

Florence 1 Schools COVID-19 Protocol Update

Prevention strategies are essential to safe delivery of in-person instruction and help to prevent COVID-19. Florence 1 Schools uses layered prevention strategies in our school settings. These include:

- Mask use is recommended in all indoor facilities and on buses.
- Staying home when sick as well as when getting tested.
- Contact tracing, in combination with isolation and quarantine
- Handwashing and respiratory etiquette
- Physical distancing with at least 3 feet of distance maintained between each student to the greatest extent possible. For distancing between adults and among adults and students physical distancing of 6 feet should be maintained to the greatest extent possible.
- Cleaning and disinfection
- Ventilation management in our buildings using a third-party vendor for changing of all filters on a scheduled rotation
- Vaccination education and promotion by offering factual information to parents and staff members who are interested in receiving the vaccine.

COVID-19 Case Management

Individuals should be excluded from school if they have any of the following with or without fever:

- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing -or-
- Loss of taste or smell -or-
- New or worsening cough

If these symptoms are explainable by an underlying condition (such as shortness of breath for an individual with asthma) exclusion may not be necessary. The underlying condition must be documented by a medical note from a health care provider.

Other symptoms to consider when assessing someone with COVID like symptoms include fever, chills, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea/vomiting or diarrhea. A person is able to spread the virus up to 2 days before they have any symptoms, but many COVID-19 cases show no symptoms at all.

COVID-19 Case Isolation

- Isolation is required for all cases of COVID-19

When someone tests positive for COVID-19, the following criteria are used for return:

- a. At least 5 days since symptoms started **AND**
- b. 24 hours since the last fever without using fever-reducing medication **AND**
- c. Symptoms are significantly improving
- d. Upon return, masks must be worn on days 6-10

If someone tests positive and is asymptomatic, the isolation period starts on the date of the specimen collection.

- Staff and students should disclose and stay home or go home if:
 - They are showing COVID-19 symptoms, until they meet criteria for return
 - They have tested positive for COVID-19, until they meet criteria for return

Case Investigation and Contact Tracing

Upon receiving notification of a person who tested positive for COVID-19, the case investigation begins. (Notification can be received several ways – the person who tested positive, DHEC or parent.) Confirmation of the test is made by receiving the lab result or confirming the result with our DHEC case investigators.

After confirmation is obtained, contact tracing begins. For students, anyone who was within 3 feet of the person who tested positive for a cumulative time of 15 minutes over a 24-hour period is considered a close contact. For adults, anyone who was within 6 feet of the person who tested positive for a cumulative time of 15 minutes over a 24-hour period is considered a close contact. Since a person is considered infectious for a period of 48 hours prior to the positive test result or for someone who is symptomatic, from the symptom onset, contact tracing looks back 48 hours.

Once close contacts are identified, the notification of close contacts begins. Close contact notification is made for adults and students who are identified as close contacts and includes those who are unvaccinated as well as vaccinated students and adults. General classroom or schoolwide notification is not provided.

Quarantine of Close Contacts

Quarantine is required for an individual who has been a close contact of someone who is determined positive either through testing or symptom consistent diagnosis, with the following two exceptions:

- Individuals who are fully vaccinated and do not have symptoms do NOT need to quarantine after a close contact.
(If a fully vaccinated person is booster eligible, they should have received their booster in addition to the primary series.)
- People who have tested positive (PCR or antigen test) for COVID-19 within the past 90 days and recovered and do not have symptoms do NOT need to quarantine. (Antibody tests are not considered exceptions for quarantine.)

Florence 1 Schools uses the CDC/DHEC option to reduce the duration of quarantines as noted below:

Quarantine can end **after** DAY 5 if a viral test is negative AND if no symptoms were reported during daily symptom monitoring.

- a. The viral test must be collected no sooner than DAY 4, and quarantine cannot be discontinued earlier than completion of DAY 5.
- b. A mask must be worn through DAY 10.

If a fully vaccinated person is identified as a close contact, they do not need to quarantine if they voluntarily provide documentation of their vaccination status. If a fully vaccinated person becomes symptomatic, testing is advised. (If a fully vaccinated person is booster eligible, they should have received their booster in addition to the primary series.)

If a student or staff member lives in the same household as a known case, their quarantine period begins on the date their household member has been cleared from their isolation period. If the student or staff member is not the caregiver of the household member who is sick and can separate themselves into their own space in the home, their quarantine period begins the day that they had their last contact with the ill person.