



Evaluation of High-Risk Contacts in Schools After Mask-Optional Change:

Due to the change in mitigation in the schools, definitions of high-risk contact have changed. The environment for close contacts could involve 4 different scenarios, of which 2 of them are new. Contact scenarios are listed below with current recommendations for assignment of risk and quarantine/testing requirements.

Scenario # 1:

- Positive case unmasked, contact unmasked: This presentation will follow established guidelines for establishing high-risk contact. If the person of concern was within 6 feet of the positive case for 10 minutes or more cumulative time during the school day, that person would be considered a high risk contact and will require standard quarantine or initiation into the test-to-stay program at the school.

Scenario # 2:

- Positive case masked, contact masked: This presentation will follow previous guidelines that consider this group low risk regardless of time encountered and distance from positive case. This would not be considered a high risk contact and would not be required to quarantine or test. The student and family should be notified by the school as before of the low-risk contact.

The following two scenarios are new due to the mask optional state of the schools:

Scenario # 3:

- Positive case masked, contact unmasked: Person of concern was within 6 feet of the positive case for 10 minutes or more cumulative time during the school day. Transmission risk unknown. See below.

Scenario # 4:

- Positive case unmasked, contact masked: Person of concern was within 6 feet of the positive case for 10 minutes or more cumulative time during the school day. Transmission risk unknown. See below.

Scenario # 3 and # 4 Guidance:

Due to the unknown nature of risk of transmission in these groups, it is most prudent to quarantine this group as a high risk contact or to enter them into the test-to-stay program at the school (if available). As these groups represent unknown risk, and the risk may be low, the Health Department will look at these groups to evaluate if any convert to positive. Data will be evaluated over the next few weeks and further recommendations will follow to better define risk category and quarantine/testing requirements.

Test to Stay Strategies:

- Any student in a school testing program for monitoring will need to wear a mask at school and in the community during the testing period.
- No other restrictions to movement will apply to the student who is confirmed negative daily through the testing programs.
- If a student has a positive test result at the school, they would enter into isolation per previously established guidelines. All positive antigen tests must be verified by a PCR test to confirm positive. If the PCR test is negative, the student will remain in the testing program. If the PCR test is positive, the student will enter into isolation per previously established guidelines.

Students and staff with history or previously documented COVID-19 infection or those that have been vaccinated continue to be considered low risk and do not require quarantine or testing to stay in school. They should continue to monitor for symptoms and present for testing if there are concerns for active disease with COVID-19.