



Prevent • Promote • Protect

Administration

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To: Pikes Peak Area Superintendents Association (PPASA)
From: Susan Wheelan, Public Health Director
Re: COVID-19 Response and K-12 School Updates to Quarantine and Isolation
Date: January 3, 2022

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to be an evolving situation. This memo is intended to provide high-level recommendations for school partners as we enter the next phase of response. In line with efforts from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) to balance disease mitigation and the importance of prioritizing in-person learning, as communicated via memo on Dec. 28, El Paso County Public Health (EPCPH) is moving forward with the shortened isolation and quarantine recommendations. Clarifying guidance specific to sectors such as school and child care facilities has not yet been issued by CDC and CDPHE. With many El Paso County schools returning to session in the coming days, EPCPH is providing this memo to serve as interim guidance. As soon as CDC and CDPHE guidance becomes available, EPCPH will issue fully updated school guidance.

We continue to support school leaders in implementing the strategies they feel most beneficial for their unique schools, communities, staff, students and families. EPCPH has worked closely with partners to build the infrastructure in El Paso County, with testing, treatment and prevention resources available to all El Paso County residents and communities. We want to make sure school leaders have quick reference to additional resources from CDPHE for schools and families for [free masks through the State School Mask project](#) and free [at-home testing kits](#).

Given the recently announced changes with COVID-19 [quarantine and isolation](#), please follow the guidance below which implements a five-day isolation period if you are asymptomatic and a five-day quarantine period beginning on the last date of exposure to the COVID-19 positive individual:

- Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 (isolate).
 - Isolation is required per EPCPH guidance which became effective Dec. 18, 2021.
 - The following applies to all cases, regardless of vaccination status:
 - Stay home for five days.
 - If the individual has no symptoms on day five, they can return to school the following day with a mask through day 10.
 - If the individual continues to have symptoms, they must isolate through day 10 after symptom onset.
 - If they have a fever, continue to stay home until the fever is resolved for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- If an individual was exposed to someone with COVID-19 in a routine classroom setting (quarantine).
 - Quarantine is optional per EPCPH guidance which became effective Dec. 18, 2021.

- Though not required, EPCPH continues to recommend quarantine as a best practice for disease prevention.
- Monitor for symptoms for a full 14 days. If the individual becomes symptomatic, follow the isolation instructions above.
- Test on day five after exposure, if possible.
- If an individual was exposed to a household member with COVID-19 (quarantine).
 - Quarantine of household contacts is required per EPCPH guidance which became effective Dec. 18, 2021.
 - If they have received a booster dose, completed the two-dose series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine within the last six months, or completed the one-dose series of Johnson & Johnson vaccine within the last two months:
 - Wear a mask when around others for a full 10 days after the last exposure to the ill individual.
 - Test on day five, if possible.
 - If the individual develops symptoms, get a test and follow the isolation instructions above.
 - If they completed the two-dose vaccine series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine over six months ago and are not boosted, or if they received the one-dose vaccine series of Johnson & Johnson vaccine over two months ago and are not boosted, or if they are unvaccinated:
 - The individual must quarantine (stay home) for five days after the last exposure to the COVID-19 positive person (beginning on day five if they are asymptomatic, or day 10 if their symptoms persist).
 - Wear a mask for the full 10 days after the last exposure.
 - Test on day five, if possible.
 - If they develop symptoms, get a test and stay home.