

What To Do When Notified of a Lab-Confirmed Case of COVID-19 in a School or Child Care Setting

Use the resources below and follow the instructions to help protect staff and children in your child care, school, or camp community while you are waiting for the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) to complete their case investigation and additional follow-up.

Resources

- For information regarding a person who is symptomatic: [Decision Tree for People with COVID-19 Symptoms in Youth, Student, and Child Care Programs \(PDF\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/exguide.pdf) (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/exguide.pdf).
- [What to do if you're waiting for COVID-19 test results \(PDF\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/waiting.pdf) (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/waiting.pdf).

You may hear about a positive result from a staff member or parent/guardian before MDH is notified. Should this occur, please reach out to the MDH follow-up team by emailing health.schoolcc.followup@state.mn.us.

The team monitors this inbox seven days a week and provides timely guidance. It is helpful if you can gather additional information (described below) before reaching out to the MDH follow-up team.

Information gathering and sharing

When notified of a confirmed case of COVID-19 involving staff or children in your program or school, gather the following information to share with the MDH follow-up team when you contact them:

- Person's (or proxy's) name and phone number, so that MDH can conduct the case investigation in a timely manner.
- Date the person first developed symptoms.
- If they did not have symptoms, what date were they tested and why were they tested?
- Date(s) the person last worked/attended the child care, school, or camp.
 - **NOTE:** MDH considers the person to be infectious beginning two days (48 hours) prior to symptoms developing, or starting on the date of the test without symptoms through 10 days

after symptoms first developed. Ideally, a person who is symptomatic would not be working/attending, so MDH generally needs to look only at the two days prior to symptoms developing (or date of test) and possibly the day symptoms developed.

How MDH uses gathered information

MDH uses this information to determine any exposures (close contacts) that may have occurred in a school, child care, or youth camp setting. If you do not have this information or are unable to collect it, MDH still wants you to reach out to health.schoolcc.followup@state.mn.us.

What is a close contact?

- A close contact is anyone who was within 6 feet of the person who is sick while they were considered to be infectious, for 15 minutes or more (regardless of whether either person wore a cloth face covering or face shield).
- Schools, child care, and camps must notify all identified close contacts of their exposure to a confirmed case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with state and federal law.
- The MDH follow-up team will provide an exclusion letter and a fact sheet that the school, child care, or camp will be asked to give to all close contacts. The exclusion letter and fact sheet share instructions for close contacts, including what they need to do to prevent the spread of COVID-19. MDH has also developed a notification letter that can be sent to families and staff who were not identified to be a close contact of the case; the letter provides general information about the situation and links to COVID-19 resources.

Consultation with MDH follow-up team

Once you have connected with the MDH follow-up team, they will evaluate next steps and provide guidance. The evaluation will take into account the information available, with a focus on those who might be considered close contacts if the person was onsite during their infectious period. MDH will consider the following to inform a recommended plan of action:

- How long was the person on site while potentially infectious?
- Whom did that person come in contact with?
- Was that person with a closed group in one classroom?
- Was that person or classroom mixing with other people or classrooms?
- Was there intermixing between groups or classrooms?

Potential recommendations by MDH

Below is a list of examples of possible recommendations from MDH. This list does not include all possible recommendations from MDH. Recommendations depend on the extent of the exposure and what mitigation measures were in place at the time of exposure.

- Send notifications to staff and families to alert them of a lab-confirmed case of COVID-19 in the child care, school, or camp community. Templates will be provided by MDH.
- Based on the details provided during the case investigation, MDH may recommend:
 - Exclusion of close contacts, which involves requiring close contacts to stay home for 14 days.
 - Closing an entire classroom, school, child care, or camp setting for 14 days (e.g., an in-home child care where children and staff are consistently in close contact). This will depend on the extent of exposure and whether there is the possibility of ongoing transmission in the program. Any closing decisions should be made in consultation with the MDH follow-up team.
 - Take no further action.

Cleaning and disinfecting

Considerations for cleaning and disinfecting your program's facilities after notification of a confirmed case of COVID-19:

- Review cleaning guidance at [COVID-19 Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidance for Schools and Child Care Programs \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/clean.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/clean.html).
- As long as routine cleaning and disinfecting have been done regularly, additional cleaning measures may not be necessary.
- Depending on when the person with COVID-19 was last on site, it may be difficult to know what areas they were in and what objects or surfaces they may have touched after they became sick.
- Email health.schools.covid19@state.mn.us if you have questions about cleaning after a child or staff member becomes ill.

If a parent of a child is diagnosed with COVID-19

- If the child lives with the parent, the child will be considered a close contact and needs to be excluded from school or child care, and needs to stay at home for 14 days from the date of their last exposure to their parent.
- Children do not represent an exposure risk within your setting solely because their parent tested positive, as long as the child has not had any symptoms.

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- If you have been able to limit the amount of time the parent has been in your setting and there was limited interaction with others, there is a good chance no one would be considered a close contact, and therefore nothing needs to be done.
- MDH doesn't require programs to send a general notification of a positive case in this situation, but can provide a template letter if requested. Contact health.schools.covid19@state.mn.us.



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Contact health.communications@state.mn.us to request an alternate format.

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