



2021-22 COVID Protocols



ROBBINSDALE
Area Schools



2021-22 COVID Protocols

Updated June 6th, 2022

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic requires multiple layers of prevention strategies in order to reduce the spread of COVID in our schools and community. Robbinsdale Area Schools follows recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as the basis for their COVID protocols. In addition, we carefully monitor community transmission and COVID vaccination rates each week to determine the need for changes to this guidance. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve, this guidance will change to reflect new information.

Vaccines

Robbinsdale Area Schools, in alignment with the CDC, strongly encourages COVID-19 vaccination for teachers, staff, families, and eligible students. Individuals under 18 years old are considered **fully vaccinated** if they've received their primary series (2-dose series of a COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna) or a single dose of Janssen vaccine).

For students and staff that are 18 years of age or older, **up to date** means a person has received all recommended COVID-19 vaccines, including any booster dose(s) when eligible. For age specific information regarding vaccine recommendations, visit: [CDC vaccine recommendations](#).

Families can find information about how to access free vaccinations by visiting the state's [vaccine connector website](#).

Face Coverings

In alignment with the CDC, face coverings are not required, but highly recommended within district buildings/facilities. Robbinsdale Area Schools will follow the CDC's community level approach to face coverings, which provides a classification of low, medium, or high based on community transmission.

Face coverings **should** be worn:

- While in the health office
- For students/staff who have tested positive (10 full days from symptom onset/positive test)
- For students/staff who have been exposed to COVID-19 (10 full days from exposure)
- Student-athletes will continue to follow MSHL face coverings protocols: [Minnesota State High School League \(MSHSL\) COVID-19 protocols](#).
- Masking will be temporarily required at a school if/when the school experiences 5% or more students absent due to positive cases of COVID-19 or symptoms consistent with COVID-19.



This is consistent with Minnesota Department of Health recommendations for previously existing influenza-like illness guidelines.

- When community levels are high, face coverings will be strongly recommended.

Families and staff may continue to wear face coverings, and are encouraged to do so if they believe it is best for them. Face coverings will be available at schools for students/staff.

Physical Distancing

CDC recommends schools maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms to reduce transmission risk.

COVID Symptom Screening

People with COVID-19 have reported a wide range of symptoms – ranging from mild to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. Anyone can have mild to severe symptoms. Common symptoms of COVID-19 are the following:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

*This list does not include all possible symptoms.

Prior to coming to school each day, individuals should perform a [COVID symptom screening](#). **People with symptoms of COVID-19 should complete the [electronic reporting form](#) for further guidance.**

COVID-19 Testing

Robbinsdale Area Schools encourages students, staff, and visitors to complete regular COVID testing in order to help identify and isolate cases. COVID-19 test kits are available in the school health office. Students and staff that are experiencing symptoms will need to provide documentation of negative test results from a supervised or lab-confirmed PCR or antigen test or an alternate diagnosis from a medical provider to return to school before their 5-day isolation period is over. Negative results from an unsupervised at-home COVID test will not be accepted.



The United States Federal Government has decided every home in the United States is eligible to order four free at-home COVID-19 tests. These tests are completely free and usually ship in 7-12 days. To order tests, please visit this link: [Free at-home COVID tests.](#)

Individuals can also find a testing location by going to the [MDH website: COVID-19 Testing.](#)

Staying Home When Sick

- Regardless of vaccination status, students and staff who have symptoms associated with COVID-19 must stay home or will be sent home immediately.
- Individuals who develop COVID-19 symptoms should isolate and get tested as soon as possible.
- **Individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 should complete the [electronic reporting form](#) for further guidance.**
- The individual may end isolation and return to school or work once they receive:
 - A negative COVID-19 test result; **OR**
 - Alternative diagnosis from a doctor/health care provider.
- If the individual chooses not to seek an alternative medical diagnosis or to obtain a COVID-19 test, they must stay home for 5 days and isolate themselves from others.
 - Day 0 is the first day the individual begins to experience symptoms, and Day 1 is the first full day after symptoms develop.
 - Before ending isolation, the individual's symptoms must have improved and the individual must be fever free for 24 hours without using fever-reducing medications.

Individuals can find a testing location by going to the [MDH website: COVID-19 Testing.](#) Negative results from unsupervised home tests will not be accepted. Supervised rapid antigen tests are available for symptomatic students and staff in the school health office.

Positive Cases

- Regardless of vaccination status, students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 should stay home (isolate) and **complete the [electronic reporting form](#)**. Once the form is submitted, communication regarding a return to school/work date will be provided.
- After 5 days, if symptoms have improved and the individual has been fever-free, without fever-reducing medications for 24 hours, they can end isolation and return to work/school.
- It is **strongly recommended** that the following individuals isolate for 10 days before returning to work or school:
 - Those who cannot wear a well-fitting mask (including those who may have an exemption from mask wearing)
 - Those who were severely ill with COVID-19
 - Children under 2
 - Individuals who are immunocompromised (consult healthcare provider for a return date).

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- Staff members should contact their immediate supervisor.

Household Close Contact

Fully Vaccinated/Up to Date/Previous Positive

- Students under 18 that are **fully vaccinated (2 doses)** or have **tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 90 days**, who have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 in their household, **do not need to quarantine** and may return to school/work as normal.
- Students and staff over 18 that are **up-to-date (2 doses plus the booster if eligible)** or **have tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 90 day**, who have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 in their household, **do not need to quarantine** and may return to work/school as normal.
- Individuals should wear a well fitting mask for 10 full days and monitor for symptoms.
- Individuals should get tested at least 5 days after they last had close contact with someone with COVID-19.

Not Fully Vaccinated/Not Up to Date

- Students under 18 that are **NOT fully vaccinated (2 doses)** or students and staff that are over 18 and **NOT up-to-date (2 doses plus booster if eligible)** and have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, **must quarantine** for 5 days.
- At least 5 days after the last day of close contact with the positive individual, the student/staff should take a **PCR test** and:
 - If the test is positive, complete the [electronic reporting form](#) for further guidance.

Robbinsdale Area Schools will only accept **lab confirmed or supervised** negative COVID-19 test results.

Wearing a mask for 10 days following exposure to someone with COVID is strongly recommended, regardless of vaccination status.

Individuals can find a testing location by going to the [MDH website: COVID-19 Testing](#).

COVID Notification

Schools will notify all families and staff if the daily absence rate of COVID-like illness (including influenza) and/or lab confirmed, positive COVID cases exceeds 5 percent. This has been the infectious diseases practice and requirement prior to the COVID-19 pandemic from Hennepin County. Positive cases and the number of individuals in quarantine or isolation due to symptoms will continue to be reported weekly on the district's COVID data dashboard. The school district will post on a weekly basis the positive COVID cases by building when three or more positive COVID cases exist in a school. This information will be posted on the district's [COVID Data Dashboard](#).



Elementary schools will also report to families when 3 or more students exhibit COVID-like symptoms in a classroom as well as when a positive COVID case exists in a grade level.

We will not be quarantining close contacts who were potentially exposed at school. Wearing a mask for 10 days after exposure to someone with COVID is strongly recommended.



General Health and Safety Practices

Cleaning and disinfecting will be performed to reduce the potential of the virus on surfaces. The District has upgraded our ventilation systems to meet MDH and CDC standards to optimize air flow within our buildings. Schools will provide hand hygiene education to students and staff. Routines for hand hygiene will be built into the school schedule to reduce the spread of infectious illnesses, including COVID-19.

Activities and Community Education Guidance

Robbinsdale Area Schools students participating in district-sanctioned athletics, activities, performances and events, across all grade levels, will be subject to [Minnesota State High School League \(MSHSL\) COVID-19 protocols](#).

According to the [MSHSL guidance](#) which was updated on May 3rd, 2022, students who test positive for COVID-19 cannot participate in in-person activities, athletics, performances or events until all three of these things are true:

- The student has been fever-free for at least 24 hours, without using fever-reducing medicine.
- It has been at least 5 days since the student first experienced symptoms or tested positive.
- Symptoms of cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms are improving.

On days 0-5, individuals may not participate in practices or competitions. **On days 6-10, students may return to practices and competitions, but a well fitting mask must be worn. If a student wants to participate in practices/competitions without wearing a mask, they must receive a negative COVID test.**

- Negative results from unsupervised home tests will not be accepted
- Negative test results must be from a lab-confirmed/supervised COVID test. The only home tests accepted are Vault (ACON Flowflex) supervised rapid antigen tests, which are available in the school health office.
- COVID-19 antigen tests are preferred over PCR/molecular tests as molecular tests can yield positive results even after an individual has recovered from their illness
- Documentation (image, PDF, etc.) of the negative COVID tests results should be sent via email to the following individuals:
 - School nurse
 - Activities and Athletics Director
 - Coach
 - COVID Response Team (covid19@rdale.org)
 - Please note: a photo of a test stick with negative results will not be accepted
- If a student continues to test positive on day 6 or after, they must continue wearing a mask until a negative COVID test is received or until day 11

These guidelines will apply to all grade levels – elementary, middle and high school. Please refer to the [MSHSL guidance for general questions](#), including middle and high school practice protocols. If you



have specific questions related to school events, performances, activities or athletics, please reach out to coaches, event coordinators or performance directors.

Frequently Asked Questions

What does "symptoms must be improving significantly" mean?

This means they are feeling almost back to normal. The cough should be greatly improved and they should no longer be feeling body aches/chills. It is normal for nasal congestion and loss of smell to linger for weeks, it is ok to return with these symptoms. The fatigue should have improved enough that they can make it through a full school day without needing to lay down and rest.

Does my student need to test to return after 10 days? No. After that amount of time a person is no longer infectious and can return without a negative antigen test.

What test does my student need to take?

For students and staff who are experiencing symptoms, a negative lab confirmed or supervised molecular/PCR or antigen test is needed. Robbinsdale Area Schools **does not** accept rapid, at-home (self administered/self read) tests (e.g., BinaxNOW or BD Veritor). **Please email documentation of negative test results to:** COVID19@rdale.org



What other precautions are we supposed to take upon returning to school?

Students and staff should wear a well-fitting mask at all times (including while at home) on days 6 to 10 following a positive test.

District COVID Coordinator Contact Information

David Dahl
Principal of Leadership Development
COVID Coordinator
763-504-8040
david_dahl@rdale.org

Kelsey Ward
Program Director, Health and Safety
COVID Coordinator
763-504-8187
kelsey_ward@rdale.org