

**Alachua County Public Schools**  
**Fall 2021 DRAFT COVID-19 Response Plan**  
Updated July 27, 2021

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## **Introduction**

Alachua County Public Schools is committed to providing a high-quality education while protecting the health and well-being of our students, staff, and families. This COVID-19 Response Plan outlines the steps that the District is taking to meet both those commitments.

Any scenario in which many unvaccinated people gather together can pose a risk for COVID-19 transmission. However, schools can effectively reduce that risk by layering key prevention measures like face coverings and physical distancing.

**The requirements and recommendations in this document are based on the best science available at this time and the current vaccination rates and level of COVID-19 transmission in Alachua County. They are subject to change as new knowledge emerges and local community transmission changes.**

Alachua County Public Schools will continue to consult regularly with our public health officials and medical advisors to ensure we are doing everything we can to protect our students, families, and staff.

This is not an exhaustive list of all of the actions being taken to respond to this pandemic. Our District and schools continue to develop and implement innovative strategies to meet the social-emotional and educational needs of our students, whether they are learning in person or online in eSchool. New federal guidance, resources, and funding will allow us to build on those efforts and to support the progress of the entire ACPS community.

## **What We Know about COVID-19**

COVID-19 spreads from person-to-person in the air through virus-containing respiratory droplets. These droplets enter the air when a person with COVID-19 breathes, especially when they talk, sing, cough, sneeze or exercise. In poorly ventilated indoor spaces, smaller droplets can float in the air and travel more than 6 feet. The virus that causes COVID-19 must enter a person's eyes, nose, or mouth to infect them.

COVID-19 can also spread if a person touches their eyes, nose, or mouth after touching a contaminated surface (also known as a fomite), but this is less common.

While fewer children have been sick with COVID-19 compared to adults, children can be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, can get sick from COVID-19, and can spread the virus that causes COVID-19 to others. Children, like adults, who have COVID-19 but have no symptoms ("asymptomatic") can still spread the virus to others.

Most children with COVID-19 have mild symptoms or have no symptoms at all. However, some children can get severely ill from COVID-19. Children with underlying medical conditions are at increased risk for severe illness compared to children without underlying medical conditions. The most common symptoms of COVID-19 in children are fever and cough, but children may have any of these signs or symptoms of COVID-19:

- |   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| → Fever or chills                             | → Diarrhea             |
| → Cough                                       | → Nausea or vomiting   |
| → Nasal congestion or runny nose              | → Stomachache          |
| → New loss of taste or smell                  | → Tiredness            |
| → Sore throat                                 | → Headache             |
| → Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing | → Muscle or body aches |

**Exposure risk lies along a continuum.** A general rule of thumb is that a person must spend a total of 15 minutes in 24 hours within 6 feet of someone with COVID-19 to be at risk of infection.

- Spending less time together is safer than more time; being further apart is better than being closer together.
- Smaller groups are safer than larger ones, outdoor settings are safer than indoor ones.
- More people using face masks is safer than fewer people using face masks.
- Activities that produce fewer respiratory droplets are safer than those that produce many droplets (silence < quiet talking < loud talking < singing)

## Promoting Vaccination

**People 12 years and older are now eligible for COVID-19 vaccination.** Achieving **high levels of COVID-19 vaccination** among eligible students, teachers, staff, and families is one of the most critical strategies to help schools safely resume full operations.

Vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. People who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are at low risk of severe illness. A growing body of evidence suggests that people who are fully vaccinated are less likely to have an asymptomatic infection or transmit COVID-19 to others.

Last spring, Alachua County Public Schools partnered with the Alachua County Health Department and UF Health to hold more than 40 COVID-19 vaccination clinics for eligible staff and students.

This fall, Alachua County Public Schools will continue to provide opportunities for COVID-19 vaccination for eligible students at middle and high schools.

The highly successful [Control Flu](#) program, which provides free flu vaccinations on school campuses in Alachua County, will be expanded to offer COVID vaccination to eligible students who have turned in a completed consent form.

The district will provide paid sick leave for employees to get vaccinated or who have side effects after vaccination.

The district will provide students and families excused absences to receive a COVID-19 vaccination and for possible side effects after vaccination.

## Wearing Masks and Face Coverings

Masks act as a simple barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from traveling into the air and onto other people when someone with COVID-19 coughs, sneezes, talks, or raises their voice. Consistent and correct use of masks is most important when students, teachers, and staff who are not fully vaccinated are indoors and when social distancing is difficult to maintain.

**Indoors:** Mask use is strongly encouraged for people who are not fully vaccinated including students, teachers, staff, visitors, and volunteers. Because children under 12 do not currently have access to vaccinations, it is strongly encouraged that all students under 12 continue to wear masks.

**Outdoors:** In general, people do not need to wear masks when outdoors. People who are not fully vaccinated should consider wearing a mask in crowded outdoor settings or during activities that involve sustained close contact with other people who are not fully vaccinated.

Schools should be supportive of people who are fully vaccinated but choose to continue to wear a mask, as a personal choice or because they have a medical condition that may weaken their immune system.

**All passengers and drivers are required to wear a mask on school buses and other school transportation.** [CDC's Face Mask Order](#) applies to all public transportation, which includes school buses. A driver does not need to wear a mask if they are the only person on the bus.

### **The following are attributes of masks needed to fulfill the requirements of the Order:**

- A properly worn mask completely covers the nose and mouth.
- Cloth masks should be made with two or more layers of a breathable fabric that is tightly woven (i.e., fabrics that do not let light pass through when held up to a light source).
- Mask should be secured to the head with ties, ear loops, or elastic bands that go behind the head. If gaiters are worn, they should have two layers of fabric or be folded to make two layers.
- Mask should fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face.
- Mask should be a solid piece of material without slits, exhalation valves, or punctures.

### **The following do not fulfill the requirements of the Order:**

- Masks worn in a way that does not cover both the mouth and nose
- Face shields or goggles (these may be worn together with a mask that meets the above requirements)
- Scarves, ski masks, balaclavas, or bandannas
- Shirt or sweater collars pulled up over the mouth and nose.
- Masks made from loosely woven fabric or that are knitted, i.e., fabrics that let light pass through
- Masks made from materials that are hard to breathe through (such as vinyl, plastic, or leather)
- Masks containing slits, exhalation valves, or punctures
- Masks that do not fit properly (large gaps, too loose or too tight)

Some individuals with disabilities are exempt from [CDC's requirement](#) to wear a mask on public transportation.

The district will continue to provide masks for employees and students on school buses and on school campuses as needed. No disciplinary action will be taken against a student who does not have a mask.

The district will provide school nurses and staff who care for individuals with COVID-19 symptoms with the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

In accordance with [School Board Policy 8450.01 - Protective Facial Coverings During Pandemic/Epidemic Events](#), the Board may require students to wear a face mask unless they are unable to do so for a health, sensory, or developmental reason.

## Physical Distancing

Based on studies from 2020-2021 school year, CDC recommends schools maintain at least **3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms**, combined with indoor mask-wearing by people who are not fully vaccinated, to reduce transmission risk.

A distance of at least **6 feet** is recommended between students and teachers/staff, and between teachers/staff who are not fully vaccinated.

### All schools are required to:

- ❑ Maintain at least 3 feet of distance between students who are not fully vaccinated to the greatest extent possible (e.g., desks spaced 3 feet apart). If it is not possible to arrange seating 3 feet apart, maximize the distance between students.
- ❑ Maintain at least 6 feet of distance between adults (teachers/staff/visitors) and students and between adults (teachers/staff/visitors) who are not fully vaccinated within school settings to the greatest extent possible.
- ❑ Provide physical guides, such as tape on floors, signs on walls, and seating markings to ensure staff and students remain at least 6 feet apart in lines and at other times.
- ❑ Minimize opportunities for sustained exposure (15 minutes or more, cumulative over a 24-hour period, within 6 feet distance) between teachers and staff during staff meetings, planning periods, lunch, recess, in teacher lounges, and break rooms and other areas teachers and staff may congregate.
- ❑ At the elementary level, develop and keep students and staff in steady cohort groups that stay together as much as possible throughout the day and from day to day. Limit mixing between cohort groups as much as possible (e.g., during lunch, bathroom breaks, arrival and dismissal, free periods, recess) unless to meet students' educational needs.

### It is recommended that all schools:

- ❑ Arrange furniture, such as desks or seating in classrooms, break rooms, and reception areas, so that students, teachers, staff, and visitors are separated from one another by at least 6 feet when feasible.
- ❑ Use alternative spaces like cafeterias and auditoriums for instruction to allow more space between students. Consider holding classes outdoors, if such spaces are available and safe for student use.
- ❑ Consider creating one-way hallways to minimize congestion. Place physical guides, like tape, on floors and sidewalks to mark one-way routes.

## Hand Hygiene

Regular handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, if soap and water are not readily available, reduces the spread of germs that can cause illness, especially if done at key times throughout the day.

### **Schools are required to:**

- ❑ Provide adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors including soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels, disinfectant wipes, and tissues, and strategically place supplies in areas where they may be frequently used.
  - ➔ Ensure that every classroom, instructional space, and common area has hand sanitizer or a place to wash hands upon entering.
  - ➔ Establish procedures to ensure that sinks and handwashing stations do not run out of soap or paper towels, and that hand sanitizer does not run out.
- ❑ Teach and reinforce handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and/or the safe use of hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol by staff and older students.
- ❑ Develop routines for staff and students in all grades to wash or sanitize their hands, especially before and after eating, upon entering/re-entering a classroom, and before and after touching shared equipment such as computer keyboards.
- ❑ Limit sharing of supplies, equipment, manipulatives, and other high-touch materials when feasible. If shared objects are used, students should wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before and after use.
- ❑ Promote hand hygiene throughout the school by placing visual cues such as [handwashing posters](#), [stickers](#), [and other materials](#) in highly visible areas.

## Cleaning and Disinfection

The virus that causes COVID-19 spreads very easily from person to person but can also spread by touching a contaminated surface or object. Although surface transmission of this virus is less likely, it is still possible that a person could get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own eyes, nose, or mouth. Cleaning and disinfecting can reduce the risk of spreading infection by reducing and killing germs on surfaces people frequently touch.

### Schools are required to:

- ❑ Clean frequently touched surfaces daily and between groups. Routine cleaning focuses on frequently touched surfaces like door handles, shared desks and tables, light switches, sink handles, and keyboards.
- ❑ Clean and disinfect surfaces that come in contact with food before and after meals and snacks.
- ❑ Ensure [safe and correct use](#) and storage of [cleaning and disinfection products](#), including storing products securely away from children. Use products that meet [EPA disinfection criteria](#).
- ❑ Avoid using cleaning products near children, and ensure that there is adequate ventilation when using these products to prevent children or staff from inhaling toxic fumes.
- ❑ Ensure adequate supplies and personal protective equipment are available to support routine cleaning and disinfection.
- ❑ Review safety information thoroughly with all employees who use disinfectant products, and all employees who work in a workspace where those products are used. The Safety Data Sheets for each cleaning product/disinfectant should be available in the front office of each school/site, per Board Policy and OSHA standards.
- ❑ If a person with COVID-19 has been on campus in the last 24 hours, clean and disinfect the areas where the person with COVID-19 spent a large proportion of their time. Follow these steps:
  - ➔ Open windows and use fans to increase outdoor air circulation in the areas to be cleaned.
  - ➔ Wait 24 hours, or as long as practical, before cleaning and disinfection.
  - ➔ Clean and disinfect all surfaces in the areas used by the ill person, including electronic equipment like tablets, touch screens, keyboards, and remote controls using a disinfectant effective against COVID-19. If common areas such as bathrooms or shared items have already been routinely cleaned and disinfected, there is no need for additional action.
  - ➔ Vacuum the space if needed.

## Ventilation and Outdoor Spaces

Being outside is a much lower risk than being inside. When indoors, ventilation systems can decrease the number of infectious respiratory droplets in the air by replacing indoor air with fresh, uncontaminated air and/or filtering droplets out of the air.

School safety laws restrict our schools' ability to increase circulation by opening doors and windows. High humidity, high temperatures, and other local weather air conditions like pollen and pollution also can make this unadvisable. However, there are still important actions that we can take to improve the indoor air quality in our schools.

The ACPS Energy Systems Department regularly reviews ventilation and filtration systems at each school, and continues to make improvements, repairs, and recommendations on a case-by-case basis. School leaders should consult with the Energy Systems Department to determine the specific actions they can take on their campus.

### Outdoor Spaces

**It is recommended that all schools:**

- ☐ Conduct as many activities outside as possible when conditions allow, especially higher-risk activities like meals and exercise.
- ☐ Stagger use of outdoor spaces to keep groups from mixing. If the outdoor space is large enough, consider designating separate spaces for each group.
- ☐ Ensure that children wash or sanitize their hands before and after using these areas. When hand hygiene is enforced, cleaning of outdoor play structures is not needed between groups.

### Indoor Air Quality

**General recommendations include:**

- ☐ Open minimum outdoor air dampers to reduce or eliminate HVAC air recirculation. In mild weather, this will not affect thermal comfort or humidity. However, this may be difficult to do in hot or humid weather.
- ☐ Increase the HVAC system's total airflow supply to occupied spaces when you can. More air flow encourages air mixing and ensures any recirculated air passes through the filter more frequently.
- ☐ Disable demand-controlled ventilation (DCV) controls that reduce air supply based on occupancy or temperature. This way the air supply will remain constant throughout the day.
- ☐ For simple HVAC systems controlled by a thermostat, setting the fan control switch from "Auto" to "On" will ensure the HVAC system provides continuous air filtration and distribution.
- ☐ Continue running the HVAC system at maximum outside airflow for 2 hours before and after the building is occupied to refresh air before arrival and remove remaining particles at the end of the day.
- ☐ Ensure restroom and kitchen exhaust fans are on and operating at full capacity while the school is occupied and for 2 hours afterward.
- ☐ Consider also leaving room doors slightly open to promote the flow of outdoor air through the indoor space when possible. Do not prop or wedge open fire doors. Continue to follow fire and building safety requirements.
- ☐ Make sure the filters are sized, installed, and replaced according to manufacturer's instructions.
- ☐ Consider portable air cleaners that use high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters to enhance air cleaning wherever possible, especially in higher-risk areas such as a nurse's office or isolation room.
- ☐ If the school uses fans, adjust the direction of fans so that air does not blow from one person's space to another's space.

## Other School Operations

### Food Service

Schools are **required** to:

- ❑ Ensure that all students wash their hands or use hand sanitizer immediately before and after eating. Hand sanitizing stations will be placed at the entrances of cafeterias, at the entrance of the serving lines, at the cashier stations, and at vending machines.
- ❑ Maintain six feet of physical distance between students during mealtimes whenever possible. When six feet of physical distance cannot be maintained, schools must create as much space as possible between students.
- ❑ Use physical markers to indicate appropriate distancing, including entrance and exit pathways, line spacing, and mealtime seating.
- ❑ Establish a method to document student seating during meals to support contact tracing in the event of an exposure. Seating during meals should align with class seating charts, when possible.
- ❑ Clean and disinfect the eating area between different groups, ensuring the safe and correct use and storage of cleaning and disinfection products.

It is **recommended** that all schools:

- ❑ Explore options for eating meals outdoors. Consider designating an outdoor eating area for each class, and marking places six feet apart for students to sit.
- ❑ Provide an outdoor break area, if feasible, for staff to eat.

### Transportation

**All students, bus drivers, and bus attendants must wear face coverings while on the school bus, consistent with the [CDC's Face Mask Order](#).**

- ❑ Parents/guardians should ensure students have appropriate face coverings. However, drivers will be provided with a supply of face coverings in case a student forgets theirs.
- ❑ Parents/guardians should screen students for COVID-19 symptoms and exposure before students leave home to ride the bus. Students with any symptoms or recent exposure must stay home.
- ❑ Students will be given an assigned seat based on their pick-up and drop-off locations. Students must sit in their assigned seats. Siblings and those sharing a household will be seated together.
- ❑ Students should sanitize their hands when entering and exiting the bus.
- ❑ Windows will be opened to maximize ventilation, as weather allows.
- ❑ Frequently touched surfaces on buses will be cleaned and disinfected between uses and after transporting any individual with COVID-19, including handrails, seats, seatbelts, and windows.

## Electives

### Physical Education and Recess

#### Schools are **required** to:

- ☐ Utilize outdoor spaces to the greatest extent possible.
- ☐ Prioritize activities that allow physical distancing. Individual sports are lower risk for transmission of SARS-CoV-2 if the students are appropriately distanced.
- ☐ Encourage the proper use of face coverings for those who are not fully vaccinated during all indoor activities.
- ☐ Require hand washing or sanitizing when equipment is shared during an activity, before play, during breaks, and after the conclusion of the activity.
- ☐ Clean and disinfect shared equipment between uses. Sports equipment can be touched by multiple players during practice and play if proper hand hygiene practices are followed.

### Elementary Music

#### Schools are **required** to:

- ☐ Maintain at least 6 feet of physical distance between students to the extent possible.
- ☐ Limit rehearsals to 30 minutes followed by a break to allow for at least one air change in the HVAC.
- ☐ Prevent the sharing of instruments. Limit the sharing of music, folders, pencils, or stands unless equipment can be properly sanitized between users.
- ☐ When playing recorders in class, the bell should be covered with saran wrap and students should wear a mask with a slit for the mouthpiece.

#### It is **recommended** that all schools:

- ☐ Hold outdoor classes with appropriate physical distancing when possible.
- ☐ Explore options like “Music on a Cart” as an option, working with classroom teachers to integrate music activities to support math, science, and social studies lessons, and dedicating more class time for music theory, static skills, steady beat, rhythm, composition, and visual and aural analysis of music.

## Beyond the School Day

### Student Groups, Teams, and Organizations

#### Schools are **required** to:

- ☐ Ensure that student groups, clubs, organizations, and teams are able to completely follow the guidelines in this document before permitting them to meet on campus for activities.
- ☐ Ensure that students returning to school after a positive COVID-19 test and isolation period obtain clearance from a physician before participating in any school sports program.
- ☐ Enforce the school district's COVID-19 prevention protocols when hosting an event. Schools must stop or cancel an event if these policies cannot be fully enforced.
- ☐ Encourage event spectators to adhere to physical distancing within the facility to the extent possible. Families may be seated together and then separated from other families.
- ☐ Ensure that visitors are aware of and abide by the established COVID-19 prevention protocols, by making announcements and posting signage in frequently-used areas to encourage them to engage in physical distancing and hand hygiene.
- ☐ Document all visitors on campus during the school day.
- ☐ Provide adequate cleaning and sanitizing supplies for event participants and attendees, including hand sanitizing stations.
- ☐ Regularly clean and disinfect facilities, equipment, and uniforms between uses and after events.
- ☐ Follow the Transportation guidelines in this plan when traveling to competitions, including on charter buses and rental vehicles.

#### It is **recommended** that all schools:

- ☐ Consider student-only events when necessary.
- ☐ Consider alternative platforms for spectator participation in events, such as live-stream video events for events.

### Staff Meetings and Training

Staff meetings and professional development may be offered in-person, remotely via Zoom or a similar video-conferencing platform, or through an alternate format when possible.

### Field Trips

Field trips may be allowed at the discretion of the school administration. Trips must follow all applicable requirements from this document, including the guidelines for transportation, as well the guidelines of the field trip venue.

### Facility Rentals

Facility rentals by outside organizations will be considered at the discretion of the school administration. Rental activities must follow all applicable requirements of this document and existing facility rental procedures, and must include plans for facility cleaning and disinfection.

## Parent/Guardian and Volunteer/Visitor Activities

### Schools are required to:

- ❑ Remind all visitors to stay home if they are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 or have been directed to isolate or quarantine by the Health Department.
- ❑ Plan Meet the Teacher events and Open Houses to engage families with their teachers in either a virtual environment or in a way that allows for physical distancing to the greatest extent possible.
- ❑ Ensure that SAC, PTA, and Booster meetings that are held on campus follow the visitor guidelines.

## Communication

### Schools are required to:

- ❑ Designate a staff member as a point of contact at their school for questions or concerns around practices, protocols, or potential exposure. All school staff and families should know who this person is and how to contact them.
- ❑ Use simple, clear, and effective language about behaviors that prevent the spread of COVID-19 when communicating with staff and families (such as on school websites, in emails, and through school social media accounts).
- ❑ Use communication methods that are accessible for all students, faculty, and staff, including those with disabilities.
- ❑ Post signs in highly visible locations (e.g., school entrances, restrooms) that promote everyday protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs (such as by properly washing hands and properly wearing a mask). Signs should include visual cues (such as clear, easy-to-understand pictures demonstrating healthy behaviors) at the appropriate reading and literacy level.

## COVID-19 Protocols: Symptomatic Students

### Overview

The process below applies to **Symptomatic Students** (students who are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19). All processes that involve COVID-19 cases will be done collaboratively with the Department of Health-Alachua as the lead agency for case investigation, contact tracing and quarantine decisions. As always, all student information will remain confidential, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

### COVID-19 Symptoms

If a student develops any symptoms of COVID-19, it is extremely important that they stay home from school and follow the guidance of their medical provider. The most common symptoms of COVID-19 in children include fever or chills, cough, nasal congestion or runny nose, new loss of taste or smell, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, diarrhea or vomiting, stomach ache, tiredness, headache, muscle or body aches, and poor appetite.

### Symptomatic Student Process

1. A teacher or staff member will refer a student who shows signs of illness at school to the school's COVID-19 Point of Contact (This may be the school nurse or DOH-Alachua nurse). If the student is not wearing a mask, they will be provided a mask as soon as possible.
2. The nurse will assess the student for symptoms of COVID-19, determine the need for isolation, and notify the school administration if isolation is needed.
3. The student will be escorted to the designated isolation room with supervision until transportation is available. The parent or guardian will be notified that their child has symptoms of COVID-19 and should be picked up from school as soon as possible. The student may not use group transportation such as the bus in order to leave the school.
4. The nurse will offer to perform a COVID-19 rapid antigen test, if the student has a signed consent form on file. If there is not a consent form on file, the parent/guardian may sign one when they arrive at the school.

The BinaxNOW COVID-19 Ag Card is a rapid antigen test that uses a card and a nasal swab to detect an active COVID-19 infection and can provide results within about 15 minutes.

- If the student has a positive rapid test result, the school will follow the protocol for **Positive Student Cases**, which includes the quarantine of unvaccinated close contacts and household members.
  - If the student has an inconclusive rapid test result, the nurse will repeat the test. If the test is still inconclusive, the nurse will offer to perform a PCR test for confirmation, with consent from the parent/guardian. The student must isolate at home while the PCR test is sent for lab processing.
  - If the student with symptoms has a negative rapid test result, the nurse will offer to perform a PCR test for confirmation, with consent from the parent/guardian. The student must isolate at home while the PCR test is sent for lab processing.
5. When a parent or guardian arrives to pick up a student, the nurse and student will walk outside to meet them, rather than the parent or guardian entering the building, if possible.
  6. The nurse will share the *Return to School COVID-19 Letter* and recommend that the parent/guardian seeks further guidance from their medical provider.

### Returning to School after Symptoms

7. If the student has a negative PCR test result, the student may end isolation and return after their symptoms have improved **AND** they have remained fever-free for at least 24 hours without the fever-reducing medications.
8. If the student has a positive test result, or the student does not take a test, the student may end isolation and return to school after at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared **AND** their symptoms have improved **AND** they have remained fever-free for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medications.
9. If a student is not tested but has a note from a primary care provider that clears them to return to school, they may submit the note and will be allowed to return to school.
10. The student must check in with the nurse upon returning to school.

## COVID-19 Protocols: Positive Student Cases

### Overview

The process below applies to students with a **Confirmed Positive Case of COVID-19**. All processes that involve COVID-19 cases will be shared with the Department of Health-Alachua as the lead agency for case investigation, contact tracing, and quarantine decisions. As always, all student information will remain confidential, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

### Reported COVID-19 Cases

1. When a student tests positive for COVID-19, their parent/guardian should notify their school as soon as possible.
2. When notified of a student testing positive for COVID-19, the school will confirm the reported case within 1 hour with the DOH-Alachua K-12 Schools Team. K-12 COVID-19 Testing Help Line: 352-420-8993
3. After consulting with the DOH team, schools may be asked to help identify and notify close contacts.

### Isolation for Cases

4. If the case is at school, they must be immediately separated in the designated isolation room with supervision until transportation is available. If multiple students need to use the isolation room, strict compliance with mask usage and physical distancing will be enforced.
5. The student's parent or guardian will be contacted to facilitate the student getting home safely. The student may not use group transportation such as the bus in order to leave the school.
6. When a parent or guardian arrives to pick up a student, the nurse and student will walk outside to meet them, rather than the parent or guardian entering the building, if possible.
7. The nurse will share the *Return to School COVID-19 Letter* with the parent or guardian and recommend that they seek further guidance from their medical provider. The Health Department will follow up with the families of students testing positive to share resources and support.

### Returning to School after Isolation

8. Students may end isolation and return to school after at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared **AND** their symptoms have improved **AND** they have remained fever-free for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medications.

Students without symptoms may return after at least 10 days have passed since the date of their positive test.

9. The student must check in with the nurse upon returning to school. Student-athletes must be screened by a physician before returning to participation on sports teams.

### Cleaning and Disinfection

10. If less than 24 hours have passed since the student was on campus or used school transportation, schools will follow the latest CDC recommendations to clean and disinfect the impacted spaces.

### Identifying Close Contacts

11. When someone with COVID-19 has been on campus during their infectious period, the school administration will collaborate with the school nurse, school staff, and the case or their family to collect details of any close contacts.
12. The **infectious period** includes the two days before a person has symptoms, and at least 10 days after the symptoms start. For a person without symptoms, it includes the two days before the person tests positive for COVID-19 and at least 10 days after.
13. **Close contacts** include any person who:
  - was within 6 feet of someone with COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more in a 24-hour period.
  - lives in the same household as someone with COVID-19.
  - had direct exposure to respiratory droplets from a person with COVID-19 (sharing utensils, etc.)
14. The school administration will identify close contacts from any time or place the person was at school during the infectious period, including in classrooms, during recess or lunch, and during extra-curricular activities.

### Quarantine of Close Contacts

15. If the close contacts are at school, they must be immediately separated in the designated isolation room with supervision until transportation is available.
  - If multiple students need to use the isolation room, strict compliance with mask usage and physical distancing will be enforced. If an entire class is determined to be close contacts, they may remain in their classroom while awaiting transportation.
16. Parents and guardians will be contacted to facilitate the students getting home safely. The students may not use group transportation such as the bus in order to leave the school.
17. When parents or guardians arrive to pick up students, students will walk outside to meet them, rather than the parent or guardian entering the building, if possible.
18. The nurse will share the *Return to School COVID-19 Letter* with the parent or guardian and recommend that they seek further guidance from their medical provider about their potential exposure to COVID-19.

### During Quarantine

19. Quarantine is intended to keep someone who might have been exposed to the virus away from others in case they develop the disease. Close contacts are required to quarantine at home and not attend school or extracurricular activities until they've been cleared to return.
20. Parents and guardians should closely watch for fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19. If symptoms develop, they should seek guidance from a medical provider and get the student tested. If possible, they should stay away from others, especially people at higher risk from COVID-19.
21. The Health Department will follow up with the families of close contacts to offer optional COVID-19 testing on Day 6 of quarantine.

### Returning to School after Quarantine

22. Quarantine can end **after Day 10** without testing, if no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring, and with the following parameters in place upon return to school:
  - No symptoms of COVID-19 infection.
  - Daily self-check symptom monitoring continues through Day 14, reporting immediately if symptoms do appear.
  - Adhere to recommended infection prevention strategies through Day 14 to include:
    - Wearing masks (correctly and consistently)
    - Maintaining at least 3 feet of distance whenever possible
    - Hand hygiene and cough etiquette
    - Cleaning and disinfection protocols
23. Quarantine can end **after Day 7** if a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test performed on Day 6 or later is negative, no symptoms were reported during daily monitoring, and with the following parameters in place upon return to school:
  - No symptoms of COVID-19 infection.
  - Daily self-check symptom monitoring continues through day 14, reporting immediately if symptoms do appear.
  - Adhere to recommended infection prevention strategies through Day 14 to include:
    - Wearing masks (correctly and consistently)
    - Maintaining at least 3 feet of distance whenever possible
    - Hand hygiene and cough etiquette
    - Cleaning and disinfection protocols
24. Students who live in the same household as someone testing positive may not shorten their quarantine and must quarantine for the full 14-day period.
25. Students must submit documentation of the negative Day 6 PCR test to return early.

### Quarantine Exceptions: Mask Wearing, Cases in the Last 90 Days, and Full Vaccination

- A. In the K–12 indoor classroom setting, the [close contact definition](#) excludes students who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student where both students were engaged in the consistent and correct use of well-fitting masks and other K–12 school prevention strategies were in place.

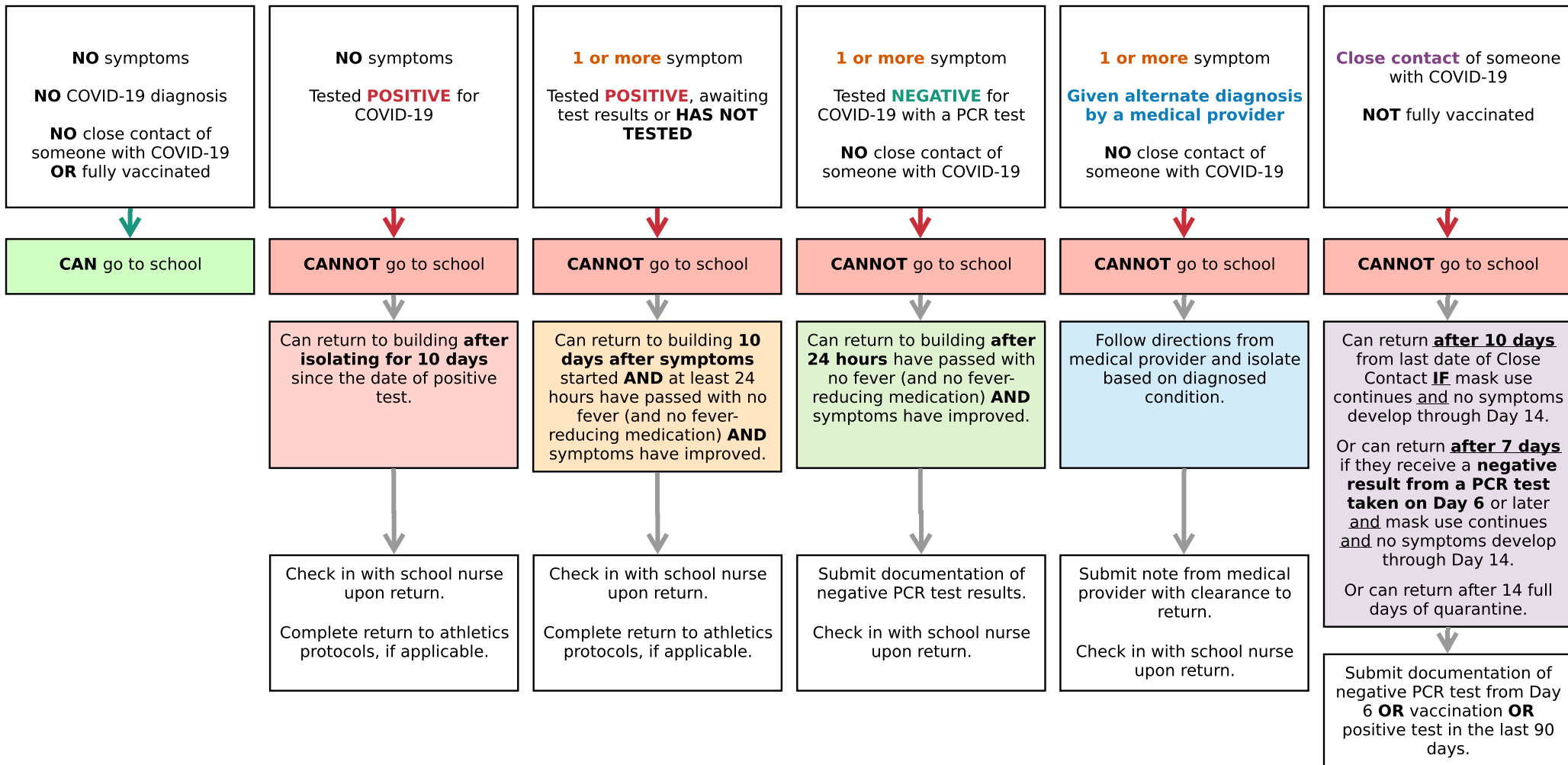
This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting.

- B. If a close contact has recovered from COVID-19 in the past 90 days, they do not need to quarantine if ALL of the following are true:
- Their illness was laboratory-confirmed in the past 90 days.
  - They have fully recovered.
  - They do not have any new symptoms of COVID-19.
- C. If a close contact has completed COVID-19 vaccination (two doses in a two-dose series or one dose in a one-dose series), they do not need to quarantine if ALL of the following are true:
- The COVID-19 exposure was at least 14 days after their vaccination series was fully completed.
  - They do not have any new symptoms of COVID-19.

If a close contact reports that they are fully vaccinated, school nurses or the DOH staff can verify that information using the Florida Shots database. If the parent/guardian has opted their child out of the Florida Shots system, they may present their child's CDC vaccination card as documentation.

If a close contact who has recovered from COVID-19 or is fully vaccinated has symptoms of COVID-19, they should isolate and seek testing.

# COVID-19 Screening Flow Chart



## COVID-19 Symptoms\*

- Fever (100.4°F / 38°C or higher)
- Cough
- Loss of taste or smell
- Chills
- Shortness of breath or Difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Muscle pain or body aches
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea

\*That are not explained by a condition such as asthma.

## Close Contacts

**Close Contacts** includes anyone in one or more of the following categories:

- Was within 6 feet of a person with COVID-19 for a combined total of 15 minutes or more in a 24-hour period
- Had direct contact with saliva or other body secretions from someone with COVID-19 (for example: been coughed on, kissed, shared utensils, etc.)
- Live in the same household as a person with COVID-19 (**Household contacts must quarantine for 14 days following exposure**)

## Quarantine Exceptions: Recent Cases, Vaccination, Classroom Mask Use

If a close contact has **recovered from COVID-19 in the past 90 days**, they do not need to quarantine if ALL of the following are true:

- Their illness was laboratory confirmed in the past 90 days.
- They have fully recovered.
- They do not have any new symptoms of COVID-19.

If a close contact has **completed COVID-19 vaccination** (two doses in a two-dose series or one dose in a one-dose series), they do not need to quarantine if ALL of the following are true:

- The exposure was at least 14 days after their vaccine series was fully completed.
- They do not have any new symptoms of COVID-19

In the K-12 indoor classroom setting, the close contact definition excludes students who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student where both students were engaged in the consistent and correct use of well-fitting masks and other K-12 school prevention strategies were in place. This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting.