

MVCA COVID PROTOCOLS 2022

MVCA's updated policy is adapted from the current 2022 policy of Columbia County School District. Our original COVID policy was based on CCSD. We believe this to be more reasonable and appropriate than current ACPD guidelines. Other schools around us have policies that are both more and less restrictive than these, but this represents good middle ground.

The following definitions determine direct or close contact:

- **Direct contact** is defined as being in contact with secretions from a sick person with COVID-19 (e.g., being coughed on, kissing, sharing utensils or drinks, etc.).
- **Close contact** is defined as someone who was without a mask within 3 feet of an infected person continuously for at least 15 minutes.

Individual is ill with COVID-like symptoms:

1. School staff will assess whether the individual is experiencing COVID-like symptoms (Fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle/body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea)
 - If the person registers a temperature of at least 100° *plus two other symptoms*, they will be sent home. School staff has the discretion to send a student home even without fever if they have reason to suspect the student may have been exposed elsewhere.
 - Individuals will be required to wear a face covering while waiting for pick-up and/or exiting the building. We will be sensitive to the medical needs of students and staff.
2. The individual is required to go home and can only return to work/school when they are fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medications for 24 hours.
3. For students, code the absence as COV-S (COVID-like Symptoms) in FACTS SIS.

Individual is exposed to a confirmed COVID-19 positive person:

1. When an individual reports contact with someone who is confirmed positive, determine if the individual has had direct or close contact with the person.
2. Individuals who are determined to be in direct or close contact with an infected person should quarantine at home and return to school as follows:
 - Return on day 10 after the date of exposure, AND
 - The individual remains symptom-free during the time of quarantine; OR
 - **Early End to Quarantine:** Quarantine may end after DAY 7 with a negative test and if no symptoms were reported during the 7 days of quarantine. The test must be administered no earlier than the 5th day of quarantine. The individual may return to school/work no earlier than the 8th day.
3. For students, code the absences as COV-EX (Exposed) in FACTS SIS.

Individual is confirmed to be positive for COVID-19:

1. The infected individual shall remain isolated at home until he/she has been released to return to work/school by their physician or has met the following criteria.
2. Individuals with confirmed COVID-19 can return to school as follows:
 - a. At least 24 hours have passed since recovery** (as defined by no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications AND improvement** in respiratory symptoms) AND
 - b. Return on day 10 after the date of the positive test; OR

- c. **Early End to Isolation:** Isolation may end on DAY 8 with a negative test and the individual has fully recovered from symptoms or has been asymptomatic. The test must be administered no earlier than the 7th day of isolation. The individual may return to school/work no earlier than the 8th day.
3. For students, code the absences as COV-P (Positive) in FACTS SIS.

Individuals who are exempt from quarantine:

- People who have tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 3 months
- People who are fully vaccinated and show no symptoms (Per CDC, FDA, and manufacturers' directions, "fully vaccinated" means at least 2 weeks have passed since the second Pfizer/Moderna vaccination or single Johnson & Johnson vaccine)

CHILD QUARANTINING WITH INFECTED PARENT (HOUSEHOLD EXPOSURE)

In the case of an infected parent with a child in the house, the child will quarantine as defined above and this quarantine may run *concurrently* with the parent's isolation period under the following guidelines:

- The child may test on day 7 to return on day 8 as long as the child has remained asymptomatic.
- Without use of a test, the child must quarantine until day 10.
- If the child develops symptoms, follow the guidelines above for COVID-like symptoms or COVID positive situations.
- The child's quarantine period is not shortened one way or the other even if the parent is following the CDC rule of 5 days of isolation followed by 5 days with a mask in their workplace.
- If another person in the household tests positive during this time, the child's concurrent quarantine restarts from the beginning of that individual's isolation period.

QUARANTINING CLASSES

We do not quarantine an entire class strictly based on the class sharing a room. Rather, quarantine decisions will be made based on exposure following the definitions of contact above. An entire class *may* end up in quarantine as a result depending on the situation in that room. However, students in the same room who were determined not to be in close contact with an infected individual or who are otherwise exempt will not be quarantined.

MASK USAGE and MITIGATION STRATEGIES

For a defined period when there are multiple active cases within the school community, MVCA reserves the right to require masks to be worn **on a limited basis when students or staff will be in within 3 feet of one another for an extended period** (per the definition of close contact above). This practice will be sensitive to the needs of students and staff with medical issues that make the wearing of a face covering inadvisable.

We recognize there are legitimate concerns with extended mask wearing for students both physically and in the learning environment. Reasonable efforts shall be made to maintain at least 3 feet of social distancing and, where possible, desk partitions/dividers. In addition, MVCA is also now using EPA/FDA-approved air filtrations systems in every instructional space. These devices are shown to removed 99.9% of contaminants and viruses from the air, including SARS-2-COVID. These units run continuously in every room during school activities.

QUICK REFERENCE

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Household Exposure

- Child quarantining with infected parent
- Quarantine runs concurrent with parent's isolation beginning from date of positive test
- If asymptomatic, may return on/after day 8 with negative test on/after day 7.
- Quarantine restarts if another household member tests positive during the quarantine

Simplified quarantine/isolation definitions

Under this revision, isolation and quarantine periods are now defined the same. Whether you are just exposed or actually test positive, return dates are determined as follows:

- **Standard with no test** – return on day 10 from date of test or exposure
- **Early Return** – Return on day 8 with a negative test no earlier than day 7 (day 5 in the case of non-household exposure) and fully recovered from symptoms or asymptomatic. Proof of negative test is required in the office for early return.
- **Early returns** assume the individual is asymptomatic or has fully recovered from all symptoms.

We are *not* adopting the CDC's 5+5 rule for COVID-positive cases – 5 days of isolation followed by return with 5 days of wearing a mask.

- Data consistently indicated COVID's virulent period is the first 5 days. The contagiousness falls off tremendously after this. After day 5, if a person is not positive, there's no need for a mask. If they are still positive, they need to not be around people. Our policy here of testing on day 7 is a better balance of caution and freedom to resume activities.
- The Omicron variant is fast-acting. It hits quickly, becomes symptomatic quickly, and appears to go away fairly quickly. This adds more validity to adjusting our time periods.