

**August 22, 2022**

## **Interim Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention for Students, Teachers and Staff in Child Care, K-12 Schools, and Day Camp Settings**

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) provides the following updated interim guidance for children, teachers, and staff in child care, K-12 schools, and camp settings. This revised guidance maintains that quarantine is no longer routinely recommended for asymptomatic individuals after exposure to COVID-19 infected individuals.

In general, masks are not routinely recommended in these settings, indoors or outdoors, except when returning to school/child care after isolation as specified below. Any individual who wishes to continue to mask, including those who face higher risk from COVID-19, may do so as an option. Masking is never recommended in these settings while the individual is eating, drinking, sleeping, or for children under the age of 2.

Isolation and Quarantine Guidance:

- **Symptomatic persons** (regardless of vaccination status) should begin isolation at home and undergo testing as recommended by their healthcare providers. The day symptoms began should be counted as day 0.

- **Persons who test positive** (regardless of vaccination status) should isolate themselves at home for at least 5 days. If they are asymptomatic or symptoms are resolving and they have been fever-free for 24 hours, they may return to programming after Day 5.:

- If the individual is able to mask, they should do so through Day 10 OR

- If the individual is unable or unwilling to mask during this time, these persons should either isolate for 10 full days (including children under age 2), or follow the [CDC "test based strategy"](#), which now includes two negative antigen tests after 5 days of isolation, in addition to being fever-free for 24 hours and with other symptoms improving. The first test should be on day 6 or after, and the second test should be 48 hours after the first test.

- Schools with the resources to do so may consider offering rapid testing on-site to symptomatic individuals and/or distributing at-home rapid antigen test kits for testing at home.

- Students or staff who come to school or child care with symptoms or develop symptoms while at school or ECE program should be asked to wear a well-fitting mask while in the building and be sent home and pursue medical evaluation and/or testing as appropriate. Some schools may have testing resources available at school. Symptomatic people should be separated from others as much as possible; children should be

supervised by a designated caregiver who is wearing a well-fitting mask or respirator until they leave school grounds.

- **For persons who have had recent confirmed or suspected exposure to an infected person** (regardless of vaccination status), quarantine is no longer recommended for K12 School and Early Care and Education settings . These individuals may continue to attend programming as long as they remain asymptomatic.

- o Masks: Students/staff that attend programming during the 10 days after exposure may choose to wear a mask around others indoors. The date of last exposure to the person with COVID-19 is considered Day 0.

- o Testing: Persons who have had recent exposure may consider testing for COVID-19  $\geq$  5 days after exposure (or sooner, if they are symptomatic), irrespective of their vaccination status. Schools may use available VDH testing resources to support this testing. Test to Stay is no longer routinely recommended. Schools that choose to implement Test to Stay programs can contact VDH for more information on available testing resources and/or guidance.

- If the school or facility is experiencing an outbreak of COVID-19 that has been difficult to control or is unusual in size or scope, regional and local epidemiologists may apply professional judgment and recommend traditional quarantine and isolation standards be applied until the situation is stabilized.