

#StayStrongNC

Reference Guide for Suspected, Presumptive, or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 (K-12)

INTERIM GUIDANCE

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NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

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Upon Arrival at School or Transportation Entry		EXPOSURE, NO SYMPTOMS	DIAGNOSIS, NO SYMPTOMS	SYMPTOMS
		Staff or Student shares they were exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the last 2 weeks but is NOT symptomatic	Staff or Student shares they were diagnosed with COVID-19 less than 10 days ago, but is NOT symptomatic	Staff or Student presents with at least one of the following COVID-19 symptoms (<i>Fever • Chills • Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing • New cough • New loss of taste or smell</i>)
WHO				
Staff Member OR Student: A designated individual (e.g., parent or guardian) is PRESENT to immediately support student to get home or to medical care safely		Pages 4-5	Pages 6-7	Pages 8-10
Student: A designated individual (e.g., parent or guardian) is NOT PRESENT to immediately support student to get home or to medical care safely		Pages 11-12	Pages 13-14	Pages 15-17

During the School Day		EXPOSURE, NO SYMPTOMS	DIAGNOSIS, NO SYMPTOMS	SYMPTOMS
		Staff or Student shares they were exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the last 2 weeks but is NOT symptomatic	Staff or Student shares they were diagnosed with COVID-19 less than 10 days ago, but is NOT symptomatic	Staff or Student presents with at least one of the following COVID-19 symptoms (<i>Fever • Chills • Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing • New cough • New loss of taste or smell</i>)
WHO				
Student		Pages 18-19	Pages 20-21	Pages 22-24
Staff Member		Pages 25-26	Pages 27-28	Pages 29-31



Introduction

This Screening Reference Guide is intended as a helpful tool for local education leaders across the state that should be used in response to suspected, presumed, or confirmed cases of COVID-19 on a school campus.

Note: This document does not outline all detailed public health guidance for K-12 schools.

- For all public health guidance view the [StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit \(K-12\)](#).
- For more information on PPE and Infection Control Items, view the [StrongSchoolsNC Infection Control and PPE Guidance \(K-12\)](#).
- For more information on [K-12 COVID-19 testing considerations](#), click here.
- Click for more information on quarantining in [English](#) and in [Spanish](#).

This Screening Reference Guide outlines protocols for staff to follow when responding to a positive symptom screening (see [StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit \(K-12\)](#) for example symptom screening forms). These protocols identify next steps in interacting with students or staff who have screened positive, meaning they:

1. Share they were exposed to someone with COVID-19 (defined as having close contact of less than 6 feet distance for more than 15 minutes) but have no symptoms;
2. Share they were diagnosed with COVID-19 less than 10 days ago but are not currently symptomatic; OR
3. Present with at least one of the following COVID-19 symptoms:
 - Fever
 - Chills
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - New cough
 - New loss of taste or smell

The following staff should adhere to protocols outlined in this Screening Reference Guide:

- All school staff who interact with students, to know what to do if students share they had an exposure to or diagnosis of COVID-19, or develop COVID-19 symptoms during the day.
- School staff who are conducting daily symptom screening upon arrival at school or at transportation entry.
- School nurses or delegated staff School staff who are responsible for cleaning, notification to local health departments, and/or communication to students, families, teachers, and staff, according to the protocols outlined in this guide.

Have questions about this guidance? Visit the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page.



Screening Flow Chart

For step-by-step instructions for school personnel, review the [Reference Guide for Suspected, Presumptive, or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 \(K-12\)](#)

Screen for COVID-19

NO FLAGS
Proceed to school

**EXPOSURE,*
NO SYMPTOMS**

Cannot go to school today

- Home for 14 days since exposure



**DIAGNOSIS,
NO SYMPTOMS**

Cannot go to school today

- Home for 10 days since first positive COVID-19 test



**AT LEAST
1 SYMPTOM****

- Fever
- Chills
- Shortness of breath/
difficulty breathing
- New cough
- New loss of taste
or smell

Cannot go to school today

- If confirmed positive COVID-19 OR person has not been tested: Home for 10 days since first symptoms, no fever for 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medicine), AND symptom improvement, including coughing and shortness of breath
- If negative rapid antigen test: home until follow-up negative PCR test, no fever for 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medicine), AND they have felt well for 24 hours.
- If negative PCR COVID-19 test: Home until no fever for 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medicine), AND they have felt well for 24 hours
- If confirmed diagnosis other than COVID-19 (e.g., stomach virus, ear infection): Follow typical school illness policies to determine when person can return.

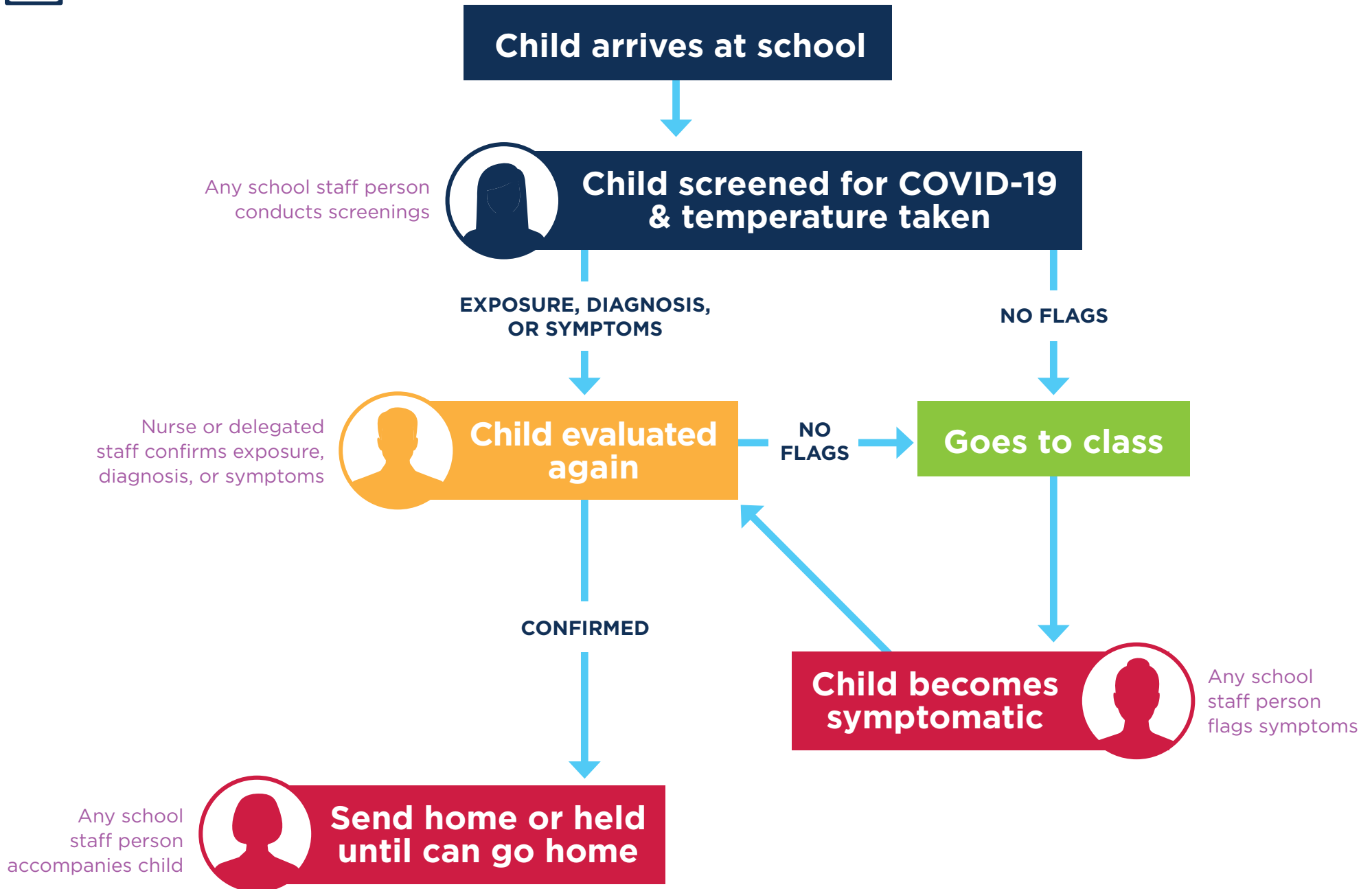


* Exposure refers to being within 6 feet of someone diagnosed with COVID-19 for 15 minutes or more.

** The more narrow set of COVID-19 symptoms listed here reflects required exclusionary symptoms in order to avoid over-exclusion of people from school facilities.



Staff Roles Flow Chart





Positive Screening Protocols Upon Arrival at School or Transportation Entry

WHO	Staff Member OR Student: A designated individual (e.g., parent or guardian) is PRESENT to immediately support student to get home or to medical care safely
CATEGORY	EXPOSURE, NO SYMPTOMS: Staff or Student shares they were exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the last 2 weeks but is NOT symptomatic

Exclusion

- Do not allow person to enter school facility.
- If staff, supervisor must be notified immediately.
- Person must immediately go home.
- Person may not return to school until:
 - If no symptoms develop and they do not have a positive COVID-19 test, 14 days after last close contact with the positive individual.
 - If no symptoms develop but the person tests positive for COVID-19, 10 days after the date of the first positive test.
 - If symptoms develop and the person tests negative for COVID-19, 14 days after the last close contact with the positive individual.
 - If symptoms develop and the person tests positive for COVID-19, 10 days after the first positive test.
- Person may participate in remote learning or teaching (if applicable) while out.

Infection Control

- Ensure that all students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and all teachers, staff and adult visitors wear face coverings during screening, unless the person (or family member, for a student) states that an exception applies. Cloth face coverings must be worn by all students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and all teachers, staff and adult visitors on buses or other transportation vehicles, inside school buildings, and anywhere on school grounds, including outside.
- Individuals waiting to be screened must stand six feet apart from each other.
- The person taking temperatures must wear a cloth face covering and must stay six feet from the individual unless taking a temperature.

Transportation

- Person may not utilize group transportation such as the bus in order to leave the school facility

Reporting

- School is not required to report a positive screening for exposure to the Local Health Department.

Communication Between School and Local Health Department

- School may consult with the Local Health Department on next steps for management and considerations on cleaning following a positive screening for exposure.

Closure

- No closure is required.
- However, the school may consult with the Local Health Department on next steps.

Cleaning

- No additional cleaning is required beyond Plan A operational requirements.
- However, the school may consult with the Local Health Department on next steps.

Communication with Students, Families, and Staff

- School is not required to share the positive screening for exposure with students, families, and staff.
- However, the school may consult with the Local Health Department on next steps regarding considerations about communication following this particular instance of a positive screening for exposure.

Local Health Department Next Steps

- The Local Health Department may provide support to the school on next steps, if requested, for items such as management, considerations on cleaning, and communication following a positive screening for exposure.



Positive Screening Protocols

Upon Arrival at School or Transportation Entry

WHO	Staff Member OR Student: A designated individual (e.g., parent or guardian) is PRESENT to immediately support student to get home or to medical care safely
CATEGORY	DIAGNOSIS, NO SYMPTOMS: Staff or Student shares they were diagnosed with COVID-19 less than 10 days ago, but is NOT symptomatic

Exclusion

- Do not allow person to enter school facility.
- If staff, supervisor must be notified immediately.
- Person must immediately go home.
- If they never develop symptoms before or after their positive test: person can return to school 10 days after the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test.
- Person may participate in remote learning or teaching (if applicable) while out.

Infection Control

- Ensure that all students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and all teachers, staff and adult visitors wear face coverings during screening, unless the person (or family member, for a student) states that an exception applies. Cloth face coverings must be worn by all students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and all teachers, staff and adult visitors on buses or other transportation vehicles, inside school buildings, and anywhere on school grounds, including outside.
- Individuals waiting to be screened must stand six feet apart from each other.
- The staff person taking temperatures must wear a cloth face covering, and must stay six feet from the individual unless taking a temperature.

Transportation

- Person may not utilize group transportation such as the bus in order to leave the school facility.

Reporting

- School must report a diagnosed case of COVID-19 among students or staff to the Local Health Department, as required by [NCGS § 130A-136](#).
- School must provide requested information, such as answering questions about adherence to mitigation efforts (e.g., wearing cloth face coverings with fidelity) and identifying potential close contacts based on classroom attendance.

Communication Between School and Local Health Department

- School must follow the directions from the Local Health Department for this particular instance, such as room or building closure, contacting students, staff, and families, and/or specific cleaning protocols.

Closure

- Close off areas used by the sick person and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting.
- Consult with the Local Health Department as to whether closure of a room or entire building is required. There may be no need to close the school if the Local Health Department determines that close contacts are excluded and there is sufficient space to continue normal operations.

Cleaning

- Close off areas used by the sick person, including school transportation vehicles, and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting.
- Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
- People should not be in the classroom, room, or other area of the facility while it is being cleaned.
- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
- Use an [EPA-registered disinfectant](#) that is active against coronaviruses. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Remember to clean items that might not ordinarily be cleaned daily such as doorknobs, light switches, countertops, chairs, cubbies, and playground structures.
- Follow [NCDHHS Environmental Health Section guidance](#) for additional cleaning and disinfection recommendations.
- For school transportation vehicles:
 - Do not use the vehicle until after cleaning and disinfection.
 - Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting (or if 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible). Open vehicle windows to ventilate if possible.
 - Follow cleaning guidance in the Transportation section of the [StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit \(K-12\)](#).
- School must follow any other cleaning directions from the Local Health Department for this particular instance.

Communication with Students, Families, and Staff

- School may choose to notify staff and families that there was an individual at the school who was diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Any notice to staff and families must maintain confidentiality in accordance with [NCGS § 130A-143](#), FERPA, and all other state and federal laws.
- Local Health Department will contact staff and families if they are identified as a close contact of the individual who tested positive.

Local Health Department Next Steps

- The Local Health Department staff will interview the person with COVID-19. The parents or guardians of minor children may be included in the interview. As part of the interview, public health staff will work with the person/family, and the school, if appropriate, to identify individuals who were in close contact (defined as within 6 feet for 15 minutes or longer).
- Public health staff will reach out to close contacts and inform them that they need to quarantine at home for 14 days after their last contact with the person with COVID-19. If close contacts cannot socially distance from a case in the home, close contacts will need to quarantine for 14 days after the person who tested positive for COVID-19 is released from isolation. Click for more information on quarantining in [English](#) and in [Spanish](#).
- Public health staff will recommend the close contacts be tested to identify additional positive cases.
- Close contacts testing negative will still need to complete the full original 14-day quarantine.



Positive Screening Protocols Upon Arrival at School or Transportation Entry

WHO	Staff Member OR Student: Student: A designated individual (e.g., parent or guardian) is PRESENT to immediately support student to get home or to medical care safely
CATEGORY	SYMPTOMS: Staff or Student presents with at least one of the following COVID-19 symptoms (<i>Fever • Chills • Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing • New cough • New loss of taste or smell</i>)

Exclusion

- Do not allow person to enter school facility
- If staff, supervisor must be notified immediately
- Person must immediately go home and seek medical care
- If diagnosed by a medical professional with COVID-19 based on a test (PCR or antigen) or symptoms, or does not get a COVID-19 test but has had symptoms, the person may return to school 10 days after their first day of symptoms and at least 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications, and other COVID-19 symptoms are improving.
- If the person receives a negative PCR COVID-19 test, person may return to school once there is no fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicines and symptoms are improving.
- If the person receives a negative rapid antigen test, they may not return to school until they have a follow up PCR test. If the follow-up PCR test is negative, person may return to school once there is no fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicines and symptoms are improving.
- Person may participate in remote learning or teaching (if applicable) while out.
- The person can return to school, following normal school policies, if they receive confirmation of an alternate diagnosis from a health care provider that would explain the COVID-19-like symptom(s), once there is no fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicines and symptoms are improving.
- All members of the symptomatic individual's household affiliated with the school (such as a sibling who is also a student, or a parent who is a teacher) must also follow procedures outlined above, because they are contacts to a potential COVID-19 case, based on the presence of symptoms consistent with COVID-19.
 - If the symptomatic individual receives confirmation of an alternate diagnosis from a health care provider that would explain the COVID-19-like symptom(s), once there is no fever without the use of fever-reducing medicines and they have felt well for 24 hours, the household member may also return to school at that time, assuming they have not developed symptoms.

Infection Control

- Ensure that all students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and all teachers, staff and adult visitors wear face coverings during screening, unless the person (or family member, for a student) states that an exception applies. Cloth face coverings must be worn by all students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and all teachers, staff and adult visitors on buses or other transportation vehicles, inside school buildings, and anywhere on school grounds, including outside.
- Individuals waiting to be screened must stand six feet apart from each other.
- The staff person taking temperatures must wear a cloth face covering and must stay six feet from the individual unless taking a temperature.

Transportation

- The person may not utilize group transportation such as the bus in order to leave the school facility.

Reporting

- School must report a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case among students or staff to the Local Health Department, as required by [NCGS § 130A-136](#).
- School must provide requested information, such as answering questions about adherence to mitigation efforts (e.g., wearing cloth face coverings with fidelity) and identifying potential close contacts based on classroom attendance.

Communication Between School and Local Health Department

- If suspected or confirmed positive case is reported:
 - School must follow the directions shared by the Local Health Department for this particular instance, such as contacting students, staff, and families, and/or specific cleaning protocols, and possible room or building closure.

Closure

- Close off areas used by the sick person and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting.
- Consult with the Local Health Department as to whether closure of a classroom or entire building is required. There may be no need to close the school if the Local Health Department determines that close contacts are excluded and there is sufficient space to continue normal operations.

Cleaning

- Close off areas used by the sick person, including school transportation vehicles, and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting.
- Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
- People should not be in the classroom, room, or other area of the facility while it is being cleaned.
- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
- Use an [EPA-registered disinfectant](#) that is active against coronaviruses. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Remember to clean items that might not ordinarily be cleaned daily such as doorknobs, light switches, countertops, chairs, cubbies, and playground structures.
- Follow [NCDHHS Environmental Health Section guidance](#) for additional cleaning and disinfection recommendations.
- For school transportation vehicles:
 - Do not use the vehicle until after cleaning and disinfection.
 - Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting (or if 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible).
 - Follow cleaning guidance in the Transportation section of the [StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit \(K-12\)](#).
- School must follow any other directions shared by the Local Health Department for this particular instance.

Communication with Students, Families, and Staff

- If a suspected or confirmed case is reported:
 - School may choose to notify staff and families that there was an individual at the school with a suspected or confirmed case for COVID-19.
 - Any notice to staff and families must maintain confidentiality in accordance with [NCGS § 130A-143](#) and all other state and federal laws.
 - Local Health Department will contact staff and families if they are identified as a close contact of the suspected or confirmed case.
- If there is no suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19:
 - School is not required to share the positive screening for symptoms with students, families, and staff.
 - However, the school may consult with the Local Health Department on next steps regarding the need for communication following this particular instance of a positive screening for symptoms.
 - Any notice to staff and families must maintain confidentiality in accordance with [NCGS § 130A-143](#) and all other state and federal laws.

Local Health Department Next Steps

- If a suspected or confirmed case reported:
 - The Local Health Department staff will interview the person with COVID-19. The parents or guardians of minor children may be included in the interview. As part of the interview, public health staff will work with the person/family, and the school, if appropriate, to identify individuals who were in close contact (defined as within 6 feet for 15 minutes or longer).
 - Public health staff will reach out to close contacts and inform them that they need to quarantine at home for 14 days after their last contact with the person with COVID-19. If close contacts cannot socially distance from a case in the home, close contacts will need to quarantine for 14 days after the person who tested positive for COVID-19 is released from isolation. Click for more information on quarantining in [English](#) and in [Spanish](#).
 - Public health staff will recommend the close contacts be tested to identify additional positive cases.
 - Public health staff will share that close contacts testing negative will still need to complete the full original 14-day quarantine.
- If there is no suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19:
 - School is not required to share the positive screening for symptoms with students, families, and staff.
 - However, the school may consult with the Local Health Department on next steps regarding the need for communication following this particular instance of a positive screening for symptoms.
 - Any notice to staff and families must maintain confidentiality in accordance with [NCGS § 130A-143](#) and all other state and federal laws.



Positive Screening Protocols

Upon Arrival at School or Transportation Entry

WHO	Student: A designated individual (e.g., parent or guardian) is NOT PRESENT to immediately support child to get home or to medical care safely
CATEGORY	EXPOSURE, NO SYMPTOMS: Staff or Student shares they were exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the last 2 weeks but is NOT symptomatic

Exclusion

- Separate student in designated area with supervision by a delegated staff person until transportation is available
- School must notify designated parent/guardian/family member, or other individual to facilitate student getting home safely
- Student may not return to school until:
 - If no symptoms develop and they do not have a positive COVID-19 test, 14 days after last close contact with the positive individual.
 - If no symptoms develop but the person tests positive for COVID-19, 10 days after the date of the first positive test.
 - If symptoms develop and the person tests negative for COVID-19, 14 days after the last close contact with the positive individual.
 - If symptoms develop and the person tests positive for COVID-19, 10 days after the first positive test.
- Student should participate in remote learning while out.

Infection Control

- Ensure that all students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and all teachers, staff and adult visitors wear face coverings during screening, unless the person (or family member, for a student) states that an exception applies. Cloth face coverings must be worn by all students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and all teachers, staff and adult visitors on buses or other transportation vehicles, inside school buildings, and anywhere on school grounds, including outside.
- Individuals waiting to be screened must stand six feet apart from each other.
- The person taking temperatures must wear a cloth face covering and must stay six feet from the individual unless taking a temperature.

Transportation

- Person may not utilize group transportation such as the bus in order to leave the school facility

Reporting

- School is not required to report a positive screening for exposure to the Local Health Department.

Communication Between School and Local Health Department

- School may consult with the Local Health Department on next steps for management and considerations on cleaning following a positive screening for exposure.

Closure

- No closure is required.
- However, the school may consult with the Local Health Department on next steps.

Cleaning

- No additional cleaning is required beyond Plan A operational requirements.
- However, the school may consult with the Local Health Department on next steps.

Communication with Students, Families, and Staff

- School is not required to share the positive screening for exposure with students, families, and staff.
- However, the school may consult with the Local Health Department on next steps regarding considerations about communication following this particular instance of a positive screening for exposure.

Local Health Department Next Steps

- The Local Health Department may provide support to the school on next steps, if requested, for items such as management, considerations on cleaning, and communication following a positive screening for exposure.



Positive Screening Protocols

Upon Arrival at School or Transportation Entry

WHO	Student: A designated individual (e.g., parent or guardian) is NOT PRESENT to immediately support child to get home or to medical care safely
CATEGORY	DIAGNOSIS, NO SYMPTOMS: Staff or Student shares they were diagnosed with COVID-19 less than 10 days ago, but is NOT symptomatic

Exclusion

- Separate student in designated area with supervision by a delegated staff person until transportation is available.
- School must notify designated parent/guardian/family member, or other individual to facilitate student getting home safely.
- If they never develop symptoms before or after their positive test: person can return to school 10 days after the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test.
- Student should participate in remote learning while out.

Infection Control

- Ensure that all students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and all teachers, staff and adult visitors wear face coverings during screening, unless the person (or family member, for a student) states that an exception applies. Cloth face coverings must be worn by all students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and all teachers, staff and adult visitors on buses or other transportation vehicles, inside school buildings, and anywhere on school grounds, including outside.
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- The staff person taking temperatures must wear a cloth face covering, and must stay six feet from the individual unless taking a temperature.

Transportation

- Person may not utilize group transportation such as the bus in order to leave the school facility.

Reporting

- School must report a diagnosed case of COVID-19 among students or staff to the Local Health Department, as required by [NCGS § 130A-136](#).
- School must provide requested information, such as answering questions about adherence to mitigation efforts (e.g., wearing cloth face coverings with fidelity) and identifying potential close contacts based on classroom attendance.

Communication Between School and Local Health Department

- School must follow the directions from the Local Health Department for this particular instance, such as room or building closure, contacting students, staff, and families, and/or specific cleaning protocols.

Closure

- Close off areas used by the sick person and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting.
- Consult with the Local Health Department as to whether closure of a room or entire building is required. There may be no need to close the school if the Local Health Department determines that close contacts are excluded and there is sufficient space to continue normal operations.

Cleaning

- Close off areas used by the sick person, including school transportation vehicles, and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting.
- Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
- People should not be in the classroom, room, or other area of the facility while it is being cleaned.
- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
- Use an [EPA-registered disinfectant](#) that is active against coronaviruses. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Remember to clean items that might not ordinarily be cleaned daily such as doorknobs, light switches, countertops, chairs, cubbies, and playground structures.
- Follow [NCDHHS Environmental Health Section guidance](#) for additional cleaning and disinfection recommendations.
- For school transportation vehicles:
 - Do not use the vehicle until after cleaning and disinfection.
 - Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting (or if 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible). Open vehicle windows to ventilate if possible.
 - Follow cleaning guidance in the Transportation section of the [StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit \(K-12\)](#).
- School must follow any other cleaning directions from the Local Health Department for this particular instance.

Communication with Students, Families, and Staff

- School may choose to notify staff and families that there was an individual at the school who was diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Any notice to staff and families must maintain confidentiality in accordance with [NCGS § 130A-143](#), FERPA, and all other state and federal laws.
- Local Health Department will contact staff and families if they are identified as a close contact of the individual who tested positive.

Local Health Department Next Steps

- The Local Health Department staff will interview the person with COVID-19. The parents or guardians of minor children may be included in the interview. As part of the interview, public health staff will work with the person/family, and the school, if appropriate, to identify individuals who were in close contact (defined as within 6 feet for 15 minutes or longer).
- Public health staff will reach out to close contacts and inform them that they need to quarantine at home for 14 days after their last contact with the person with COVID-19. If close contacts cannot socially distance from a case in the home, close contacts will need to quarantine for 14 days after the person who tested positive for COVID-19 is released from isolation. Click for more information on quarantining in [English](#) and in [Spanish](#).
- Public health staff will recommend the close contacts be tested to identify additional positive cases.
- Close contacts testing negative will still need to complete the full original 14-day quarantine.



Positive Screening Protocols Upon Arrival at School or Transportation Entry

WHO	Student: A designated individual (e.g., parent or guardian) is NOT PRESENT to immediately support child to get home or to medical care safely
CATEGORY	SYMPTOMS: Staff or Student presents with at least one of the following COVID-19 symptoms (<i>Fever • Chills • Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing • New cough • New loss of taste or smell</i>)

Exclusion

- Immediately isolate student in designated area with supervision by a delegated staff person.
- School must notify designated parent/guardian/family member, or other individual to facilitate student getting home and to medical care safely.
- Person must immediately go home and seek medical care.
- If diagnosed by a medical professional with COVID-19 based on a test (PCR or antigen) or symptoms, or does not get a COVID-19 test but has had symptoms, the person may return to school 10 days after their first day of symptoms and at least 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications, and other COVID-19 symptoms are improving.
- If the person receives a negative PCR COVID-19 test, person may return to school once there is no fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicines and symptoms are improving.
- If the person receives a negative rapid antigen test, they may not return to school until they have a follow up PCR test. If the follow-up PCR test is negative, person may return to school once there is no fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicines and symptoms are improving.
- Student should participate in remote learning while out.
- The person can return to school, following normal school policies, if they receive confirmation of an alternate diagnosis from a health care provider that would explain the COVID-19-like symptom(s), once there is no fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicines and symptoms are improving.
- All members of the symptomatic individual's household affiliated with the school (such as a sibling who is also a student, or a parent who is a teacher) must also follow procedures outlined above, because they are contacts to a potential COVID-19 case, based on the presence of symptoms consistent with COVID-19.
 - If the symptomatic individual receives confirmation of an alternate diagnosis from a health care provider that would explain the COVID-19-like symptom(s), once there is no fever without the use of fever-reducing medicines and they have felt well for 24 hours, the household member may also return to school at that time, assuming they have not developed symptoms.

Infection Control

- Ensure that all students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and all teachers, staff and adult visitors wear face coverings during screening, unless the person (or family member, for a student) states that an exception applies. Cloth face coverings must be worn by all students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and all teachers, staff and adult visitors on buses or other transportation vehicles, inside school buildings, and anywhere on school grounds, including outside.

Transportation

- The person may not utilize group transportation such as the bus in order to leave the school facility.

Reporting

- School must report a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case among students or staff to the Local Health Department, as required by [NCGS § 130A-136](#).
- School must provide requested information, such as answering questions about adherence to mitigation efforts (e.g., wearing cloth face coverings with fidelity) and identifying potential close contacts based on classroom attendance.

Communication Between School and Local Health Department

- If suspected or confirmed positive case is reported:
 - School must follow the directions shared by the Local Health Department for this particular instance, such as contacting students, staff, and families, and/or specific cleaning protocols, and possible room or building closure.

Closure

- Close off areas used by the sick person and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting.
- Consult with the Local Health Department as to whether closure of a classroom or entire building is required. There may be no need to close the school if the Local Health Department determines that close contacts are excluded and there is sufficient space to continue normal operations.

Cleaning

- Close off areas used by the sick person, including school transportation vehicles, and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting.
- Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
- People should not be in the classroom, room, or other area of the facility while it is being cleaned.
- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
- Use an [EPA-registered disinfectant](#) that is active against coronaviruses. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Remember to clean items that might not ordinarily be cleaned daily such as doorknobs, light switches, countertops, chairs, cubbies, and playground structures.
- Follow [NCDHHS Environmental Health Section guidance](#) for additional cleaning and disinfection recommendations.
- For school transportation vehicles:
 - Do not use the vehicle until after cleaning and disinfection.
 - Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting (or if 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible).
 - Follow cleaning guidance in the Transportation section of the [StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit \(K-12\)](#).
- School must follow any other directions shared by the Local Health Department for this particular instance.

Communication with Students, Families, and Staff

- If a suspected or confirmed case is reported:
 - School may choose to notify staff and families that there was an individual at the school with a suspected or confirmed case for COVID-19.
 - Any notice to staff and families must maintain confidentiality in accordance with [NCGS § 130A-143](#) and all other state and federal laws.
 - Local Health Department will contact staff and families if they are identified as a close contact of the suspected or confirmed case.
- If there is no suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19:
 - School is not required to share the positive screening for symptoms with students, families, and staff.
 - However, the school may consult with the Local Health Department on next steps regarding the need for communication following this particular instance of a positive screening for symptoms.
 - Any notice to staff and families must maintain confidentiality in accordance with [NCGS § 130A-143](#) and all other state and federal laws.

Local Health Department Next Steps

- If a suspected or confirmed case reported:
 - The Local Health Department staff will interview the person with COVID-19. The parents or guardians of minor children may be included in the interview. As part of the interview, public health staff will work with the person/family, and the school, if appropriate, to identify individuals who were in close contact (defined as within 6 feet for 15 minutes or longer).
 - Public health staff will reach out to close contacts and inform them that they need to quarantine at home for 14 days after their last contact with the person with COVID-19. If close contacts cannot socially distance from a case in the home, close contacts will need to quarantine for 14 days after the person who tested positive for COVID-19 is released from isolation. Click for more information on quarantining in [English](#) and in [Spanish](#).
 - Public health staff will recommend the close contacts be tested to identify additional positive cases.
 - Public health staff will share that close contacts testing negative will still need to complete the full original 14-day quarantine.
- If there is no suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19:
 - School is not required to share the positive screening for symptoms with students, families, and staff.
 - However, the school may consult with the Local Health Department on next steps regarding the need for communication following this particular instance of a positive screening for symptoms.
 - Any notice to staff and families must maintain confidentiality in accordance with [NCGS § 130A-143](#) and all other state and federal laws.



Positive Screening Protocols During the School Day

WHO	Student
CATEGORY	EXPOSURE, NO SYMPTOMS: Staff or Student shares they were exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the last 2 weeks but is NOT symptomatic

Exclusion

- Separate student in designated area with supervision by a delegated staff person until transportation is available.
- School must notify designated parent/guardian/family member, or other individual to facilitate student getting home safely.
- Student may not return to school until:
 - If no symptoms develop and they do not have a positive COVID-19 test, 14 days after last close contact with the positive individual.
 - If no symptoms develop but the person tests positive for COVID-19, 10 days after the date of the first positive test.
 - If symptoms develop and the person tests negative for COVID-19, 14 days after the last close contact with the positive individual.
 - If symptoms develop and the person tests positive for COVID-19, 10 days after the first positive test.
- Student should participate in remote learning while out.

Infection Control

- Ensure that all students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and all teachers, staff and adult visitors wear face coverings during screening, unless the person (or family member, for a student) states that an exception applies. Cloth face coverings must be worn by all students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and all teachers, staff and adult visitors on buses or other transportation vehicles, inside school buildings, and anywhere on school grounds, including outside.
- Individuals waiting to be screened must stand six feet apart from each other.
- The person taking temperatures must wear a cloth face covering and must stay six feet from the individual unless taking a temperature.

Transportation

- Person may not utilize group transportation such as the bus in order to leave the school facility.

Reporting

- School is not required to report a positive screening for exposure to the Local Health Department.

Communication Between School and Local Health Department

- School may consult with the Local Health Department on next steps for management and considerations on cleaning following a positive screening for exposure.

Closure

- No closure is required.
- However, the school may consult with the Local Health Department on next steps.

Cleaning

- No additional cleaning is required beyond Plan A operational requirements.
- However, the school may consult with the Local Health Department on next steps.

Communication with Students, Families, and Staff

- School is not required to share the positive screening for exposure with students, families, and staff.
- However, the school may consult with the Local Health Department on next steps regarding considerations about communication following this particular instance of a positive screening for exposure.

Local Health Department Next Steps

- The Local Health Department may provide support to the school on next steps, if requested, for items such as management, considerations on cleaning, and communication following a positive screening for exposure.



Positive Screening Protocols During the School Day

WHO	Student
CATEGORY	DIAGNOSIS, NO SYMPTOMS: Staff or Student shares they were diagnosed with COVID-19 less than 10 days ago, but is NOT symptomatic

Exclusion

- Separate student in designated area with supervision by a delegated staff person until transportation is available.
- School must notify designated parent/guardian/family member, or other individual to facilitate student getting home safely.
- If they never develop symptoms before or after their positive test: person can return to school 10 days after the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test.
- Student should participate in remote learning while out.

Infection Control

- Ensure that all students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and all teachers, staff and adult visitors wear face coverings during screening, unless the person (or family member, for a student) states that an exception applies. Cloth face coverings must be worn by all students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and all teachers, staff and adult visitors on buses or other transportation vehicles, inside school buildings, and anywhere on school grounds, including outside.
- Individuals waiting to be screened must stand six feet apart from each other.
- The staff person taking temperatures must wear a cloth face covering, and must stay six feet from the individual unless taking a temperature.

Transportation

- Person may not utilize group transportation such as the bus in order to leave the school facility.

Reporting

- School must report a diagnosed case of COVID-19 among students or staff to the Local Health Department, as required by [NCGS § 130A-136](#).
- School must provide requested information, such as answering questions about adherence to mitigation efforts (e.g., wearing cloth face coverings with fidelity) and identifying potential close contacts based on classroom attendance.

Communication Between School and Local Health Department

- School must follow the directions from the Local Health Department for this particular instance, such as room or building closure, contacting students, staff, and families, and/or specific cleaning protocols.

Closure

- Close off areas used by the sick person and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting.
- Consult with the Local Health Department as to whether closure of a room or entire building is required. There may be no need to close the school if the Local Health Department determines that close contacts are excluded and there is sufficient space to continue normal operations.

Cleaning

- Close off areas used by the sick person, including school transportation vehicles, and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting.
- Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
- People should not be in the classroom, room, or other area of the facility while it is being cleaned.
- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
- Use an [EPA-registered disinfectant](#) that is active against coronaviruses. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Remember to clean items that might not ordinarily be cleaned daily such as doorknobs, light switches, countertops, chairs, cubbies, and playground structures.
- Follow [NCDHHS Environmental Health Section guidance](#) for additional cleaning and disinfection recommendations.
- For school transportation vehicles:
 - Do not use the vehicle until after cleaning and disinfection.
 - Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting (or if 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible). Open vehicle windows to ventilate if possible.
 - Follow cleaning guidance in the Transportation section of the [StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit \(K-12\)](#).
- School must follow any other cleaning directions from the Local Health Department for this particular instance.

Communication with Students, Families, and Staff

- School may choose to notify staff and families that there was an individual at the school who was diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Any notice to staff and families must maintain confidentiality in accordance with [NCGS § 130A-143](#), FERPA, and all other state and federal laws.
- Local Health Department will contact staff and families if they are identified as a close contact of the individual who tested positive.

Local Health Department Next Steps

- The Local Health Department staff will interview the person with COVID-19. The parents or guardians of minor children may be included in the interview. As part of the interview, public health staff will work with the person/family, and the school, if appropriate, to identify individuals who were in close contact (defined as within 6 feet for 15 minutes or longer).
- Public health staff will reach out to close contacts and inform them that they need to quarantine at home for 14 days after their last contact with the person with COVID-19. If close contacts cannot socially distance from a case in the home, close contacts will need to quarantine for 14 days after the person who tested positive for COVID-19 is released from isolation. Click for more information on quarantining in [English](#) and in [Spanish](#).
- Public health staff will recommend the close contacts be tested to identify additional positive cases.
- Close contacts testing negative will still need to complete the full original 14-day quarantine.



Positive Screening Protocols During the School Day

WHO	Student
CATEGORY	SYMPTOMS: Staff or Student presents with at least one of the following COVID-19 symptoms (<i>Fever • Chills • Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing • New cough • New loss of taste or smell</i>)

Exclusion

- Immediately isolate student in designated area with supervision by a delegated staff person.
- School must notify designated parent/guardian/family member, or other individual to facilitate student getting home and to medical care safely.
- Person must immediately go home and seek medical care
- If diagnosed by a medical professional with COVID-19 based on a test (PCR or antigen) or symptoms, or does not get a COVID-19 test but has had symptoms, the person may return to school 10 days after their first day of symptoms and at least 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications, and other COVID-19 symptoms are improving.
- If the person receives a negative PCR COVID-19 test, person may return to school once there is no fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicines and symptoms are improving.
- If the person receives a negative rapid antigen test, they may not return to school until they have a follow up PCR test. If the follow-up PCR test is negative, person may return to school once there is no fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicines and symptoms are improving.
- Student should participate in remote learning while out.
- The person can return to school, following normal school policies, if they receive confirmation of an alternate diagnosis from a health care provider that would explain the COVID-19-like symptom(s), once there is no fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicines and symptoms are improving.
- All members of the symptomatic individual's household affiliated with the school (such as a sibling who is also a student, or a parent who is a teacher) must also follow procedures outlined above, because they are contacts to a potential COVID-19 case, based on the presence of symptoms consistent with COVID-19.
 - If the symptomatic individual receives confirmation of an alternate diagnosis from a health care provider that would explain the COVID-19-like symptom(s), once there is no fever without the use of fever-reducing medicines and they have felt well for 24 hours, the household member may also return to school at that time, assuming they have not developed symptoms.

Infection Control

- Ensure that all students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and all teachers, staff and adult visitors wear face coverings during screening, unless the person (or family member, for a student) states that an exception applies. Cloth face coverings must be worn by all students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and all teachers, staff and adult visitors on buses or other transportation vehicles, inside school buildings, and anywhere on school grounds, including outside.

Transportation

- The person may not utilize group transportation such as the bus in order to leave the school facility.

Reporting

- School must report a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case among students or staff to the Local Health Department, as required by [NCGS § 130A-136](#).
- School must provide requested information, such as answering questions about adherence to mitigation efforts (e.g., wearing cloth face coverings with fidelity) and identifying potential close contacts based on classroom attendance.

Communication Between School and Local Health Department

- If suspected or confirmed positive case is reported:
 - School must follow the directions shared by the Local Health Department for this particular instance, such as contacting students, staff, and families, and/or specific cleaning protocols, and possible room or building closure.

Closure

- Close off areas used by the sick person and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting.
- Consult with the Local Health Department as to whether closure of a classroom or entire building is required. There may be no need to close the school if the Local Health Department determines that close contacts are excluded and there is sufficient space to continue normal operations.

Cleaning

- Close off areas used by the sick person, including school transportation vehicles, and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting.
- Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
- People should not be in the classroom, room, or other area of the facility while it is being cleaned.
- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
- Use an [EPA-registered disinfectant](#) that is active against coronaviruses. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Remember to clean items that might not ordinarily be cleaned daily such as doorknobs, light switches, countertops, chairs, cubbies, and playground structures.
- Follow [NCDHHS Environmental Health Section guidance](#) for additional cleaning and disinfection recommendations.
- For school transportation vehicles:
 - Do not use the vehicle until after cleaning and disinfection.
 - Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting (or if 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible).
 - Follow cleaning guidance in the Transportation section of the [StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit \(K-12\)](#).
- School must follow any other directions shared by the Local Health Department for this particular instance.

Communication with Students, Families, and Staff

- If a suspected or confirmed case is reported:
 - School may choose to notify staff and families that there was an individual at the school with a suspected or confirmed case for COVID-19.
 - Any notice to staff and families must maintain confidentiality in accordance with [NCGS § 130A-143](#) and all other state and federal laws.
 - Local Health Department will contact staff and families if they are identified as a close contact of the suspected or confirmed case.
- If there is no suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19:
 - School is not required to share the positive screening for symptoms with students, families, and staff.
 - However, the school may consult with the Local Health Department on next steps regarding the need for communication following this particular instance of a positive screening for symptoms.
 - Any notice to staff and families must maintain confidentiality in accordance with [NCGS § 130A-143](#) and all other state and federal laws.

Local Health Department Next Steps

- If a suspected or confirmed case reported:
 - The Local Health Department staff will interview the person with COVID-19. The parents or guardians of minor children may be included in the interview. As part of the interview, public health staff will work with the person/family, and the school, if appropriate, to identify individuals who were in close contact (defined as within 6 feet for 15 minutes or longer).
 - Public health staff will reach out to close contacts and inform them that they need to quarantine at home for 14 days after their last contact with the person with COVID-19. If close contacts cannot socially distance from a case in the home, close contacts will need to quarantine for 14 days after the person who tested positive for COVID-19 is released from isolation. Click for more information on quarantining in [English](#) and in [Spanish](#).
 - Public health staff will recommend the close contacts be tested to identify additional positive cases.
 - Public health staff will share that close contacts testing negative will still need to complete the full original 14-day quarantine.
- If there is no suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19:
 - School is not required to share the positive screening for symptoms with students, families, and staff.
 - However, the school may consult with the Local Health Department on next steps regarding the need for communication following this particular instance of a positive screening for symptoms.
 - Any notice to staff and families must maintain confidentiality in accordance with [NCGS § 130A-143](#) and all other state and federal laws.



Positive Screening Protocols During the School Day

WHO	Staff Member
CATEGORY	EXPOSURE, NO SYMPTOMS: Staff or Student shares they were exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the last 2 weeks but is NOT symptomatic

Exclusion

- Supervisor must be notified immediately.
- Person must immediately go home.
- Person may not return to school until:
 - If no symptoms develop and they do not have a positive COVID-19 test, 14 days after last close contact with the positive individual.
 - If no symptoms develop but the person tests positive for COVID-19, 10 days after the date of the first positive test.
 - If symptoms develop and the person tests negative for COVID-19, 14 days after the last close contact with the positive individual.
 - If symptoms develop and the person tests positive for COVID-19, 10 days after the first positive test.
- Person may participate in remote teaching (if applicable) while out.

Infection Control

- Ensure that all students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and all teachers, staff and adult visitors wear face coverings during screening, unless the person (or family member, for a student) states that an exception applies. Cloth face coverings must be worn by all students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and all teachers, staff and adult visitors on buses or other transportation vehicles, inside school buildings, and anywhere on school grounds, including outside.

Transportation

- Person may not utilize group transportation such as the bus in order to leave the school facility.

Reporting

- School is not required to report a positive screening for exposure to the Local Health Department.

Communication Between School and Local Health Department

- School may consult with the Local Health Department on next steps for management and considerations on cleaning following a positive screening for exposure.

Closure

- No closure is required.
- However, the school may consult with the Local Health Department on next steps.

Cleaning

- No additional cleaning is required beyond Plan A operational requirements.
- However, the school may consult with the Local Health Department on next steps.

Communication with Students, Families, and Staff

- School is not required to share the positive screening for exposure with students, families, and staff.
- However, the school may consult with the Local Health Department on next steps regarding considerations about communication following this particular instance of a positive screening for exposure.

Local Health Department Next Steps

- The Local Health Department may provide support to the school on next steps, if requested, for items such as management, considerations on cleaning, and communication following a positive screening for exposure.



Positive Screening Protocols During the School Day

WHO	Staff Member
CATEGORY	DIAGNOSIS, NO SYMPTOMS: Staff or Student shares they were diagnosed with COVID-19 less than 10 days ago, but is NOT symptomatic

Exclusion

- Supervisor must be notified immediately.
- Person must immediately go home.
- If they never develop symptoms before or after their positive test: person can return to school 10 days after the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test.
- Person may participate in remote teaching (if applicable) while out.

Infection Control

- Ensure that all students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and all teachers, staff and adult visitors wear face coverings during screening, unless the person (or family member, for a student) states that an exception applies. Cloth face coverings must be worn by all students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and all teachers, staff and adult visitors on buses or other transportation vehicles, inside school buildings, and anywhere on school grounds, including outside.

Transportation

- Person may not utilize group transportation such as the bus in order to leave the school facility.

Reporting

- School must report a diagnosed case of COVID-19 among students or staff to the Local Health Department, as required by [NCGS § 130A-136](#).
- School must provide requested information, such as answering questions about adherence to mitigation efforts (e.g., wearing cloth face coverings with fidelity) and identifying potential close contacts based on classroom attendance.

Communication Between School and Local Health Department

- School must follow the directions from the Local Health Department for this particular instance, such as room or building closure, contacting students, staff, and families, and/or specific cleaning protocols.

Closure

- Close off areas used by the sick person and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting.
- Consult with the Local Health Department as to whether closure of a room or entire building is required. There may be no need to close the school if the Local Health Department determines that close contacts are excluded and there is sufficient space to continue normal operations.

Cleaning

- Close off areas used by the sick person, including school transportation vehicles, and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting.
- Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
- People should not be in the classroom, room, or other area of the facility while it is being cleaned.
- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
- Use an [EPA-registered disinfectant](#) that is active against coronaviruses. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.

- ❑ Remember to clean items that might not ordinarily be cleaned daily such as doorknobs, light switches, countertops, chairs, cubbies, and playground structures.
- ❑ Follow [NCDHHS Environmental Health Section guidance](#) for additional cleaning and disinfection recommendations.
- ❑ For school transportation vehicles:
 - Do not use the vehicle until after cleaning and disinfection.
 - Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting (or if 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible). Open vehicle windows to ventilate if possible.
 - Follow cleaning guidance in the Transportation section of the [StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit \(K-12\)](#).
- ❑ School must follow any other cleaning directions from the Local Health Department for this particular instance.

Communication with Students, Families, and Staff

- ❑ School may choose to notify staff and families that there was an individual at the school who was diagnosed with COVID-19.
- ❑ Any notice to staff and families must maintain confidentiality in accordance with [NCGS § 130A-143](#), FERPA, and all other state and federal laws.
- ❑ Local Health Department will contact staff and families if they are identified as a close contact of the individual who tested positive.

Local Health Department Next Steps

- ❑ The Local Health Department staff will interview the staff person with COVID-19. As part of the interview, public health staff will work with the person/family, and the school, if appropriate, to identify individuals who were in close contact (defined as within 6 feet for 15 minutes or longer).
- ❑ Public health staff will reach out to close contacts and inform them that they need to quarantine at home for 14 days after their last contact with the person with COVID-19. If close contacts cannot socially distance from a case in the home, close contacts will need to quarantine for 14 days after the person who tested positive for COVID-19 is released from isolation. Click for more information on quarantining in [English](#) and in [Spanish](#).
- ❑ Public health staff will recommend the close contacts be tested to identify additional positive cases.
- ❑ Close contacts testing negative will still need to complete the full original 14-day quarantine.



Positive Screening Protocols During the School Day

WHO	Staff Member
CATEGORY	SYMPTOMS: Staff or Student presents with at least one of the following COVID-19 symptoms (<i>Fever • Chills • Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing • New cough • New loss of taste or smell</i>)

Exclusion

- Supervisor must be notified immediately.
- Person must immediately go home.
- If diagnosed by a medical professional with COVID-19 based on a test (PCR or antigen) or symptoms, or does not get a COVID-19 test but has had symptoms, the person may return to school 10 days after their first day of symptoms and at least 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications, and other COVID-19 symptoms are improving.
- If the person receives a negative PCR COVID-19 test, person may return to school once there is no fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicines and symptoms are improving.
- If the person receives a negative rapid antigen test, they may not return to school until they have a follow up PCR test. If the follow-up PCR test is negative, person may return to school once there is no fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicines and symptoms are improving.
- Person may participate in remote teaching (if applicable) while out.
- The person can return to school, following normal school policies, if they receive confirmation of an alternate diagnosis from a health care provider that would explain the COVID-19-like symptom(s), once there is no fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicines and symptoms are improving.
- All members of the symptomatic individual's household affiliated with the school (such as a sibling who is also a student, or a parent who is a teacher) must also follow procedures outlined above, because they are contacts to a potential COVID-19 case, based on the presence of symptoms consistent with COVID-19.
 - If the symptomatic individual receives confirmation of an alternate diagnosis from a health care provider that would explain the COVID-19-like symptom(s), once there is no fever without the use of fever-reducing medicines and they have felt well for 24 hours, the household member may also return to school at that time, assuming they have not developed symptoms.

Infection Control

- Ensure that all students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and all teachers, staff and adult visitors wear face coverings during screening, unless the person (or family member, for a student) states that an exception applies. Cloth face coverings must be worn by all students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and all teachers, staff and adult visitors on buses or other transportation vehicles, inside school buildings, and anywhere on school grounds, including outside.

Transportation

- The person may not utilize group transportation such as the bus in order to leave the school facility.

Reporting

- School must report a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case among students or staff to the Local Health Department, as required by [NCGS § 130A-136](#).
- School must provide requested information, such as answering questions about adherence to mitigation efforts (e.g., wearing cloth face coverings with fidelity) and identifying potential close contacts based on classroom attendance.

Communication Between School and Local Health Department

- If suspected or confirmed positive case is reported:
 - School must follow the directions shared by the Local Health Department for this particular instance, such as contacting students, staff, and families, and/or specific cleaning protocols, and possible room or building closure.

Closure

- Close off areas used by the sick person and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting.
- Consult with the Local Health Department as to whether closure of a classroom or entire building is required. There may be no need to close the school if the Local Health Department determines that close contacts are excluded and there is sufficient space to continue normal operations.

Cleaning

- Close off areas used by the sick person, including school transportation vehicles, and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting.
- Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
- People should not be in the classroom, room, or other area of the facility while it is being cleaned.
- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
- Use an [EPA-registered disinfectant](#) that is active against coronaviruses. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Remember to clean items that might not ordinarily be cleaned daily such as doorknobs, light switches, countertops, chairs, cubbies, and playground structures.
- Follow [NCDHHS Environmental Health Section guidance](#) for additional cleaning and disinfection recommendations.
- For school transportation vehicles:
 - Do not use the vehicle until after cleaning and disinfection.
 - Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting (or if 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible).
 - Follow cleaning guidance in the Transportation section of the [StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit \(K-12\)](#).
- School must follow any other directions shared by the Local Health Department for this particular instance.

Communication with Students, Families, and Staff

- If a suspected or confirmed case is reported:
 - School may choose to notify staff and families that there was an individual at the school with a suspected or confirmed case for COVID-19.
 - Any notice to staff and families must maintain confidentiality in accordance with [NCGS § 130A-143](#) and all other state and federal laws.
 - Local Health Department will contact staff and families if they are identified as a close contact of the suspected or confirmed case.
- If there is no suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19:
 - School is not required to share the positive screening for symptoms with students, families, and staff.
 - However, the school may consult with the Local Health Department on next steps regarding the need for communication following this particular instance of a positive screening for symptoms.
 - Any notice to staff and families must maintain confidentiality in accordance with [NCGS § 130A-143](#) and all other state and federal laws.

Local Health Department Next Steps

- If a suspected or confirmed case reported:
 - The Local Health Department staff will interview the person with COVID-19. The parents or guardians of minor children may be included in the interview. As part of the interview, public health staff will work with the person/family, and the school, if appropriate, to identify individuals who were in close contact (defined as within 6 feet for 15 minutes or longer).

- Public health staff will reach out to close contacts and inform them that they need to quarantine at home for 14 days after their last contact with the person with COVID-19. If close contacts cannot socially distance from a case in the home, close contacts will need to quarantine for 14 days after the person who tested positive for COVID-19 is released from isolation. Click for more information on quarantining in [English](#) and in [Spanish](#).
 - Public health staff will recommend the close contacts be tested to identify additional positive cases.
 - Public health staff will share that close contacts testing negative will still need to complete the full original 14-day quarantine.
- If there is no suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19:
- School is not required to share the positive screening for symptoms with students, families, and staff.
 - However, the school may consult with the Local Health Department on next steps regarding the need for communication following this particular instance of a positive screening for symptoms.
 - Any notice to staff and families must maintain confidentiality in accordance with [NCGS § 130A-143](#) and all other state and federal laws.