b>Scenario 4a</b>	An ill student or staff member <b>does not get tested</b> with a COVID-19 viral test. Ill person has <u>no known COVID-19 contacts</u> in past 14 days.
<b>Scenario 4b</b>	An ill student or staff member with COVID-19 symptoms <b>does not get tested</b> . Ill person was in <u>close contact</u> with someone who had COVID-19 in past 14 days.
<b>Scenario 4c</b>	An ill student or staff member with COVID-19 symptoms <b>does not get tested</b> with a COVID-19 viral test, and a clear <u>non-respiratory diagnosis is identified</u> as cause of illness. Ill person was in <u>close contact</u> with someone who had COVID-19 in past 14 days.
<b>Scenario 5</b>	<b>One student</b> or <b>staff</b> member has a <b>positive</b> COVID-19 viral test.
<b>Scenario 6</b>	<b>Two or more people</b> within <u>same cohort</u> have a <b>positive</b> COVID-19 viral test within 14 days.
<b>Scenario 7</b>	<b>Two or more people</b> in <u>different cohorts</u> have a <b>positive</b> COVID-19 viral test within 14 days.

## Scenario 1

A student or staff member has been **exposed to a person with** COVID-19. The student or staff member is not currently showing symptoms.

Involved persons	Action
<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Send individual home (if not home already).</li><li>• Record the date school became aware and excluded the individual.</li><li>• Advise of how to receive instruction while quarantined.</li></ul>
<b>Exposed person</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Quarantine at home for 14 days after date of last exposure to the COVID-19 positive contact. (If a household exposure and additional household members become ill with COVID-19, or if the exposed person cannot avoid continued close contact, the length of quarantine may be &gt;14 days.</li></ul>
<b>Household members, including siblings</b> (if exposed person is a student) (if exposed in a household)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Siblings should also quarantine at home for 14 days after date of last exposure to the COVID-19 positive contact. If additional household members become ill with COVID-19, or if the exposed person cannot avoid continued close contact, the length of quarantine may be &gt;14 days.</li><li>• If exposed sibling becomes ill during quarantine, see Scenario 2b.</li><li>• On occasion, a household member may not be exposed to other members and siblings.</li></ul>

## Scenario 2a.

A student or staff member **becomes ill** with COVID-19 symptoms Ill person has no known COVID-19 contacts in past 14 days.

Involved persons	Action
<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Isolate student or staff member.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Send student or staff home.</li></ul></li><li>• Record the symptoms reported or observed, and the date school became aware and excluded the individual.</li><li>• Advise of how to receive instruction while isolating.</li></ul>
<b>Ill person</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Seek testing from healthcare provider. If individual does not have a provider and needs assistance finding a testing site, use the testing map found <a href="#">here</a> or call 211.</li><li>• If the ill person has a negative COVID-19 viral test, see Scenario 3a.</li><li>• If the ill person does not get tested for COVID-19, see Scenario 4a.</li><li>• If the ill person has a positive COVID-19 viral test, see Scenario 5.</li></ul>
<b>Household members, including siblings</b> (if exposed person is a student)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All household members may continue school attendance while ill student is evaluated for COVID-19 infection, based upon school policy. <i>PHD authority to quarantine depends on ill person's test result.</i></li></ul>

## Scenario 2b.

A student or staff member **becomes ill** with COVID-19 symptoms Ill person was in close contact with someone who had COVID-19 in past 14 days. Close contacts are recommended to be quarantined and should not be in attendance.

Involved persons	Action
<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Isolate student or staff member.</li> <li>Send student or staff home. The ill person may be a probable case due to their symptoms and recent contact with a COVID-19 case. Review Probable information in the contact-tracing guide. Someone may not meet probable at onset of symptoms, but additional symptoms may develop while the individual is on isolation.</li> <li>Record the symptoms reported or observed, and the date school became aware/excluded the individual.</li> <li>Inform of instruction options while isolating.</li> <li>School begin school-based contact tracing to determine close contacts of the ill student or staff member. Follow contract tracing guide.</li> <li>Use Common Communication protocol to notify class/cohort/staff of a COVID-19 case. If cannot confirm that 6-feet distancing was consistently maintained during school day, recommend cohort quarantine.</li> <li>Notify exposed contacts to initiate quarantine period.</li> </ul>
<b>Ill person</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek testing from healthcare provider. If individual does not have a provider and needs assistance finding a testing site, use the testing map found <a href="#">here</a> or call 211.</li> <li>If the ill person has a negative COVID-19 viral test, see Scenario 3b.</li> <li>If the ill person does not get tested for COVID-19, see Scenario 4b.</li> <li>If the ill person has a positive COVID-19 viral test, see Scenario 5.</li> </ul>
<b>Household members, including siblings</b> (if exposed person is a student)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All household members need to quarantine at home for 14 days if a probable case. Refer to Scenario 1.</li> </ul>

### Scenario 3a.

An ill student or staff member has a **negative** COVID-19 molecular test and has no known COVID-19 contacts in past 14 days.

Involved persons	Action
<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use Illness Decision Tree &amp; School Policy for when to return.</li></ul>
<b>Ill person</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Follow healthcare provider and school guidance.</li></ul>
<b>Household members, including siblings</b> (if exposed person is a student)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Healthy household members without symptoms may continue school attendance.</li></ul>

## Scenario 3b.

An ill student or staff member has a **negative** COVID-19 viral test and was in close contact with someone who had COVID-19 in past 14 days. Close contacts are recommended to be quarantined and should not be in attendance.

Involved persons	Action
<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Isolate student or staff member.</li> <li>Send individual home (if not home already). The ill person may be a probable case due to their symptoms and recent contact with a COVID-19 case.</li> <li>School nurse or designated staff should contact CDH to verify case status and to begin collaboration on contact tracing.</li> <li>If probable - School begin school-based contact tracing to determine close contacts of the ill student or staff member. Follow contract tracing guide.</li> <li>Use Common Communication protocol to notify class/cohort/staff of a COVID-19 case.</li> <li>Notify exposed contacts to initiate quarantine period.</li> <li>Notify of how to receive instruction while on quarantine.</li> </ul>
<b>Ill person</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Even though the COVID-19 test was negative, the ill person may be considered a presumptive case because of symptoms and recent close contact; the negative test may be a false negative result and/or timing and type of test may not be in line with guidance.</li> <li>Ill person should follow PHD and healthcare provider guidance.</li> </ul>
<b>Central District Health (CDH)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Verify case.</li> <li>Provide guidance and resources to school.</li> </ul>
<b>Exposed persons, including household members (ie. Siblings to positive student)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If probable - Should quarantine. Refer to Scenario 1.</li> </ul>



## Scenario 4a.

An ill student or staff member **does not get tested** with a COVID-19 viral test. Ill person has no known COVID-19 contacts in past 14 days.

Involved persons	Action
<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Isolate student or staff member.</li><li>• Send individual home (if not home already).</li><li>• Inform how to receive instruction while isolating.</li></ul>
<b>Ill person</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use Illness Decision Tree &amp; School Policy for when to return.</li></ul>
<b>Household members, including siblings</b> (if exposed person is a student)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Follow school policy.</li></ul>

## Scenario 4b.

An ill student or staff member with COVID-19 symptoms **does not get tested** with a COVID-19 viral test.

Ill person was in close contact with someone who had COVID-19 in past 14 days.

Involved persons	Action
<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Isolate student or staff member.</li> <li>Send individual home (if not home already). The ill person may be a probable case due to their symptoms and recent contact with a COVID-19 case.</li> <li>School nurse or designated staff should contact CDH to verify case status and to begin collaboration on contact tracing.</li> <li>If probable - School begin school-based contact tracing to determine close contacts of the ill student or staff member. Follow contract tracing guide.</li> <li>Use Common Communication protocol to notify class/cohort/staff of a COVID-19 case.</li> <li>Notify exposed contacts to initiate quarantine period.</li> </ul> <p>Notify of how to receive instruction while on quarantine.</p>
<b>Ill person</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ill person should isolate at home for 10 days after symptoms first appeared <b>and</b> until 24 hours after fever is resolved, without use of fever-reducing medicine, <b>and</b> other symptoms are improving.</li> <li><b>If an alternative respiratory diagnosis is identified by a healthcare provider</b> as the cause of the person's illness (e.g., positive influenza test), COVID-19 is still not ruled out <b>as</b> co-infection is possible. The ill person should follow PHD guidance on isolation or quarantine.</li> </ul>
<b>Central District Health (CDH)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Verify case.</li> <li>Provide guidance are resources to school.</li> </ul>
<b>Exposed persons, including household members (ie. Siblings to positive student)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer to Scenario 1.</li> </ul>

## Scenario 4c.

An ill student or staff member with COVID-19 symptoms **does not get tested** with a COVID-19 viral test, and a clear non-respiratory diagnosis is identified as cause of illness. Ill person was in close contact with someone who had COVID-19 in past 14 days.

Involved persons	Action
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Send individual home (if not home already). The ill person is not considered a "presumptive case" due to alternative diagnosis.</li></ul>
Ill person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Because a clear alternative non-respiratory diagnosis is identified by a healthcare provider</b> as the cause of the person's illness (e.g., a positive urine culture in a child with fever), then usual disease-specific return-to-school guidance should be followed. However, <b>this student also requires quarantine</b>, due to recent exposure to COVID-19 case. Person must quarantine at home for <i>14 days after date of last exposure</i> to the COVID-19 positive contact (refer to Scenario 1a), <b>and</b> meet usual return-to-school guidance for diagnosis. If person develops new COVID-19 symptoms during quarantine, refer to Scenario 2b.</li></ul>
Household members, including siblings (if exposed person is a student)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Because a clear alternative non-respiratory diagnosis is identified by a healthcare provider</b> as the cause of the person's illness, then all household members may continue school attendance, as long as the family member develops no COVID-19 symptoms during quarantine. If household members shared exposure risk to COVID-19 they should continue to quarantine.</li></ul>

## Scenario 5

One student or staff member has a positive COVID-19 viral test.

Involved persons	Action
<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send student/staff home, if not already isolated.</li> <li>• School nurse or designated staff contact CDH to report following guide.</li> <li>• Begin contact tracing per guide.</li> <li>• Use Common Communication protocol to notify class/cohort/staff.</li> <li>• If cannot confirm that 6-feet distancing was consistently maintained during school day, recommend cohort quarantine.</li> <li>• Notify exposed contacts to initiate quarantine period.</li> <li>• Inform how to receive instruction while isolating.</li> </ul>
<b>Ill person</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Isolate at home for 10 days after symptoms first appeared <b>and</b> until 24 hours after fever is resolved, without use of fever-reducing medicine, <b>and</b> other symptoms are improving.</li> </ul>
<b>Central District Health (CDH)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verify case.</li> <li>• Work with school to review contact tracing.</li> <li>• Provide resource and guidance to school.</li> </ul>
<b>Exposed persons, including household members (ie. Siblings to positive student)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refer to Scenario 1.</li> </ul>

## Scenario 6

**Two or more people** within same cohort have a **positive** COVID-19 viral test within 14 days.

- Consult with CDH to determine if these situations are a cluster/outbreak and may require additional quarantines, temporary short-term dismissal, or 14 day switch to virtual or pause.

## Scenario 7

**Two or more people** in different cohorts have a **positive** COVID-19 viral test within 14 days.

- Consult with CDH to determine if these situations are a cluster/outbreak and may require additional quarantines, temporary short-term dismissal, or 14 day switch to virtual or pause.

## **Communication Tools & Resources**

Each of the scenarios require a differentiated approach to communication. School and district leaders should customize these tools for their local scenario and context.

### **Plan Communication Methods:**

When it comes to communicating with staff, students and families, school and district leaders are a trusted source. Parents, families and the community want to feel listened to, valued, and considered in decision making regarding events that impact the school community.

To the extent possible, schools should initiate routine status updates to keep staff, students and families informed before a crisis occurs. Build your network of key messengers, ensuring all communities have access to relevant and timely information and post information and resources on the homepage of your website. Follow these tips:

- Keep it simple! (who, what, where, when, why, how, how much).
- Be clear, concise, and factual. Information moves quickly in times of crisis.
- Use methods that work best for families and students which can direct people to additional resources and information on the web, which may include:
  - Voice
  - Text
  - Push notifications
  - Email
  - Social media
  - Web

## **Public Reporting of School Cases**

### **Why is it important to report outbreaks of positive COVID-19 cases?**

Public reporting of outbreaks can help people better understand how disease transmission is happening in their communities. For example, if there are suddenly many more cases in a smaller county, reporting of a school outbreak responsible for many new cases can better illustrate why cases have spiked. This information also can prompt people within a particular area or location to take steps to protect themselves, such as by social distancing or wearing face coverings.

## **Role of State and Local Public Health Authorities**

### **What is CDH's role in responding to outbreaks in school districts around the state?**

CDH supports local public health authorities and schools in responding to cases and outbreaks through data sharing, technical assistance—recommendations for limiting the spread of the virus within a facility—and case investigation, which includes interviewing individuals who test positive for COVID-19 and tracing their close contacts.

## Communication Templates & Best Practices

Ensure you have a process in place and those involved understand it.

- District/school may choose to do a general message to your entire school community about a positive case followed by a targeted message to those effected.
- District/school may choose to only do a targeted message to those effected.
  - For close contacts please include they should quarantine 14 days since their last exposure.
  - You can also include that public health is still doing their investigation and dates may change, but they will be notified if so.
  - Please clearly define quarantine and explain what to do if they become ill (seek testing, hcp advice, inform the school).
  - **CDH may not be reaching out to contacts. Do not include that CDH will communicate with contacts unless you have confirmed with CDH.**
- Identify one person to send communication to your school community – this is generally not the teacher and should be a single contact to help ensure messaging is consistent and multiple messages are not sent.
  - It has been found helpful for a teacher or principal to send a follow up or encouragement to review message and ask questions if it is sent out by district administration. Many families express they are receiving many messages this year and not reading everything.
- Many families are concerned about virtual learning or child's work while on quarantining
  - Having messaging available or a place to ask questions is helpful

## **Appendix**

- Seen below

## **Letter Templates**

- Seen below



# COVID-19 | LEVELS OF COMMUNITY SPREAD FOR SCHOOLS

Central District Health | Ada | Boise | Elmore | Valley

CDH uses a two-week average of daily COVID-19 cases calculated per 100,000 people in a given county. The categories are weekly assessments of community spread and are updated on Mondays. For counties with fewer than 25,000 people, case rate thresholds have been adjusted because small changes in reported cases can greatly impact rates.

They are recommendations only; final decisions are made by local school boards. If category designations are adjusted, then schools and families should expect transition time as changes may or may not be immediate.

Private and charter schools should use the category based on the address of their facility and associated school district boundary. Corresponding data is updated every Monday by noon on [CDH's Tableau Page](#). See the respective county tab for related data.



**ADA & ELMORE COUNTIES**  
CASE RATE OF 3.0 OR LESS

**BOISE & VALLEY COUNTIES**  
CASE RATE OF 5.0 OR LESS

► **LEVEL OF OPERATION**

School buildings open with physical distancing and sanitation



**ADA & ELMORE COUNTIES**  
CASE RATE GREATER THAN 3.0 BUT LESS THAN 20.0

**BOISE & VALLEY COUNTIES**  
CASE RATE GREATER THAN 5.0 BUT LESS THAN 30.0

► **LEVEL OF OPERATION**

School buildings open but option of limited/staggered use of school buildings with physical distancing and sanitation



**ADA & ELMORE COUNTIES**  
CASE RATE OF 20.0 OR GREATER

**BOISE & VALLEY COUNTIES**  
CASE RATE OF 30.0 OR GREATER

► **LEVEL OF OPERATION**

Minimal use of school buildings and limited in-person instruction unless otherwise recommended by Central District Health

**2019 Census Bureau population estimates:**

**Ada Co: 481,587 | Elmore Co: 27,511**

**Boise Co: 7,831 | Valley Co: 11,392**

► **Case Rate Calculation Example:**

If 80 cases were reported over 14 days in Elmore County

1. Calculate Average Cases Per Day:  $80 \text{ cases} \div 14 \text{ days} = 5.71 \text{ average cases per day}$
2. Convert to Case Rate:  $5.71 \div 27,511 \text{ (Elmore Co Population)} = 0.0002075 \text{ cases per person in county}$
3. Convert Case Rate to per 100,000:  $0.0002075 \times 100,000 = 20.75 \text{ cases per 100,000 population}$   
= 20.75 for the 2-week average rate / Red Category



[cdh.idaho.gov/covid](https://cdh.idaho.gov/covid)

COVID-19 Call Center: 208-321-2222 - Open M-F 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

continued ►

revised 10/19/2020

# COVID-19 | LEVELS OF COMMUNITY SPREAD FOR SCHOOLS

Central District Health | Ada | Boise | Elmore | Valley



## Possible Differences for Rural Communities

CDH recognizes the potential for community spread differences within its rural counties of Boise, Elmore, and Valley, and the role that geographic distance might play in a community's risk. For instance, Basin School District and Horseshoe Bend School District are both located in Boise County, but are approximately 30 miles apart and an hour's drive. Because of the significant geographic distance, it is possible that two school districts within the same county could, at times, be in different risk categories. CDH will work directly with the school districts and independent schools if this situation arises.

## Resources

- **CDH COVID-19 Directory Page:** [cdh.idaho.gov/covid](https://cdh.idaho.gov/covid)
- **Latest Local Information, Data & Links:** [cdh.idaho.gov/dac-coronavirus](https://cdh.idaho.gov/dac-coronavirus)
- **Direct Link to CDH Tableau Data Site:**  
<https://public.tableau.com/profile/central.district.health#!/vizhome/CDHCOVID-19/CDHCOVID-19Information>
- **CDH COVID-19 Schools page:** [cdh.idaho.gov/dac-coronavirus-schools](https://cdh.idaho.gov/dac-coronavirus-schools)
- **CDH COVID-19 Call Center:** 208-321-2222 - Open M-F 8:30 am - 4:30 pm; Closed on holidays

**Letter for Positive Case in School – Fill in Red (XXXX) areas with applicable information:**

Dear (XXXX) Parent, Guardian & Staff Member:

(XXX) School is committed to keeping families informed, and it's our goal to be transparent within the bounds of our students', staffs', and community's rights to confidentiality. We are writing to update you on the most current developments regarding COVID-19.

Today, we were informed that an individual within our school community has tested positive for COVID-19. Please keep his/her health and recovery in mind.

Our school is working with (Name of local public health district) to identify and contact those who may have come into close contact with the individual. A (school nurse) from (name of school) will be notifying parents, staff, and faculty who had closest contact to the individual testing positive for COVID-19. At this time, if you are not contacted by (email or phone) by (XXX date) then your student is not considered to be a close contact, but should continue to monitor their health and follow current safety protocols and mitigations strategies.

We have protocols in place for positive cases, which includes the following:

- Communicating directly to our school community
- Intensifying cleaning and disinfection protocols per CDC and FDA guidance
- Coordinating with (name of local public health district) on our next course of action, which is dependent on the level or risk to our school community. Such courses of actions could include:
  - Low-risk: no further action and normal school operations continue;
  - Medium risk: some students and staff may have had an increase in risk of exposure, and they may be contacted with further instruction on home isolation or to monitor symptoms for 14 days;
  - High-risk: multiple students and staff have been identified as a close contact and a short-term closure of school is needed to stop the potential spread.

We will continue monitoring any developments and plan accordingly in partnership with (name of local public health district.) We will update you as we have more information. In the meantime, please seek information from credible sources during these challenging times:

- [Central District Health](#); Informational Call Center 208-321-2222 (or name of local public health district + contact info)
- [Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- (School Website)
- (School District Website)

We encourage you to continue to take care of yourselves and one another.

Sincerely,

XXXX

**Letter/Email for Positive Case with No Close Contacts Identified - Fill in Red (XXXX) areas with applicable information:**

Dear (XXXX) Parent, Guardian & Staff Member:

(XXX) School District is committed to keeping families informed, and it's our goal to be transparent within the bounds of our students', staffs', and community's rights to confidentiality. We are writing to update you on the most current developments regarding COVID-19.

(Name of local public health district and affected school) have completed their contact tracing efforts and concluded that no close contacts were identified (close contact is defined as being within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes). We commend our students, families, and staff for their efforts in maintaining our safety protocols and mitigations strategies, and emphasize the continued need to do so while at school and out in our community.

In order to keep our school safe, please continue to monitor for signs and symptoms of illness and to take the following COVID-19 precautions:

(Include any state or regional standard recommendations, such as Idaho Rebounds):

- Engage in physical distancing of at least six feet
- Wear face coverings in public places
- Stay home if sick
- Practice good hand hygiene
- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Disinfect surfaces and objects regularly

Sincerely,

(XXXXXXXXXX)

**Letter/Email for Positive Case in Classroom with No Close Contacts Identified - Fill in Red (XXXX) areas with applicable information:**

Dear (XXXX) Parent, Guardian & Staff Member:

(XXX) School District is committed to keeping families informed, and it's our goal to be transparent within the bounds of our students', staffs', and community's rights to confidentiality. We are writing to update you on the most current developments regarding COVID-19.

(Name of local public health district and/or affected school) has completed their contact tracing efforts and concluded that no close contacts were identified in this classroom setting (close contact is defined as being within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes). We commend our students, families, and staff for their efforts in maintaining our safety protocols and mitigations strategies, and emphasize the continued need to do so while at school and out in our community.

In order to keep our school safe, please continue to monitor for signs and symptoms of illness and to take the following COVID-19 precautions:

(Include any state or regional standard recommendations, such as Idaho Rebounds):

- Engage in physical distancing of at least six feet
- Wear face coverings in public places
- Stay home if sick
- Practice good hand hygiene
- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Disinfect surfaces and objects regularly

Sincerely,

(XXXXXXXX)

**Letter for Positive Case in School with Associated Close Contacts Identified - Fill in Red (XXXX) areas with applicable information:**

Dear (XXXX) Parent, Guardian & Staff Member:

(XXX) School is committed to keeping families informed, and it's our goal to be transparent within the bounds of our students', staffs', and community's rights to confidentiality. We are writing to update you on the most current developments regarding COVID-19.

We received notification that an individual within our school community has tested positive for COVID-19. In addition to this positive individual, there have been close contacts identified that are being contacted by the (school nurse) to provide guidance on next steps. Most within our population are considered low risk for this exposure. Please remember to keep the health and recovery of all individuals impacted by this in mind.

We are working with health officials on appropriate next steps for those directly impacted by this exposure. In some cases, they are helping us to identify and contact those who may have come into close contact with the individual. A (school nurse) from (school name) will be notifying parents, staff, and faculty who had closest contact to the individual testing positive for COVID-19. At this time, if you are not contacted by (email or phone) by (XXX date) then your student is not considered to be a close contact, but should continue to monitor their health and follow current safety protocols and mitigations strategies.

We have protocols in place for positive cases, which includes the following:

- Communicating directly to our school community- Particularly those in the classroom/location determined to be at highest risk.
- Intensifying cleaning and disinfection protocols per CDC and FDA guidance
- Coordinating with (name of local public health district) on our next course of action, which is dependent on the level or risk to our school community. Such courses of actions could include:
  - Low-risk: no further action and normal school operations continue;
  - Medium risk: some students and staff may have had an increase in risk of exposure, and they may be contacted with further instruction on home isolation or to monitor symptoms for 14 days;
  - High-risk: multiple students and staff have been identified as a close contact and a short-term closure of school is needed to stop the potential spread.

We will continue monitoring any developments and plan accordingly in partnership with (name of local public health district.) We will update you as we have more information. In the meantime, please seek information from credible sources during these challenging times and work to keep yourselves and others safe:

- [Central District Health](#): Informational Call Center 208-321-2222 (or name of local public health district + contact info)
- [Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- (School Website)
- (School District Website)

Sincerely, (XXXXX)

**Letter for Positive Case in Classroom with Unknown Associated Close Contact Information - Fill in Red (XXXX) areas with applicable information:**

Dear (XXXX) Parent, Guardian & Staff Member:

(XXX) School District is committed to keeping families informed, and it's our goal to be transparent within the bounds of our students', staffs', and community's rights to confidentiality. We are writing to update you on the most current developments regarding COVID-19.

Health officials have been working with us and have identified a positive COVID-19 illness in one of our classrooms and are recommending a short-term dismissal of students and staff associated with this setting. At this time, this classroom will move to online instruction until (XXXX) to allow for (XXXXX (e.g. staff and students to stay home and monitor symptoms for 14 days).)

We have protocols in place for positive cases, which includes the following:

- Communicating directly to our school community
- Intensifying cleaning and disinfection protocols
- Coordinating with (name of local public health district) on our next course of action

This classroom can re-open safely after completing the 14-day quarantine to ensure staff and students are no longer at risk. If you have not received notification of potential risk in this event, please be mindful others that may be impacted and are working to accommodate quarantine guidelines. Additional measures will be taken by our school to ensure the classroom/location impacted receives a thorough cleaning and sanitization in accordance to recommended guidelines provided in the links below. We will continue monitoring any developments and plan accordingly in partnership with (name of local public health district.) We will update you as we have more information. In the meantime, please seek information from credible sources during these challenging times:

- [Central District Health](#); Informational Call Center 208-321-2222 (or name of local public health district)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- (School Website)
- (School District Website)

We encourage you to continue to take care of yourselves and one another, and to continue following COVID-19 community precautions and mitigation strategies.

Sincerely,

(XXXXX)

**Letter for Short-Term Dismissal - Fill in Red (XXXX) areas with applicable information:**

Dear (XXXX) Parent, Guardian & Staff Member:

(XXX) School District is committed to keeping families informed, and it's our goal to be transparent within the bounds of our students', staffs', and community's rights to confidentiality. We are writing to update you on the most current developments regarding COVID-19.

Health officials have been working with us and have identified a cluster of COVID-19 illnesses at our school and are recommending a short-term dismissal of students and most staff. At this time, we are closing the school until XXXX to allow for (XXXXX (e.g. staff and students to stay home and monitor symptoms for 14 days).)

We have protocols in place for positive cases, which includes the following:

- Communicating directly to our school community
- Intensifying cleaning and disinfection protocols
- Coordinating with (name of local public health district) on our next course of action

Schools can re-open safely after short-term closure. We will continue monitoring any developments and plan accordingly in partnership with (name of local public health district.) We will update you as we have more information. In the meantime, please seek information from credible sources during these challenging times:

- [Central District Health](#); Informational Call Center 208-321-2222 (or name of local public health district)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- (School Website)
- (School District Website)

We encourage you to continue to take care of yourselves and one another, and to continue following COVID-19 community precautions and mitigation strategies.

Sincerely,

(XXXXX)



**Letter for Positive Case in School –Recommendation for 14-Day Quarantine- No Direct Follow-Up from Health Department Fill in Red (XXXX) areas with applicable information:**

Dear (XXXX) Parent, Guardian & Staff Member:

(XXX) School is committed to keeping families informed, and it's our goal to be transparent while respecting our students', staffs', and community's rights to confidentiality. We are writing to update you on the most current developments regarding COVID-19.

Today, (date), we were notified that an individual within our school community (or affiliated with this specific team/event) has tested positive for COVID-19 and may have exposed others to the illness. Please keep his/her health and recovery in mind.

Health officials are working with us to identify those who may have increased risk of exposure from this event. If you are in receipt of this letter, we are recommending a 14-day quarantine for all individuals with direct exposure to (XXX event on XXX date.) You may not be contacted directly by Central District Health for follow up but are encouraged to watch for signs and symptoms of illness for the duration of the 14-day quarantine. Should signs or symptoms occur, please seek medical advice from a primary care provider. (You may add you would like them to call the school nurse)

We have protocols in place for positive cases, which includes the following:

- Communicating directly to our school community
- Restricting activities and advising individuals to follow 14-day \*quarantine guidelines.
- Intensifying cleaning and disinfection protocols per CDC and FDA guidance
- Staggering lunches to reduce intermixing
- Coordinating with CDH on our next course of action

We will continue monitoring any developments and plan accordingly in partnership with CDH and will update you if we have more information. In the meantime, please seek information from credible sources during these challenging times:

- [Central District Health](#); Informational Call Center 208-321-2222 (or name of local public health district + contact info)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- (School Website)
- (School District Website)

We encourage you to continue to take care of yourselves and one another.

Sincerely,

(XXXXX)

\*Quarantine definition – Quarantine refers to the practice of separating individuals who have had close contact with someone with COVID-19 to determine whether they develop symptoms or test positive for the disease. Quarantine also reduces the risk of transmission if an individual is later found to have COVID-19.

Quarantine for COVID-19 should last for a period of 14 days after the exposure has ended. Ideally, each quarantined individual should be quarantined in a single location. Quarantine includes not attending school, childcare, work, or visiting the community or having visitors at the location of quarantine. The exception is to seek medical care.