

# Addendum 5

## Adapt, Advance, Achieve: Connecticut's Plan to Learn and Grow Together

Connecticut State Department of Education



## Interim Guidance for Responding to COVID-19 Scenarios in Connecticut School Districts

August 6, 2020 (Updated January 4, 2021)



The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) and State Department of Public Health (DPH) have collaborated to provide school districts with guidance and protocols for responding to specific COVID-19 scenarios that may occur during the 2020–21 school year. This guidance complements the Containment Plan (p. 23) requirement of [Adapt, Advance, Achieve: Connecticut's Plan to Learn and Grow Together](#), which instructs school districts to develop written protocols for containment and immediate response related to symptoms of, diagnosis of, or exposure to the virus. Guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) informs the specific scenarios and actions that follow. CDC guidance and public health data are evolving and therefore, this guidance may be updated accordingly.

This document addresses issues when a student or staff person has or develops: possible signs and symptoms of COVID-19; a diagnosis of COVID-19; or exposure to a person diagnosed with COVID-19. It describes immediate actions for removing an individual from the school setting and when to safely return them to school. School district leaders are encouraged to use this as a guide, in consultation with public health experts, including school nurses, school medical advisors, local health directors and in consideration of all specific circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

While this guidance is representative of acceptable public health practices for limiting the spread of COVID-19 in schools based on the current CDC and CT DPH recommendations in place, school districts should consider local variables when choosing the approach to implementation, including but not limited to health and safety, equity and access, the school district's specific administrative needs, input from local public health, and consultation with legal counsel.

Event	Location of Event	Testing Result PCR or antigen tests can be accepted <sup>3</sup>	Isolation/Quarantine <b>Isolation</b> = when you are experiencing symptoms or have a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 <b>Quarantine</b> = when you have been exposed but you are not experiencing symptoms
<p><b>Individual has COVID-19 symptoms<sup>1</sup> but has NOT had close contact<sup>2</sup> to a person diagnosed with COVID-19</b></p>	<p><b>If at home:</b> stay home, notify the school immediately (do not wait until the beginning of the next school day), and <b>get tested</b>.</p>	Individual tests <sup>3</sup> <b>negative</b>	Return to school once there are no symptoms for 24 hours.
	<p><b>If at school:</b> students should remain masked, adhere to strict physical distancing, be assessed by the school nurse or school medical advisor (if available), stay in the isolation room (with adult supervision), until picked up to go home, consult a healthcare provider, and get tested. If symptoms arise <b>on the bus</b>, students should remain masked and follow the remaining measures listed above upon arrival to school. They must not be sent home on the bus.</p>	Individual tests <b>positive</b>	<p>Remain home (except to get medical care), monitor symptoms, notify the school immediately, notify personal close contacts, assist the school in contact tracing efforts<sup>4</sup>, and answer phone calls from public health officials/contact tracing staff.</p> <p>Stay in self-isolation<sup>5</sup> for at least 10 days since the onset of symptoms and until at least 24 hours have passed with no fever<sup>6</sup> (without fever-reducing medications) and with improvement in other COVID-19 symptoms.</p>
	<p><b>If at school:</b> staff members should remain masked, adhere to strict physical distancing, immediately contact leadership (per district protocols), go home, consult a healthcare provider, and get tested.</p> <p>If a staff or student is ill enough to require transport to a healthcare facility, notify EMS that COVID-19 is a concern.</p>	Individual <b>is not tested or test results not yet available</b>	<p>Presume COVID-19. Stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days since the onset of symptoms <b>and</b> until at least 24 hours have passed with no fever (without fever-reducing medications) and with improvement in other symptoms.</p> <p>Can return to school earlier if obtains note from healthcare provider with a specific, confirmed alternate diagnosis.</p>

Event	Location of Event	Testing Result PCR or antigen tests can be accepted <sup>3</sup>	Isolation/Quarantine Isolation = when you are experiencing symptoms or have a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 Quarantine = when you have been exposed but you are not experiencing symptoms
<p><b>Individual has COVID-19 symptoms<sup>1</sup> AND had close contact<sup>2</sup> to a person diagnosed with COVID-19</b></p>	<p><b>If at home:</b> stay home, notify the school immediately (do not wait until the beginning of the next school day), and <b>get tested</b>.</p>	Individual tests <b>negative</b>	Stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days since the onset of symptoms and until at least 24 hours have passed with no fever (without fever-reducing medications) and with improvement in other symptoms.
	<p><b>If at school:</b> students should remain masked, adhere to strict physical distancing, be assessed by the school nurse or school medical advisor (if available), stay in the isolation room (with adult supervision), until picked up to go home, consult a healthcare provider, and get tested. If symptoms arise <b>on the bus</b>, students should remain masked and follow the remaining measures listed above upon arrival to school. They must not be sent home on the bus.</p>	Individual tests <b>positive</b>	<p>Remain home (except to get medical care), monitor symptoms, notify the school, notify personal close contacts, assist public health and the school in contact tracing efforts.</p> <p>Stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days since the onset of symptoms and until at least 24 hours have passed with no fever (without fever-reducing medications) and with improvement in other symptoms.</p>
	<p><b>If at school:</b> staff members should remain masked, adhere to strict physical distancing, immediately contact leadership (per district protocols), go home, consult a healthcare provider, and get tested.</p> <p>If a staff or student is ill enough to require transport to a healthcare facility, notify EMS that COVID-19 is a concern.</p>	Individual <b>is not tested or test results not yet available</b>	Presume COVID-19. Stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days since the onset of symptoms and until at least 24 hours have passed with no fever (without fever-reducing medications) and with improvement in other symptoms.

Event	Location of Event	Testing Result PCR or antigen tests can be accepted <sup>3</sup>	Isolation/Quarantine <b>Isolation</b> = when you are experiencing symptoms or have a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 <b>Quarantine</b> = when you have been exposed but you are not experiencing symptoms
<p><b>Individual does not have COVID-19 symptoms BUT had close contact<sup>2</sup> to someone diagnosed with COVID-19</b></p>	<p><b>If at home:</b> stay home, notify the school immediately (do not wait until the beginning of the next school day), and <b>get tested</b>.</p> <p><b>If at school:</b> students should remain masked, adhere to strict physical distancing, be assessed by the school nurse or school medical advisor (if available), be picked up to go home, consult a health care provider, and get tested. Students who do not have symptoms may remain in the health room until they are picked up, they do not have to be sent to the isolation room. They must not be sent home on the bus.</p>	<p>Individual tests <b>negative</b> <b>(If utilizing test to shorten quarantine period, ensure testing sample taken no earlier than 5 days after last exposure consistent with <a href="#">CT DPH Interim Recommendations</a>.<sup>7</sup>)</b></p>	<p>Remain home in self-quarantine<sup>7</sup> for the recommended 10 days from last exposure to the person diagnosed with COVID-19 consistent with school district policy. If school district policy allows for exit from quarantine after 7 days with a documented negative test result, exit quarantine but continue daily symptom monitoring for an additional 7 days (days 8–14).</p> <p>For any length quarantine, if any symptoms develop, immediately self-isolate and contact the local public health department and healthcare provider.</p> <p>Increase attentiveness to mitigating actions.<sup>7</sup></p>
	<p><b>If at school:</b> staff members should remain masked, adhere to strict physical distancing, immediately contact leadership (per district protocols), go home, consult a healthcare provider, and get tested.</p>	<p>Individual tests <b>positive</b></p>	<p>Remain home (except to get medical care), monitor symptoms, notify the school, notify personal close contacts, assist public health and the school in contact tracing efforts.</p> <p>Stay home until 10 days have passed since date of the positive COVID-19 test or if symptoms occur, 10 days since symptoms began.</p>
		<p>Individual <b>is not tested</b></p>	<p>Remain home in self-quarantine for 10 days from last exposure to the person diagnosed with COVID-19. Continue daily symptom monitoring for an additional 4 days (days 11–14). If any symptoms develop, immediately self-isolate and contact the local public health department and healthcare provider.</p> <p>Increase attentiveness to mitigating actions.<sup>7</sup></p>

## End notes

- 1 **Key COVID-19 signs and symptoms are:** feeling feverish, measured temp 100.4 F or more, chills, uncontrolled new cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, loss of taste or smell. There are other more nonspecific signs and symptoms. For a full list, see CDC web page at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>
- 2 **Close contact:** Spending a total of at least 15 minutes (within 24 hours) within 6 feet of a person with confirmed COVID-19, or a direct exposure to possibly infected droplets of saliva or nasal mucus (e.g., being sneezed or coughed on in the face). See CDC web page at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>
- 3 **COVID-19 test for school/work attendance:** This is a viral test, NOT an antibody test. Tests for the presence of the virus must be used. Antibody tests, which test for the individual's immune system reaction to a past viral infection should not be used to determine school attendance (see CDC information on COVID-19 tests at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/testing.html>). This can include a molecular test (often called a PCR test) or an antigen test. A negative antigen test in a person with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or a close contact without symptoms should be followed up with a PCR test. Find DPH guidance on the use of antigen tests here: <https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/HAI/COVID-19-Healthcare-Guidance>.
- 4 **Contact tracing:** A public health intervention in which the contacts of a person with a communicable disease are identified, and possibly tested, quarantined or isolated to interrupt the transmission of the virus in a population. <https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/ContaCT>
- 5 **Self-Isolation:** Individual with signs or symptoms of COVID-19, or a positive test, stays home until no longer infectious for at least 10 days since the onset of symptoms **and** until at least 24 hours have passed with no fever (without fever-reducing medications) and with improvement in other COVID-19 symptoms. See CDC web page at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/isolation.html>
- 6 **Fever:** Measured temperature of 100.4 F or higher
- 7 **Self-Quarantine:** Individual identified as a close contact without symptoms stays home for 10 days since last exposure to someone who was diagnosed with COVID-19. Continue daily symptom monitoring for an additional 4 days (day 11–14). When diagnostic testing resources are sufficient and available, a quarantine period of 7 days with a negative test result, consistent with [CT DPH Interim Recommendations](#), is also acceptable; continue daily symptom monitoring for an additional 7 days (day 8–14). If any symptoms develop, immediately self-isolate and contact the local public health authority and healthcare provider.

For individuals returning from self-quarantine, for the balance of the 14-day period after exposure, school districts should: (1) ensure adherence to mitigating actions including strict supervision of mask wearing and social distancing; (2) restrict students from participating in athletics or other group extracurricular activities (for the full 14 days); and (3) consider limiting educator and staff duties that require sustained and close contact with other individuals (within 6 feet for 15 minutes or more within 24 hours). See [CT DPH Interim Guidance on the Length of Quarantine for Contacts of Persons with SARS-CoV-2 Infection](#).