

Acoma Department of Education
Response to COVID-19 Positives & Exposure

Close Contact: What is it?

A close contact exposure means a person was closer than 6 feet or 2 meters (about 2 arm lengths) from someone who tested positive for COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or longer within a 24-hour period. This is a cumulative total meaning you could have different exposure events throughout the day. For example, you could be closer than 6 feet to the person who tested positive 3 different times in the day for 5-minutes each time, bringing the total time you were in close contact to 15 minutes. You may also have a close contact exposure if:

- You cared for someone at home who is sick with COVID-19.
- You had direct physical contact with the person who has COVID-19 (hugged or kissed them).
- You shared eating or drinking utensils with the person who has COVID-19.
- The person who has COVID-19 sneezed, coughed, or somehow got respiratory droplets on you.

Remember: Exposure is 6 feet for a total of 15 minutes (6/15)

If you were in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, up to 2 days before he or she had symptoms, you were exposed to the virus and should quarantine. Even if the person who has COVID-19 didn't have any symptoms, he or she is infectious up to 2 days before they were tested.

In a school setting, close contact exposure means:

- Anyone in a school setting (like a classroom) or in a school bus who sat 6 feet or 2 meters in the front, back, or to the side of the person who tested positive for a total of 15 minutes or longer.
- A teacher, employee (such as a paraprofessional or bus driver), or visitor who was 6 feet or 2 meters for a total of 15 minutes or longer from the person who tested positive.
- Anyone who was closer than 6 feet or 2 meters for a total of 15 minutes or longer to the person who tested positive during extracurricular activities (sports, dances, clubs); during a school gathering (assemblies, dances); or during lunch or free periods.

If the Health Command or point of contact at the school are unable to determine who was in close contact with the person who tested positive, everyone in the classroom, school bus, lunch or free period, extracurricular activity (sports, dances, clubs), or school gathering (assemblies, dances) is considered exposed.

If students, teachers, or employees live with someone who has COVID-19, how long do they have to quarantine?

A household contact is a person who lives with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. Household contacts are at a much higher risk of getting infected with the virus.

Students, teachers, or employees who are a household contact should quarantine for 10 days from the last day of exposure to the person who tested positive. You must finish the entire 10-day quarantine, even if you don't have symptoms or test negative. You may not end quarantine before 10 days.

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It can be very hard to stay isolated from people who live in your home. If you live with a person who tests positive for COVID-19, you may keep having exposures and may need to quarantine longer than 10 days. Every time you come into close contact with the person who tested positive while they are infectious, your quarantine starts over because you were exposed to the virus again.

What information can a school disclose when someone in the school tests positive for COVID-19?

A school may disclose that someone at the school tested positive for COVID-19, if the facts alone or in combination with other information released, do not identify the person.

The school may not publicly release the personal identifying information (PII) of the student such as the student's name or whether they tested positive for COVID-19. The school may not publicly release the name of a teacher or employee who tested positive for COVID-19.

* Under the US Department of Education, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a school is allowed to disclose student PII to the Health Command on a case-by-case basis if it is necessary to protect the health and safety of the student or others, without the written consent of an eligible student or parent or guardian.

Determining Close Contact Exposures

The point of contact (POC) will work closely with the Health Command to determine who came into close contact at school with the person who tested positive. The POC may need to talk with a teacher or coach to understand who a student was in close contact with. Sharing this information must be limited to the least number of school officials possible and each must be notified that the information is confidential and cannot be re-disclosed or shared with anyone else.

Schools will determine close contact exposures:

To protect the privacy of the person who tested positive as much as possible and help with contact tracing efforts, schools will do the following:

- Written seating charts for each class or extracurricular activity
- Transportation seating chart for each bus or vehicle transporting students
- Employee commuting record for personal vehicles using a share-ride

Exposures to COVID-19

Anyone who comes into close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 should get tested for COVID-19. Wait 7 days after the exposure to get tested. This lets enough of the virus build up in your body to be detected by the test. Getting tested too soon can result in an inaccurate test result. Testing locations can be provided by the Health Command or be found at

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the New Mexico Department of Health COVID 19 Screening and Testing page at <https://cv.nmhealth.org/public-health-screening-and-testing/>.

Do students, teachers, or employees need a doctor’s note to return to work/school?

If students, teachers, or employees test negative for COVID-19, do they need a doctor’s note to go back to school or work? Students, teachers, and employees who were exposed DO NOT need to quarantine don’t need to provide proof of a negative test result to return to school or work. Students, teachers, and employees who were exposed and met the criteria to quarantine, must provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test to return to school or work sooner than 10 days. The Health Command will determine what documentation meets this requirement.

Quarantine & Criteria:

Students, teachers, or employees who were exposed to someone with COVID-19 at school do not have to quarantine if:

- The school can verify that both people were wearing face masks (the person who was exposed and the person who tested positive) as defined by tribal and/or federal/state health guidelines, and
- The person who was exposed does not have any symptoms of COVID-19.

If at any time during the 14 days after their exposure a student, teacher, or employee develops symptoms of COVID-19, he or she should isolate and get tested right away. If the person does not have symptoms, he or she should wait 7 days after they were exposed to get tested.

When can students, teachers, or employees who are exposed to COVID-19 end quarantine?

Students, teachers, or employees who were not wearing a mask at the time of exposure or who were exposed to someone who was not wearing a mask may end quarantine:

- On day 10 without testing. If you don’t have symptoms of COVID-19, you can end quarantine 10 days after the last time you had close contact with the person who tested positive.
- On day 7 with a negative test result. You can get tested on day 7 of your quarantine.

You can end quarantine if your test is negative, and you do not have any symptoms of COVID-19. You must wait at least 7 days after the exposure to be tested. You must continue to quarantine until you get your test results back. Students, teachers, or employees who live with someone who tests positive for COVID-19 must quarantine for 10 days from the last day of exposure to the person who tested positive. You must finish the entire 10-day quarantine, even if you don’t have symptoms or test negative.

What is the proper way to wear a face mask?

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The school is responsible for verifying that face masks were worn correctly at the time of the exposure. This means the person who tests positive and the person who came into close contact with them were both properly wearing a face mask.

A face mask that is worn correctly must:

- Cover the **nose and mouth** without openings that can be seen through.
- Be made of synthetic fabrics.
- Secure under the chin.
- Fit snugly against the nose and sides of the face.
- Not have exhalation valves or vents.

Childcare and Classroom Closures:

Classrooms will be subject to closure if a teacher, staff, or student has the following:

- Tested positive for COVID-19
- Discloses to the principal that they have COVID-19 symptoms
- Demonstrates signs and symptoms of COVID-19
- Discloses that they have been exposed to a person who has tested positive for COVID-19

Childcare & School Building Closures

Buildings will be closed on the following basis:

- There are 5% of the total population of staff, teachers, and/or students in the building with COVID-19 positives and/or exposures.

If a closure occurs, there will be a return to virtual learning for no less than 10 school days and no longer than 15 days, unless the Health Command and governing bodies determine an extended length of time.