

COVID-19 in the School and Your Child

What will happen when someone at my child's school is identified as having COVID-19?

If it is determined that an individual with COVID-19 was in a school - for example, if it was a student, a teacher or other school staff, or a visitor with COVID-19 - then further information will be gathered to assess the risk that the virus may have spread to others in the school setting. Schools are required to maintain records of attendance, cohorts and activities that they will provide to public health to assist in determining who may have been exposed to the individual with COVID-19 in the school setting. Note that an individual with COVID-19 may not have been in the school when they were infectious in which case transmission in the school setting would not have happened and no follow-up with the school would be needed.

Public health will work closely with the school to ensure that anyone who is at risk for COVID-19 is informed and given instructions about what they need to do. Some individuals in the school setting may be considered "close contacts" where the risk that they may have caught the virus is higher. These individuals will need to self-isolate at home for 14 days and will be followed by a Public Health Nurse (PHN). Others in the school setting will be considered 'low risk' and will be able to continue to attend school with the guidance to be vigilant in monitoring for any symptoms. PHNs will follow-up and closely monitor the school situation for period of time after any suspected exposure (usually two weeks or more as needed). During that time, if there is any indication that the virus has spread to others, public health will act quickly and introduce stronger measures to contain any ongoing spread of the virus.

What will happen if my child is identified as having COVID-19?

If your child's test came back positive, a PHN would connect with you and your child. Your child would need self-isolate and take appropriate precautions to reduce the risk of transmitting the virus to others, including to others in the household. The PHN would follow up daily to check on their overall health and wellbeing, answer your questions, and provide ongoing support and recommendations to help manage through this time. Public health will also advise you when your child is considered 'cleared' of the virus and can resume their regular activities, including returning to school. A repeat test is not needed - and is not recommended - for someone to be considered 'cleared' or 'resolved' of their COVID-19 infection. Your child must stay in self-isolation at home and not return to school or to other activities in the community until public health advises you that it is okay for them to do so.



What will happen if my child has been in contact with someone with COVID-19?

As part of the public health follow-up on someone who has COVID-19, public health identifies individuals who may have been exposed to the virus through their interactions with the individual with COVID-19. These individuals, who are often referred to as “contacts”, are identified as being at higher risk or lower risk depending on the nature of their interactions with the person who had COVID-19. “Close contacts” are those who are at higher risk. To assess the level of risk, public health considers factors related to the interactions, such as location, length of time, activities, distance apart, and the protective measures that were practiced at the time.

If an exposure to COVID-19 occurred at your child’s school, the school will provide public health with detailed information, including contact information for parents/caregivers, as part of the public health investigation of the exposure. Schools are expected to maintain various records in order to assist public health with the quick identification of people who are contacts and management of COVID-19 exposures in the school setting.

If your child has been identified as a ‘close contact’ of someone who has COVID-19, you will be contacted directly by a PHN. The PHN will get additional information from you and your child. They will tell you what you and your child need to do and will answer your questions. Close contacts need to self-isolate at home and monitor for symptoms. Testing for COVID-19 will be recommended in some circumstances. The PHN can assist in accessing testing if and when that is needed. Public health will also continue to support you and your child, often through regular connection with you, throughout the self-isolation period and will advise you and your child when they can return to school. Your child must not return to school until public health advises you that it is okay for them to do so.

If your child is identified as being a low risk contact of someone with COVID-19, information and instructions will be communicated to you through the school or public health communication. In most circumstances, low risk contacts can continue to attend school in person as long as they remain without symptoms. You will be provided information on how to contact public health if you have questions.

Please ensure your child’s school has up-to-date contact information so public health can reach you, during the day, as well as in evenings and on weekends.

Note that public health will not reveal the name or personal information of anyone who has COVID-19.

For more information visit [TBDHU.com/safereturn_parents](https://www.tbdhu.com/safereturn_parents)