

COVID-19 Exposure Management Plan Guidance in TK-12 Schools: Appendix T2

Recent Updates: (Changes highlighted in yellow)

1/30/2022

- Added information on when students and staff with COVID-19 may leave isolation and return to school.
- Updated masking guidance.
- Clarified that testing requirements for staff follow guidance outlined in Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Prevention [Emergency Temporary Standards](#) (ETS).
- Clarified that persons with a positive COVID-19 test in the past 90 days, regardless of vaccination status, are exempt from quarantine and testing.

A targeted public health response to contain COVID-19 exposures at a community-level can help maximize the impact of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (DPH) COVID-19 response.

Primary and Secondary Schools serving students from Transitional Kindergarten through Grade 12 (TK-12 Schools) are trusted community partners that can help DPH improve the timeliness and impact of the Public Health response through rapid initiation of a COVID-19 Exposure Management Plan (EMP). Immediate implementation of an EMP when a single case of COVID-19 is identified at a school can accelerate the ability to contain the spread of infection and prevent outbreaks from occurring.

The steps for managing exposures to 1, 2, and 3 or more COVID-19 cases at TK-12 Schools are described below and summarized in Appendix A. Because TK-12 Schools will vary in the level of resources available for COVID-19 exposure management, *required* steps are the minimum elements that must be included in the EMP. *Recommended* steps include optional elements for exposure management where school resources are sufficient. The requirements and recommendations presented are specific to TK-12 instructional and non-instructional facilities serving TK-12 Schools. For the purposes of this plan, the word "School" applies to both TK-12 instructional and non-instructional facilities. Additional resources for TK-12 Schools can be located in the [TK-12 School COVID-19 Toolkit](#).

Options for simplifying case identification and exposure management in TK-12 schools during a COVID-19 surge is outlined in Appendix B. These options are temporary and guided by transmission patterns during a surge period. As such, Public Health will provide communication on when schools may activate a surge protocol for case identification and exposure management. **The surge protocol is currently active.**

Exposure Management Planning Prior to Identifying 1 COVID-19 Case at School

- ☐ *Required:* A designated School COVID-19 Compliance Officer that is responsible for establishing and enforcing all COVID-19 prevention and exposure management protocols and ensuring that staff and students receive education about COVID-19. A designated COVID-19 Compliance Officer who serves as a liaison to DPH for sharing site-level information to facilitate public health action.
- ☐ *Required unless the surge protocol is active:* Seating charts in classrooms and participant rosters for students and staff participating in school extracurricular programs to facilitate identification of close contacts of persons with COVID-19 at the school.
- ☐ *Required:* A plan for all students, employees, and visitors who (1) have symptoms consistent with

COVID-19, (2) are quarantined because of exposures at school, or (3) are at a school with an active public health investigation to have access to testing or be tested for COVID-19.

- ☐ **Required:** A plan to report all known COVID-19 hospitalizations and/or deaths among students or staff to DPH by sending a notification to [ACDC-Education@ ph.lacounty.gov](mailto:ACDC-Education@ph.lacounty.gov).
- ☐ **Recommended:** If a school elects to implement an asymptomatic screening testing program, staff and students that are not fully vaccinated should be prioritized for regular testing as an important part of identifying infections early to prevent transmission on campus. Based on the current level of community transmission, fully vaccinated individuals may be considered for asymptomatic screening testing programs if there is sufficient testing capacity. School screening testing programs should use an FDA-authorized viral COVID-19 test, including a Nucleic Acid Amplification Test (NAAT, such as PCR) or an Antigen test, that is collected and performed in a healthcare setting or certified testing site. An FDA-authorized Over-the-Counter test (or at-home test) is acceptable for use in COVID-19 school screening testing programs. Note, unverified Over-the-Counter test results cannot be used to fulfill required testing for school employees under the [California State Health Officer Order](#). program are advised to apply DPH guidance on [Decision Pathways](#) for persons who have not been tested yet for COVID-19 but screen positive for symptoms prior to school entry or while at school.

Exposure Management for 1 COVID-19 Case at School

- ☐ **Required:** After identifying 1 confirmed COVID-19 case on campus, the School Compliance Officer instructs the case to follow Home Isolation Instructions for COVID-19 (ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation). NOTE: a confirmed COVID-19 case is an individual who has a positive COVID-19 test. Refer to sample [isolation instruction notification](#) (posted on ph.lacounty.gov/EducationToolkitTK12) for a model that can be adapted (see Template #1).
 - Students and staff with COVID-19 can end isolation after Day* 5 ONLY if all of the following criteria are met: 1. A COVID-19 viral test** collected on Day 5 or later is negative, and 2. No fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine, and 3. Other symptoms are improving --or-- Isolation can end after Day 10 if both these criteria are met: 1. No fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine, and 2. Other symptoms are not present or are improving. *For symptomatic students and staff, Day 0 is the first day of symptoms; Day 1 is the first full day after symptoms develop. For asymptomatic students and staff, Day 0 is the day the first positive test was collected; Day 1 is the first full day after the positive test was collected. **The test must be an FDA authorized viral test (e.g., PCR or Antigen test, including at-home tests). An antigen test is preferred for testing out of isolation.
 - NOTE: For staff, per Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Prevention [Emergency Temporary Standards](#) (ETS), testing that is required for employees must be provided by the employer free of charge and during work hours; these tests may not be self-administered or self-read unless they are observed by the employer or an authorized telehealth proctor.
 - Regardless of when isolation ends, students and staff with COVID-19 must wear a highly protective mask when around others, both indoors and outdoors (except when eating or drinking), for 10 days. The mask should be a well-fitting medical mask or respirator or a well-fitting non-cloth* mask of multiple layers of non-woven material with a nose-wire. *Cloth masks meeting ASTM standards for high filtration efficiency (ASTM F3502-level 2) are permitted. See ph.lacounty.gov/masks for more information.
- ☐ **Required:** The Compliance Officer works to identify all individuals, or, during when the surge protocol is active, all groups, in the school with an exposure to the confirmed positive case during their infectious period (Close Contacts).

- A case is considered to be infectious from 2 days before their symptoms first appeared until their isolation ends, as described in the Home Isolation Instructions for COVID-19 (ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation). A person with a positive COVID-19 test but no symptoms is considered infectious from 2 days before their test was taken until their isolation ends.
 - Close Contact: An **individual** is considered to have been exposed to a case during the infectious period if at least one of the following criteria are met: (1) being within 6 feet of the infected person for 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period or (2) having had unprotected contact with the infected person's body fluids and/or secretions of a person with confirmed COVID-19 (e.g., being coughed or sneezed on, sharing utensils or saliva, or providing care without using appropriate protective equipment). A **group** is considered to have been exposed to a case during the infectious period if they shared the same indoor airspace at school with the infected person for 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.
- ☐ *Required:* The School Compliance Officer must notify DPH of employees, children, and visitors with confirmed COVID-19 who were on campus at any point within the 14 days prior to the illness onset date (school-associated case).
- ☐ *Required unless the surge protocol is active:* The School Compliance Officer must notify DPH of persons on campus who were exposed to the infected person during the infectious period. The illness onset date is the first date of COVID-19 symptoms, or the COVID-19 test date, whichever is earlier.
- ☐ *Required unless the surge protocol is active:* All school-associated COVID-19 cases and persons identified to have had an exposure to cases on campus should be reported online through the secure web application: <http://www.redcap.link/lacdph.educationsector.covidreport>. If online reporting is not possible, reporting can be done manually by downloading and completing the [COVID-19 Case and Contact Line List for the Education Sector](#) and sending it to ACDC-Education@ph.lacounty.gov. All case notifications should be submitted within 1 business day of being notified of the case.
- Schools that need assistance on COVID-19 case reporting or other exposure management processes can call the TK-12 School COVID-19 Case Reporting Call Center, Monday through Friday from 8:00AM to 5:00PM. School administrators that do not have the Call Center number should contact ACDC-Education@ph.lacounty.gov for the number.
- ☐ *Required:* All persons identified to have had an exposure to a COVID-19 positive case at school are notified by the School Compliance Officer of the exposure. This can be done through the individual contact tracing option or a student group tracing option, as described below.

Individual contact tracing option

- The individual contact tracing option is the current standard for contact tracing in schools. In this approach individual students and staff who spent more than a cumulative total of 15 minutes over 24 hours within 6 feet of a known positive case at school during their infectious period are identified as close contacts to the infected person.
- Schools notify close contacts of the required action for them to take and provide them with a copy of the [Public Health Emergency Quarantine Order](#). Refer to sample [individual exposure notification letter](#) (posted on ph.lacounty.gov/EducationToolkitTK12) for a model that can be adapted (see Template #2).
- DPH will coordinate with the school to contact persons who are identified as having had close contact with the school-associated case(s) to gather additional information and provide guidance on testing and quarantine.

- Action for close contacts who are required to quarantine
 - The following close contacts are required to quarantine*:
 - Students and staff** who are not fully vaccinated

*Asymptomatic students and staff close contacts who were previously infected with SARS-CoV-2 within the last 90 days are not required to quarantine and exempt from testing, regardless of vaccination status.

**Asymptomatic staff close contacts who are fully vaccinated and not boosted (if eligible) can remain at the worksite on the condition that if they do not have symptoms and meet testing and masking requirements. Requirement to quarantine continues to apply to all settings other than employee worksite. This guidance is outlined in Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Prevention Emergency Temporary Standards (ETS). Additional details are provided in the section: "Action for close contacts who are not required to quarantine".
 - Close contacts who are required to quarantine must self-quarantine (stay in their home or another residence, separate from others) and monitor for symptoms as outlined in Quarantine and Other Instructions for Close Contacts. As long as symptoms of COVID-19 are not present, they may end quarantine either:
 - After 10 full days have passed from their last known contact to the infectious case (as defined above). Activities may resume starting on Day 11 provided they are asymptomatic; OR
 - After 5 full days have passed from their last known contact to the infectious case if they have a negative viral test result from a specimen collected on Day 5 from the date of last exposure to the case. Activities may resume starting on Day 6. The test must be an FDA-authorized viral COVID-19 test (e.g., NAAT or Antigen test, including at-home tests). If the test is positive, follow Home Isolation Instructions for COVID-19 (ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation). NOTE: For staff, per Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Prevention Emergency Temporary Standards (ETS), testing that is required for employees must be provided by the employer free of charge and during work hours; these tests may not be self-administered or self-read unless they are observed by the employer or an authorized telehealth proctor.
 - Regardless of when quarantine ends, Close contacts must continue to monitor their health and wear a highly protective mask when around others for 10 days after the last date of exposure, both indoors and outdoors, except when eating or drinking. The mask should be a well-fitting medical mask or respirator or a well-fitting non-cloth* mask of multiple layers of non-woven material with a nose-wire. *Cloth masks meeting ASTM standards for high filtration efficiency (ASTM F3502-level 2) are permitted. See ph.lacounty.gov/masks for more information. If symptoms develop, test using an FDA-authorized viral COVID-19 test and stay home. If the test is positive, follow Home Isolation Instructions for COVID-19 (ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation).
 - *Modified quarantine option for students who are not fully vaccinated.* Schools have the option of permitting student close contacts who are not fully vaccinated and had a mask-on-mask exposure at school to continue to take part in all school activities, including sports and extracurricular activities, if the specific criteria below are met. If these criteria cannot be met, then the exposed student must remain in home quarantine as outlined above.

(1) The exposure was to a person with a COVID-19 diagnosis in any school setting

where students are supervised by school staff (indoors, outdoors, or on school buses).

- (2) The exposed student remains asymptomatic.
 - (3) The exposed student AND the person with a COVID-19 diagnosis MUST have each worn a mask consistently and correctly during the entire exposure period. This includes any outdoor exposures. Prior to applying modified quarantine, verification is required of mask-to-mask exposure between the person with a COVID-19 diagnosis and the exposed student. School Administrators must keep records of this verification and provide to Public Health upon request.
 - (4) In school outbreak sites, students with an outbreak exposure who are not fully vaccinated may, at the direction of the Department of Public Health, be required to fully quarantine at home. They may be released after Day 5, if they have a negative viral test result from a specimen collected on Day 5 from the date of last exposure to a confirmed COVID-19 case in the outbreak, provided they remain without symptoms. Note: in outbreak sites, the quarantine period may be extended by Public Health for additional days to help control transmission risk.
 - (5) Students under modified quarantine are still subject to the [Health Officer Quarantine Order](#) and must stay at home for the duration of quarantine, except for in-person instruction.
 - (6) Students under modified quarantine are required to wear a mask indoors and outdoors and on school buses, while at school. The exception is for eating and drinking, where they must be at least 6 feet away from other students and preferably outdoors.
 - (7) Students under modified quarantine must be tested at least once weekly, preferably on or around Day 5. Whenever possible, these students should be tested twice weekly using an FDA-authorized viral COVID-19 test (e.g., PCR or Antigen) in a healthcare setting or certified testing site or an FDA-authorized Over-the-Counter test. When possible, the first test specimen should be collected immediately after notification of exposure and the second test specimen be collected on or after Day 5 from the date of last exposure. Students may be released from quarantine after Day 5 from the date of last exposure if a test specimen is collected on Day 5, the test is negative, and the student remains without symptoms. Even if released from quarantine after Day 5, exposed students must continue to monitor their health and mask at all times (indoors, outdoors, and on school buses) for 10 days from the date of last exposure. If symptoms develop, the student should test using an FDA-authorized viral COVID-19 test and stay home. If the test is positive, follow Home Isolation Instructions for COVID-19 (ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation).
- Action for identified close contacts who are not required to quarantine*
 - The following close contacts are not required to quarantine provided they remain asymptomatic:
 - Students and staff** who are [fully vaccinated](#)
- *Asymptomatic students and staff close contacts who were previously infected with SARS-CoV-2 within the last 90 days are not required to quarantine and exempt from testing, regardless of vaccination status.
- **Asymptomatic staff close contacts who are fully vaccinated and not boosted (if eligible) can remain at the worksite on the condition that if they do not have

symptoms and meet testing and masking requirements. Requirement to quarantine continues to apply to all settings other than employee worksite. This guidance is outlined in Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Prevention [Emergency Temporary Standards](#) (ETS). Additional details are provided below.

- These students and staff may remain in school provided they monitor for symptoms and wear a highly protective mask when around others for 10 days after the last date of exposure, both indoors and outdoors, except when eating or drinking. The mask should be a well-fitting medical mask or respirator or a well-fitting non-cloth* mask of multiple layers of non-woven material with a nose-wire. *Cloth masks meeting ASTM standards for high filtration efficiency (ASTM F3502-level 2) are permitted. See ph.lacounty.gov/masks for more information. If symptoms develop, test using an FDA-authorized viral COVID-19 test and stay home. If the test is positive, follow Home Isolation Instructions for COVID-19 (ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation).
- If testing resources are available, this group can be tested with an FDA-authorized viral COVID-19 test (e.g., PCR or Antigen test, including at-home tests) at least once during the 10-day period after the last date of exposure. Note: exposed staff who are fully vaccinated and not boosted (if eligible) are required to test between Days 3 and 5 of their last exposure to remain in school. Per Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Prevention [Emergency Temporary Standards](#) (ETS), testing that is required for employees must be provided by the employer free of charge and during work hours; these tests may not be self-administered or self-read unless they are observed by the employer or an authorized telehealth proctor.

Student group tracing option

- Schools may apply a group tracing option for groups of students who spent more than a cumulative total of 15 minutes within a 24-hour period in a shared indoor airspace at school (including classrooms, locker rooms, shared transportation, etc.) with a known COVID-19 positive case during their infectious period.
- Under this option, notification will occur to all members of relevant groups in which exposure occurred (e.g., classmates, teammates, cohorts), informing them of a potential exposure and required actions. Refer to sample [group tracing exposure notification letter](#) (posted on ph.lacounty.gov/EducationToolkitTK12) for a model that can be adapted (see Template #3).
- All students in the identified 'exposed group' may remain in school and participate in all school activities during the quarantine period provided they are asymptomatic and meet the requirements below:
 - Students who are not [fully vaccinated](#) are required to test, at least weekly, for 10 days after the last exposure date; testing should occur between days 3 and 5 from last exposure date where possible.
 - All other exposed students are recommended to test once in the 10 days after the last exposure date, preferably between days 3 and 5 where possible. The exception is students who had a positive COVID-19 test in the past 90 days; these students are exempt from testing.
 - All exposed students, regardless of vaccination status or previous infection, are required to remain fully masked indoors and outdoors, unless actively eating or drinking, when around others through day 10 after their last exposure date.

Eating and drinking should happen distanced from others. Students need to remain masked at all times during sports and/or extracurricular activities.

- ☐ **Required:** Schools are required to have a plan to facilitate COVID-19 response testing for persons who have an exposure at school. Staff and students who are tested must inform the school of the test results. Testing resources include: School Testing Programs, Employee Health Services or Occupational Health Services, Student Health Center, Personal Healthcare Providers, LA City and County Testing Sites: covid19.lacounty.gov/testing, and [Community-Based Testing Sites](#) (local health centers and pharmacies). Individuals who need assistance finding a medical provider can call the LA County Information line 2-1-1, which is available 24/7.
- ☐ **Required:** Schools are required to have sufficient testing capacity two weeks after re-opening from winter break or by January 25, 2022, whichever is later, to test exposed students who are unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated at least once weekly, during the 10 days after their last exposure date. **Please notify DPH immediately if you do not have testing capacity to meet this requirement.** In the event of wide-scale or repeated exposures within a school, weekly testing of all unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated students may be considered until such time that exposure events become less frequent. This would still require notification to all students with a known exposure (individual contact tracing) or potential exposure (group contact tracing) without requiring additional testing of the specific students.
- ☐ **Required:** Employees with a campus exposure should follow guidance outlined in Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Prevention [Emergency Temporary Standards](#) (ETS). However if an employee's quarantine period ends before they meet [Cal/OSHA's criteria for return-to-work](#), they may return to the Worksite(s) as soon as they have cleared quarantine per the [Health Officer Quarantine Order](#). A summary of requirements is provided in the Public Health guidance document on [Responding to COVID-19 in the Workplace](#). **Per Cal/OSHA ETS, testing that is required for employees must be provided by the employer free of charge and during work hours; these tests may not be self-administered or self-read unless they are observed by the employer or an authorized telehealth proctor.**
- ☐ **Recommended:** The School Compliance Officer will determine whether additional notification is needed to inform the wider school community about the school exposure and precautions being taken to prevent spread of COVID-19. Refer to sample [general notification letter](#) (posted on ph.lacounty.gov/EducationToolkitTK12) for a model that can be adapted (see Template #4).

Exposure Management for 2 COVID-19 Cases at School within a 14-day Period

- ☐ **Required:** After identifying 2 confirmed cases within a 14-day period, the school follows the *required* steps for 1 confirmed case.
- ☐ **Required unless the surge protocol is active:** The School Compliance Officer consults with Public Health to determine whether the 2 cases are epidemiologically linked, meaning that the two affected individuals were both present at some point in the same setting during the same time period while either or both were infectious.* Schools should contact DPH for assistance in determining whether cases are epidemiologically linked by emailing ACDC-Education@ph.lacounty.gov or by calling the TK-12 School COVID-19 Case Reporting Call Center.

**A case is considered to be infectious from 2 days before symptoms first appeared until isolation ends. A person with a positive COVID-19 test but no symptoms is considered to be infectious from 2 days before their test was taken until isolation ends.*

Determination of epidemiological links between cases may require further investigation to assess exposure history and identify all possible locations and persons that may have been exposed to the case

while infectious at the site. NOTE: Epidemiologically linked cases include persons with identifiable connections to each other such as sharing a physical space (e.g., in a classroom, school event, sports team, other extracurricular activities, school transportation, office site), indicating a higher likelihood of linked spread of disease in that setting rather than sporadic transmission from the broader community. If epidemiological links exist, DPH will advise the school on important steps to take and communications to students and employees on precautions to take to prevent further spread at the school, including implementation of site- specific interventions for infection control.

Exposure Management for ≥ 3 COVID-19 Cases at School within a 14-day Period

- ☐ **Required:** If the school identifies a cluster of 3 or more confirmed cases within a 14-day period, the school should proceed with the following steps:
- Report the cluster immediately to DPH by calling the TK-12 School COVID-19 Case Reporting Call Center or by submitting a report online at: <http://www.redcap.link/lacdph.educationsector.covidreport>. If online reporting is not possible, reporting can be done manually by downloading and completing the [COVID-19 Case and Contact Line List for the Education Sector](#) or, during when the surge protocol is active, using any other format, and sending it to ACDC-Education@ph.lacounty.gov.
 - Outbreak Criteria: At least 3 confirmed cases of COVID-19 within a 14-day period of each other in a specified group* with members who are epidemiologically linked, do not share a household, and are not a close contact of each other outside of the campus.

*Specified groups include persons that share a common membership at school (e.g., classroom, school event, sport teams, other school extracurricular activities, school transportation, office site). Epidemiological links require the infected persons to have been present at some point in the same setting during the same time period while infectious.
 - NOTE: For overnight camps, a “household cohort” means cabinmates (campers and staff) who are staying together in a cabin, bunkhouse, or similar space. Additional guidance regarding overnight camps is located in the [Reopening Protocol for Overnight Organized/Children's Camps: Appendix K-1](#).
 - If outbreak criteria are not met, DPH will advise the school to continue with routine exposure management.
 - If outbreak criteria are met and DPH recommends an outbreak response, DPH will notify the school that an outbreak investigation has been activated and a public health investigator will communicate directly with the school to coordinate the response.

Appendix A: Steps for Managing Exposures to COVID-19 Cases at School

1 Case	1) <i>Required:</i> School notifies case to follow isolation instructions. 2) <i>Required:</i> School works with DPH to identify school contacts. Schools can call the TK-12 School COVID-19 Case Reporting Call Center for assistance with identification of close contacts and exposure management. 3) <i>Required:</i> School identifies and notifies school contacts of exposure using an individual contact tracing option or group tracing option. 4) <i>Required:</i> School submits a report to DPH with information on the confirmed case. 5) <i>Required unless surge protocol is active:</i> School submits a report on persons who were exposed to the case at the site. 6) <i>Recommended:</i> School sends general notification to inform the school community of the school exposure and precautions taken to prevent spread.
2 Cases	1) <i>Required:</i> Follow required steps for 1 confirmed case. 2) <i>Required unless the surge protocol is active:</i> If the 2 cases occurred within 14 days of each other, school consults with DPH to determine whether the cases have epidemiological (epi) links. If epi links exist, school implements additional infection control measures. Schools can call the TK-12 School COVID-19 Case Reporting Call Center or email ACDC-Education@ph.lacounty.gov for assistance in determining whether cases have epidemiological links.
3+ Cases	1) <i>Required:</i> If a cluster of 3 or more cases occurred within 14 days of each other, the school immediately notifies DPH by calling the TK-12 School COVID-19 Case Reporting Call Center or reporting online at: http://www.redcap.link/lacdph.educationsector.covidreport. 2) <i>Required:</i> DPH determines if the outbreak criteria have been met. If a DPH outbreak investigation is activated, a public health investigator will contact the school to coordinate the outbreak investigation.

Appendix B: Temporary Measures for Case Identification and Exposure Management in School During a Surge Period

1/12/2022: The surge protocol is currently active.

1/17/2022: Changes were made to add a group tracing option for students with an exposure in an indoor shared airspace and to add additional testing considerations.

Options for simplifying case identification and exposure management in TK-12 schools during a COVID-19 surge is outlined below. These options are temporary and guided by transmission patterns during a surge period. As such, Public Health will provide communication on when schools may activate a surge protocol for case identification and exposure management.

Case Management: Identification and Isolation of COVID-19 Cases

- Schools should prioritize identification of COVID-19 on campus and isolation of cases. This should take precedence over other COVID-19 measures.
- Schools should inform parents of infected children that they need to keep their children in isolation at home to prevent further spread on campus. Notification can be individualized or through an email blast or robocall to parents of positive cases. *Please refer to the [isolation notification template](#) (posted on ph.lacounty.gov/EducationToolkitTK12) for a model you can use.*
 - a. Parents who have questions about isolation requirements can call the DPH COVID-19 Information Hotline at 1-833-540-0473. This line is available in multiple languages and operates 7 days a week from 8:00 AM to 8:30 PM.
 - b. If schools would like DPH to conduct additional outreach to parents of the infected student(s), a phone number for the family should be included in your case report to DPH. Refer to section on reporting below, for instructions on simplified case reporting during the surge period.
- If schools have multiple cases in a cohort/group (e.g., classroom, sports group, etc.) that may be linked, administrators should immediately contact the DPH Education Sector COVID-19 Case Reporting hotline or email ACDC-Education@ph.lacounty.gov to report the cluster.

COVID-19 Exposure Management

- Schools may have limited capacity to do contact tracing given the volume of cases during the surge period. Schools may opt to do group tracing **for exposures that** occurred in a shared indoor airspace at school (e.g., classroom, locker rooms, shared transportation). In this option, entire relevant groups are notified of potential exposure to a positive case during the period of infectiousness and provided with instructions on actions that should be taken. This notification can be done by an email blast or robocall. Refer to sample [group tracing exposure notification template](#) (posted on ph.lacounty.gov/EducationToolkitTK12) for a model you can use.

In a group tracing approach, students in the identified 'exposed group' may remain in school and participate in all school activities during the quarantine period provided they are asymptomatic and meet the requirements below:

- Students, regardless of vaccination status or previous infection, are required to remain fully masked indoors and outdoors, unless actively eating or drinking, when around others through day 10 after their exposure. Eating and drinking should happen distanced from others. Students need to remain masked at all times during sports and/or extracurricular activities.
- Students who are not fully vaccinated are required to test at least once weekly. All other exposed

student groups are recommended to test once within the 10 days of their last exposure. The exception is students who had a positive COVID-19 test in the past 90 days; these students are exempt from testing. See section on testing considerations for more details.

- Schools are not required to report information about close contacts to DPH during the surge period. Refer to the following section on reporting procedures during the surge period.

Reporting COVID-19 Cases and Close Contacts

- Until the end of January, isolation of cases and exposure management are the most important strategies for limiting spread. Reporting cases and close contacts is secondary. If schools lack capacity to submit a REDCap report or Excel line list for case and close contact reporting, they can do the following:
 - a. Case information: Case information may be submitted in any format the school prefers at ACDC-Education@ph.lacounty.gov. The school has the option of limiting the report to: last name, first name, and date of the infected child's COVID-19 test. As noted above, if schools would like DPH to conduct additional outreach to the parents of the infected student(s), a phone number for the family should be included in the case report. Schools may submit additional case information if capacity allows.
 - b. Close contact information: Schools are not required to report close contact information during this surge period. Schools that are able to report close contacts may simplify reporting by limiting the information to: last name, first name, and date of last exposure to the infected child. Schools may submit other contact information if capacity allows. Contact reports may be submitted via our routine REDCap report, Excel line list, or in any format the school prefers.

Testing Considerations

- Schools are required to have sufficient testing capacity two weeks after re-opening from winter break or by January 25, 2022, whichever is later, to test exposed students who are not fully vaccinated at least once weekly, during the 10 days after last exposure. Where possible, testing should occur between days 3 and 5 from last exposure. **Please notify DPH immediately if you do not have testing capacity to meet this requirement.**
- In the event of wide-scale or repeated exposures within a school, weekly testing of students who are not fully vaccinated may be considered until such time that exposure events become less frequent. This would still require notification to all students with a known exposure (individual contact tracing) or potential exposure (group contact tracing) without requiring additional testing of the specific students.
- If testing resources are sufficient, schools can test fully vaccinated exposed students at least once, during the 10 days after last exposure, preferably between days 3 and 5 from last exposure where possible.
- Schools with limited testing capacity should prioritize response testing of staff and students with symptoms or exposures over regular, weekly testing. Schools with enough testing capacity may continue to conduct weekly asymptomatic, screening testing. Universal testing will more quickly identify asymptomatic positive cases and prevent certain school-based exposures. Note: In youth sports programs, weekly testing **is still required** for unvaccinated athletes of all ages participating in indoor moderate or high-risk sports and for all unvaccinated athletes aged 12 years and older and staff participating in outdoor moderate or high-risk sports.
- Any FDA approved antigen or PCR test is acceptable, including at-home tests, whether testing is done for individually exposed students, for exposure groups or for the school as a whole. This is true for staff as well, except for required weekly testing for unvaccinated staff, which needs to be performed in a healthcare setting (including telehealth), certified testing site, or observed by the employer.

- Staff and students who had a positive COVID-19 test in the past 90 days are exempt from testing as results may remain persistently positive and not be indicative of a new active infection.
- DPH will work with LACOE to identify and address barriers to required COVID-19 testing by schools. To improve testing access, schools may accept results of students' at-home or over-the-counter tests for all testing needs.

Vaccination

- Since the need to quarantine is determined by incomplete vaccination, DPH will maximize our support for mobile vaccine clinics at the schools and make sure parents and students know that they can be best protected and will not have to quarantine if they are up to date on their COVID-19 vaccinations.

Communication

- DPH will, as noted above, support schools by responding to questions from parents of students who have COVID-19.
- The DPH Education Sector COVID-19 Case Reporting hotline remains fully staffed and available to help with all aspects of case management, contact tracing and outbreak management. School Administrators can get assistance by calling this number Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM or by emailing ACDC-Education@ph.lacounty.gov.
- DPH will prepare and translate template documents that schools can use to notify parents of children in all categories of infection or exposure, explaining what is required in each case. These and other documents are located at: ph.lacounty.gov/acd/ncorona2019/EducationToolkit/tk12/