



Diocese of Covington
Department of Catholic Schools
COVID-19 Return to School Requirements


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Quick Reference Guide

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The Department of Catholic Schools has released the “COVID-19 Return to School Requirements” document to provide all schools within the Diocese of Covington consistent procedures to return to school for in-person instruction. This document was created based upon the most up-to-date information from various sources including, but not limited to, the Kentucky Department of Health, the Kentucky Department of Education, and the Centers for Disease Control along with the guidance of educators, medical professionals, attorneys, and the Diocesan Coronavirus Task Force. **As new information is received from health and government officials, there may be updates to these requirements that will be communicated following a review from the task force.**

Schools **are required to follow** the directives marked “Diocesan Requirements.” The “Diocesan Guidelines” are provided as a guide, offering suggestions or ideas for schools to use depending upon their own unique needs. Each school must ensure that the local level school plans and procedures are in compliance with the Diocesan requirements.

| School Activity | Diocesan Requirements | Diocesan Guidelines |
|--|---|---------------------|
| Employee Health Assessment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Each employee must sign an “Employee Acknowledgement of Responsibility to Perform Daily Personal Health Assessment.” ▪ Employee completes a daily personal health assessment before employee leaves home for school. ▪ Employee must document their self-assessment each day upon arrival. | |
| Student Health Assessment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Each family signs an “Acknowledgement of Responsibility to Perform Daily Personal Health Assessment.” ▪ Each student, with the assistance of a parent or guardian, completes a daily personal health assessment before the student leaves home for school – this is in addition to, and does not replace, the temperature check at the school. | |
| Essential Volunteer Health Assessment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School volunteers who are deemed essential to school operations by the principal must sign an “Essential Volunteer Acknowledgement of Responsibility to Perform Daily Personal Health Assessment.” | |

| School Activity | Diocesan Requirements | Diocesan Guidelines |
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| Essential Volunteer Health Assessment <i>Continued</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Essential volunteer completes a personal health assessment before the volunteer leaves home for school on a scheduled volunteer day. | |
| Immunizations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student must be current with required immunizations to return to school for in-person instruction. | |
| Signs and Messages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Post signs in highly visible locations (e.g., school entrances, restrooms) that promote everyday protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs (such as by properly washing hands and properly wearing a cloth face covering). ▪ Regularly broadcast announcements on the PA system on the ways to reduce the spread of COVID-19. ▪ Post signs on front doors informing visitors of the screening requirements required before entering (temperatures/symptoms). This includes delivery services and mail. ▪ Facilities must be marked for six feet distance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Include messages (for example, videos) about behaviors that prevent the spread of COVID-19 when communicating with staff and families (such as on school websites, in emails, and on school social media accounts). ▪ Find free CDC print and digital resources on CDC's communications resources main page. |
| Arrival to School | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students wear masks during arrival ▪ Once temperature screened, students must proceed directly to the classroom (unless part of the breakfast program) avoiding congregation in the halls or other common areas or students proceed directly to the classroom wearing masks to have temperature taken. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stagger arrival times according to class level with the exception of siblings. ▪ Schools may need to lengthen the morning arrival to accommodate the staggered drop-off. ▪ Identify specific windows of time when certain portions of the school population will arrive (ex: divide by alphabet/last name). |
| Temperature Checks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Temperature checks (touchless thermometer) conducted for all students and staff at point of school property entry. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Schools may use temperature entry screening equipment. ▪ Health Professional Volunteers. Use staff for supervision. |

| School Activity | Diocesan Requirements | Diocesan Guidelines |
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| Temperature Checks <i>Continued</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff clean hands before touching the thermometer. ▪ The thermometer cleaned according to the manufacturer’s recommendations. ▪ A health screening station(s) must be established at the facility, near but not blocking, each entry used for student arrival. This can be outdoors under cover for inclement weather. Floor markings must be visible to maintain six feet distance between students. Schools should eliminate large gatherings at these stations which may require multiple entry points or longer, staggered arrival times. ▪ Temperature checks can be taken before entering the classroom with six feet distance between students. ▪ Persons who have a fever of 100.4^o (38.0^oC) or above must not be admitted to the facility. ▪ In the event that a student does not meet the health requirements, an isolation area is utilized where students can wait for a second temperature check using a different thermometer and to be picked up, if necessary. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Designate a set of staff members to administer employee temperature checks at school as early as possible upon arrival. Self-checks are not sufficient. ▪ For some schools, checking temperatures at vehicles can minimize the need for isolated areas and procedures for holding/transporting sick students. |
| Spacing/Classroom | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase space between student seating to be six feet or greater. ▪ If the physical space in the school does not allow for spacing students’ desks six feet apart, space desks as far away as possible and require masks at all times in that classroom for students and staff. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use self-contained classrooms, if feasible, to limit exposure to a small group of students/staff. ▪ Have breaks/recess outside, and open windows where feasible to help improve ventilation. |

| School Activity | Diocesan Requirements | Diocesan Guidelines |
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| Spacing/Classroom <i>Continued</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Place markings on the floor/facility as a reminder of areas that are six feet apart. ▪ Modify classes/activities that normally require multiple students to engage in an activity, so distance and sanitation needs are met. ▪ Reduce congestion in common areas (school office, guidance, drop off/pick up, etc.). ▪ Create and maintain seating charts for students in all classes. These will be used for contact tracing if a student tests positive for COVID-19. ▪ Turn desks to face in the same direction. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clean classrooms during the time students are out of the room. Wipe door handles and desk tops in between classes, if possible. ▪ Reduce class sizes to allow for smaller cohorts of students to decrease the potential need for contact tracing. ▪ Plexiglass may be used in classrooms for dividers between students if approved by the local health department and it meets fire code requirements. These must be securely fastened to prevent student injury and should be cleaned frequently. |
| Masks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students enrolled in first grade and above and staff are required to wear a cloth face covering, unless medically waived. ▪ Messages or images on masks align with the Catholic faith and school dress code. ▪ Teach and reinforce use of cloth face coverings and are most essential in times when physical distancing is difficult. ▪ At teacher discretion, masks can be lowered during classroom time if all students and staff are seated six feet apart and no persons are walking around inside the classroom. ▪ When students are outside and six feet from others, masks are not required. ▪ Masks are to be worn when students are moving from place to place in classrooms, school buildings, and other school facilities. ▪ Masks must cover nose and mouth, stay in place and be in good condition. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with students and families to identify alternative face coverings based on individual student medical needs and circumstances. Schools should maintain extra masks for those individuals that need them. ▪ Cloth face coverings are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected but does not have symptoms. Cloth face coverings are not surgical masks, respirators, or other medical personal protective equipment. ▪ Information should be provided to staff, students, and students' families on proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings. ▪ Masks should be labeled with name. ▪ Every student/staff should have multiple masks. ▪ Coordinate a pick up day to distribute masks to students so they can practice prior to the first school day. ▪ Schools have the final determination on acceptable masks. |

| School Activity | Diocesan Requirements | Diocesan Guidelines |
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| Hallway Traffic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students and staff moving through the hallways must wear masks. ▪ Facilities are to be marked to show the traffic direction and social distancing (including stairwells). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Designate one-way hallway traffic when possible or staying to the right side. ▪ Designate certain doors for entry and exit. ▪ Identify and reduce areas of congregation by students. |
| Lockers/Cubbies/Coat & Backpack Areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limit use. ▪ Avoid congregating. ▪ Face coverings required. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Possible morning, lunch and afternoon use. ▪ Establish procedures for staggered use. |
| Shared Objects | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Avoid sharing of items that are difficult to clean or disinfect. ▪ Keep each child's belongings separated from others' and in individually labeled containers, cubbies, or areas. ▪ Avoid sharing electronic devices, toys, books, and other games or learning aids. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing of high touch materials to the extent possible (e.g., assigning each student his or her own art supplies, equipment, pens, pencils, calculators) or limit use of supplies and equipment by one group of children at a time and clean and disinfect between use. ▪ Teachers using paper worksheets have a turn-in tray that can be isolated for 24 hours. ▪ Identify materials that can be asked to be brought in and used by individual students. |
| Water Fountains | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Water fountains can only be used to fill water bottles. ▪ Students bring their own water bottles to be refilled throughout the day. ▪ Water fountains are to be cleaned and sanitized frequently throughout the school day. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School has limited amount of disposable water bottles for backup. |

| School Activity | Diocesan Requirements | Diocesan Guidelines |
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| Isolation Areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Designated area for isolation of sick students with an ability to maintain adult supervision. ▪ Assure student is wearing a face covering if there is no medical reason to prevent this. ▪ Sick students can't be sent on the school bus. ▪ Health room supplies must include gloves, face masks, and face shields. ▪ The isolation area must be cleaned and sanitized after each use. ▪ Transportation criteria for how a student gets home if the parent has no transportation or is not responding. ▪ Parents must have a back-up contact on their emergency cards. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students need to be picked up in a set amount of time - within 60 minutes. ▪ Consider having a first aid and medication station outside the health office for students who are well and use the health room space for ill students. ▪ Additional guidance https://education.ky.gov/comm/Documents/Reopening%20Considerations%20Workplace%20Health%20and%20Safety%20FINAL.pdf |
| Cafeteria | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stagger lunch times and promote social distancing. ▪ Students must be seated six feet or more from others while eating. ▪ If students eat in the cafeteria, surfaces must be cleaned and sanitized between cohorts of diners. ▪ Students and staff use hand sanitizer or wash hands well before eating lunch or snacks, and after placing their masks back on their faces after they eat. ▪ Put labels on the tables to indicate six feet spacing. ▪ Assigned seating will be needed to support contact tracing if the school experiences a positive COVID-19 case. ▪ Siblings may sit next to each other. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Each school task force along with the cafeteria manager must determine if they can meet the serving and cleaning guidelines to serve meals and eat in the cafeteria. ▪ If social distancing is not possible in the cafeteria, have meals served to the classroom or students bring it back to the classroom. Eating outside with spacing is also an option. ▪ Cafeterias can serve hot lunches at schools where students will eat in the cafeteria. ▪ Cafeterias can offer box/bag lunches or grab-n-go lunches for those eating outdoors or in classrooms. ▪ Students still have the option to pack under both scenarios. |

| School Activity | Diocesan Requirements | Diocesan Guidelines |
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| Recess/Playgrounds | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students must practice good hand hygiene by washing/sanitizing their hands before going out to play and immediately upon returning inside the school building after putting on masks. ▪ Assign a recess schedule that limits how many classes are on the playground at one time. ▪ Students must engage in no contact activities. ▪ Equipment must be sanitized. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If multiple playground areas are available, utilize them to minimize how many students are mixing. ▪ Provide no contact recess activities - Red light-Green light, Shadow tag, jump rope, hula hoops... |
| Gymnasiums, P.E. Classes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have P.E. classes outside whenever possible and reasonable. ▪ Clean and sanitize frequently used equipment between classes or sports teams. ▪ When students are engaged in physical activity face masks should be removed. ▪ Student activities should be no contact and include six feet or more distance between each student. ▪ When students are outside and six feet from others, masks are not required. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide hand hygiene rules in the gym and advise students not to share personal items. ▪ Allow students to wear PE uniform for the entire day to eliminate changing. ▪ Locker Room - end class early for students to change. Provide multiple changing areas. ▪ Develop activities that omit the sharing of equipment. ▪ Identify as many low-touch physical activities as possible. ▪ Provide disinfectant wipe stations throughout the room for use on equipment. |
| Dismissal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stagger dismissal with safe distancing and masks. ▪ Parents are to remain in their vehicles and not congregate outside of school exits. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extend dismissal time. ▪ Provide additional pickup routes and locations if possible. |
| Extra-Curricular Activities (After school clubs, academic team, etc.) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ After-school clubs, academic teams, etc. are to social distance at least six feet. ▪ Avoid sharing of items. | |

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| Field Trips, Assemblies, and School Visitors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Until further notice, cancel field trips, assemblies, and other large group activities to avoid mixing students in large common areas. ▪ Limit non-essential visitors and activities with outside groups and organizations. Students requiring outside services – such as mental health, speech, occupational and physical therapies – are allowed, but service providers must follow screening protocol and must wear proper PPE. ▪ College Reps not permitted until further notice. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pursue virtual group events. ▪ Pursue virtual activities and events in lieu of field trips, student assemblies, special performances, school-wide parent meetings, and spirit nights, as possible. ▪ Grade level meetings may be held. Students must be spaced six feet and wearing masks. |
| School Masses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Follow Diocese of Covington Protocols for Celebrating the Liturgy amid COVID–19 https://covdio.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Protocols.pdf ▪ Students must sit in designated area. ▪ Designated area for visitors (if space allows for visitors) and follow school dismissal procedures. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review First Friday Mass options with pastor/chaplain. ▪ Consider class-level Masses. ▪ Examine the possibility of adding school Mass times to allow all students to attend in person. |
| Aftercare* | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limit the number of students for Aftercare. ▪ Provide a space with social distancing. ▪ Omit sharing items. ▪ Establish a limit on the number of students permitted in each indoor area to be used. ▪ Limit contact between students of different classes/grade levels. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Utilize outdoor spaces as much as possible. ▪ Provide procedures for parents to pick up students with minimal contact (call ahead of arrival; limit on-site payments). |
| <p><i>*In addition to the Diocese of Covington COVID-19 guidance, aftercare, daycare and childcare programs operated by or at schools and parishes in the Diocese of Covington and licensed by the state of Kentucky must also follow the regulations provided by the Kentucky Division of Regulated Childcare.</i></p> | | |

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| Sanitation and Environmental Standards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Utilize Guidance on Safety Expectations and Best Practices for Kentucky Schools https://education.ky.gov/comm/Documents/Safety%20Expectations_FINAL%20DOC.pdf ▪ Utilize KDE Facilities and Logistics https://education.ky.gov/comm/Documents/Phase%20II%20Reopening%20Considerations%20Facilities%20and%20Logistics%20FINAL.pdf | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Share plan with school community. |
| Contact Tracing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be prepared to cooperate with the contact tracing investigation with manifests of classroom cohorts, cafeteria seating charts, etc. that will allow quick identification of those at high risk of infection from the positive COVID-19 student/staff. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Share Contact Tracing PDF ▪ https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/covid19/CTyouractionmatters.pdf ▪ Additional resources ▪ https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/contact-tracing.html |
| Traditional Learner | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students must commit to following safety guidelines to protect themselves, their peers, and faculty and staff. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Outside of school, students and families are encouraged to remain Healthy at Home to the greatest extent possible and avoid large gatherings. |
| At-Home Learner | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school’s main focus and efforts are to provide in-person instruction. ▪ Students who choose learning-from-home must commit to the guidelines set forth by the school. ▪ Students are held to the same grading and performance standards as traditional learners. ▪ Students are held to the same attendance standards and may be marked absent if not logged on at the times designated by the school. | |

| School Activity | Diocesan Requirements | Diocesan Guidelines |
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| At-Home Learner <i>Continued</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A request to return to the traditional program must be made to the principal one week in advance of intent to return; however, a student may have to remain an at-home learner through an entire quarter/trimester, as determined by school. ▪ Students may not participate in school-sponsored extracurricular activities. ▪ The at-home learning option is designed for COVID-19 related concerns, quarantine, or illness. ▪ Videoing of the class must focus only on the teacher unless the parents of every child in the classroom have given permission for their child to be on video. | |
| Emergency Response Drills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Refer to COVID-19 Considerations for Reopening Schools: Facilities and Logistics. ▪ https://education.ky.gov/comm/Documents/Phase%20II%20Reopening%20Considerations%20Facilities%20and%20Logistics%20FINAL.pdf | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider preparing a virtual demonstration of the process for the drills. |
| Elementary Sports | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Winter sports may resume with practices starting after Dec. 14th and competitions after Jan. 4th. ▪ Spring sports may resume according to the regular season schedules. ▪ The Diocese of Covington Return to Sports document must be followed. | |
| High School Sports | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High schools will follow the KHSAA Guidelines and the Diocese of Covington return to sports requirements. | |
| Medical Care | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Schools may provide for the ongoing medical care for students, as per a normal year. | |

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| Parent-Teacher Meetings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parent-teacher meetings may be conducted in-person. Masks and 6 feet distancing must be followed at all times. ▪ If the school is hosting school-wide parent-teacher meetings, the program must be structured to ensure the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Scheduled times ○ No congregating in the school building ○ Parents should not enter the school until their scheduled time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Offer virtual meetings for families who cannot attend in person. |
| Family Trips | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ According to the CDC, travel increases your chances of getting and spreading COVID-19. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-in-the-us.html ▪ To help keep our school communities safe, all families are discouraged from traveling to another country or state for family trips. ▪ Families must notify the school of trips that may increase student exposure to COVID-19. ▪ As a result of traveling, students may be subject to a quarantine in order to return to school. Considerations for this include the location, trip activities, and the mode of travel. ▪ Travel that meets any of the following criteria will require a mandatory quarantine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Travel via public transportation (planes, bus, etc.) - Travel outside of the United States - Travel to states with positive testing rates of 15% or higher. See latest list of states at: https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/testing/tracker/map/percent-positive | |

| School Activity | Diocesan Requirements | Diocesan Guidelines |
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| Meetings (School board, Boosters, PTO) | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Virtual/video meetings are recommended whenever possible. ▪ Outdoor meetings (ex: pavilion) are recommended if possible - following public health guidelines. |

INFECTION PROCEDURES

Q1. What are the symptoms of COVID-19? The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has identified a wide-range of symptoms that can be mild to severe and symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with the following symptoms may have COVID-19: fever (above 100.4°F), chills, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle/body aches, headache, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea and a new, uncontrolled cough that causes difficulty breathing. Follow this link to check your [symptoms](#).

Q2. What should a parent do if a child has illness symptoms? If your child shows illness [symptoms](#) that could be COVID-19, you should contact your doctor. Your doctor may ask that your child participate in a COVID-19 test. You must alert your school's main office and do not send your child to school. If the symptoms occur during the school day, your child will be immediately sent to the office and you will be contacted to pick your child up from school. Your child may return to school when he/she has been symptom and fever free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication or your child's doctor has provided an alternative diagnosis.

Q3. My child had COVID-19-like symptoms, but tested negative for COVID-19. When can he/she return to school? If your child tested negative for COVID-19, but has another illness, your child may return to school when he/she has been fever and symptom free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication. A doctor's note will not be required for return.

Q4. What should I do if my child tests positive for COVID-19? You must contact your child's school immediately to report the positive case. You will need to provide details to the school principal to assist with contact tracing. This may include, but not be limited to: the date symptoms began, close contacts your child had with others, siblings (their school/grade levels), other activities, etc. This information will be used to determine if there were any close contacts in the school community who will need to quarantine. You should work with your child's primary care physician for treatment. Your child may not return to school until he/she has met the return to school requirements in Q5.

Q5. When can a student return to school after receiving a positive COVID-19 test? If a student tests positive for COVID-19, the student must isolate and not return to school until they have met [CDC's criteria to discontinue home isolation](#). This includes:

1. At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared; and
2. At least 24 hours have passed since the last fever without the use of fever reducing medications; and
3. Other symptoms have improved.

Q6. What should I do if another member of my household tests positive for COVID-19? You must immediately contact your school's office to report the positive case. You will need to provide details to the school principal to assist with contact tracing. This may include, but not be limited to: who tested positive, the date symptoms began, close contacts with family or community members, children in the home (their school/grade levels), etc. This information will be used to determine if there were any close contacts in the school community who will need to quarantine. Your school will ask that your child quarantine and monitor for symptoms. The quarantine will begin after the positive household member has recovered based on the criteria in question Q5 above. This means the quarantine period may be up to 24 days – 14 days beyond the 10 days needed for the positive household member to recover.

Q7. What happens if my child's teacher tests positive for COVID-19? Should any employee have COVID-19 symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19, we will follow the same protocols used for students. If your child's teacher becomes sick and is unable to work, your school will provide a substitute teacher.

Q8. What happens if a student in my child's class tests positive for COVID-19? Your school will make all parents aware that a student has tested positive for COVID-19. Contact tracing will be used to determine which students had close contact with the positive case. Students who are considered to be close contacts by the CDC/health department guidelines will need to begin a quarantine from the date of exposure, monitor for symptoms, and participate in at-home instruction. In some cases, it is possible that the entire class will be isolated at home for 10-14 days.

Q9. I suspect someone in my household may have COVID-19, should I keep my children home from school? Yes, if you suspect that someone in your household may have COVID-19 or is going to be tested for COVID-19 then all the household members should stay home and not attend school or other activities. The family members should remain isolated at home while awaiting the test results.

Q10. I have been notified by the school or health department that my child has been a close contact to someone who tested positive for COVID-19. What does this mean? When your child has been determined to be a close contact to someone who tested positive for COVID-19, this means your child may have been exposed to the virus. Since symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure, your child will need to quarantine at home and monitor for symptoms for 14 days after the exposure. During this time, the isolated child should remain at home, take daily temperature checks, and as much as possible remain in a separate room, use a separate bathroom and avoid eating meals with the family. Arrangements should be made with

the school to participate in at-home instruction. If symptoms appear during this time, you should notify the school and your child's doctor. If no symptoms appear, your child may return to school at the end of the quarantine period.

Q11. If my child has had a close contact with a positive case (outside of the household) and is required to quarantine, do my other children need to quarantine? No, your other children will not need to isolate since they were not considered a close contact to the positive case. However, the child in quarantine should remain isolated at home as much as possible while monitoring for symptoms. If symptoms should appear in the isolated child or any household member, you must contact your child's school immediately for further guidance.

Q12. Could my child's school building be closed due to COVID-19 this year? At times, a school may need to close on short notice when we are notified about a positive case that has been at school. This may be necessary to carry out additional disinfecting or to allow time for school and health department officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation and trace all potential contacts. While it is our goal to continue in-person instruction, the health and safety of our students, their families, and our staff are the first priority.

If you have additional questions please contact your school office or the Kentucky COVID-19 hotline at (800) 722-5725.

Updated Quarantine Guidance

The CDC and the Kentucky Department of Health recently updated their quarantine guidance. The new guidance allows options to shorten the quarantine period for those who have been exposed to the virus as long as they have **NO symptoms**. The CDC has provided an explanation and data for this decision. It can be found [here](#).

It is important to note that symptoms of COVID-19 can begin 2-14 days following exposure to a positive individual. This means that even after following a shorter quarantine option, a close contact must continue to monitor for symptoms for 14 days after exposure. If symptoms appear during these 14 days, even if the close contact has returned from a shortened quarantine option, the person must isolate immediately, notify the principal, contact their physician and get a COVID-19 test.

Below are the three quarantine options now available according to the Northern Kentucky Health Department. These options can be used by individuals who are considered to be close contacts to a positive case and required to quarantine.

1. Quarantine for 14 days; especially if you are going to be around people that are high-risk* for the virus: elderly, people with co-morbidities, immunocompromised (*Recommended*)
2. Quarantine for 10 days if you have NO symptoms**
3. Quarantine for 7 days if you have a negative COVID-19 test on or after day 5 and have NO symptoms**

*High-risk – Older adults and people with medical conditions who are immunocompromised

**Symptoms – Symptoms include 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

For the Diocese of Covington schools, the following procedures will be implemented in light of the new quarantine guidance:

- Individual Cases – Individual students or staff who are considered close contacts may choose any of the three quarantine options. Parents and staff will need to communicate their intended quarantine plan to the school principal when reporting their exposure. Prior to their return to school, the child's parent or staff member must update the school principal on their quarantine/symptom status and get final approval for returning under the shortened options.
 - For those choosing the 7 day quarantine option, proper documentation must be provided to the school principal in order to return to school and school activities. The close contact needs to provide the date of exposure, documentation showing the date of the COVID-19 test was at least 5 days after exposure, and documentation of the negative result. If this information is not provided, or the procedures are not followed correctly, then the 10 or 14 day quarantine option will be used.
- Class/Team/Group Quarantines – When we determine that a group of students must quarantine due to exposure to a positive case, the 10 day quarantine option will be used. Even though the group can return after 10 days, parents can choose to keep their child home for the full 14 day quarantine. While individuals can still proceed with the 7-day option to return to their non-school related activities, the 10 day quarantine will remain in place for school and all school related activities.

- Household Contacts – One of the most challenging quarantines for our families has been the long quarantine associated with a positive case living within the same household as students. For a student in this situation, their 14 day quarantine begins after the 10 day recovery period of the positive case. This meant 24 days total. Our Diocesan schools will still follow the guidance for the quarantine to begin following the 10 day recovery period of the positive case. However, the quarantine options from that point will be permitted. This means the quarantine period for a household contact could be 17, 20, or 24 days.
- Since each case is reviewed individually, there are times when the Diocese of Covington COVID Coordinator, the Superintendent, and the school principal may determine that a quarantine will go above the minimum options and require the full 14 days. Since each case and situation can be unique, we must take the actions that we deem appropriate to ensure the safety of all the students, staff, and families in our school communities.

Quarantine Exemptions FAQ's

Many families ask about exemptions to quarantines. We continue to follow the guidance from the Northern Kentucky Health Department, the Kentucky Department of Health, and the CDC for this information. We are in close contact with our local health department and will update this guidance when new information is released. Below are a few questions and answers relating to quarantine exemptions.

- 1. I already had COVID-19, do I have to quarantine again if I am deemed a close contact?** If you have tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days you will not have to go into quarantine as a result of being a close contact. It is important to note that while it is rare, you can still get COVID-19 during this 90-day period and beyond so you should always follow the symptom protocols regardless of a previous diagnosis.
- 2. If I have a positive antibody test may I be exempt from quarantine?** No, the current guidance does not recognize positive antibody tests as a reason to be exempt from a close contact quarantine. You can read more information about antibody testing from the CDC here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/testing/serology-overview.html>
- 3. I have received the vaccine, may I be exempt from quarantine?** No, at this time the guidance from the health department does not allow for an exemption to a quarantine if you have been vaccinated.
- 4. Our entire family has previously tested positive for COVID-19, can we avoid the school travel quarantine?** At this time, the travel quarantine will apply to all students regardless of a previous COVID-19 positive test. While there may be a 90-day immunity to COVID-19, it is still possible to get and transmit the virus and travel may increase that risk. The travel quarantine ensures that families who choose higher risk activities do not impose those same risks on school families who are not choosing to take the same risks.

CDC GUIDANCE ON EXPOSURE TO COVID-19

How is an exposure to COVID-19 determined?

After an individual tests positive for COVID-19, contact tracing will be used to determine whether or not other individuals may have been exposed to the virus. This will be conducted by the local health department and your child's school. Contact tracing will involve looking at all close contacts beginning 48 hours prior to the test or 48 hours prior to the onset of symptoms up to the last known contact with others. Any individual or group who is deemed a close contact to the positive COVID-19 case will be considered to have been exposed and will need to quarantine and monitor for symptoms for 14 days.

What counts as close contact?

- You were within 6 feet of someone who has COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more (masked or unmasked)
- You provided care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19
- You had direct physical contact with the person (hugged or kissed them)
- You shared eating or drinking utensils
- They sneezed, coughed, or somehow got respiratory droplets on you

If you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 you must:

- Quarantine at home for up to 14 days after your last contact with a person who has COVID-19 **see new quarantine options on p. 16*
- Watch for fever (100.4°F), cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19
- If possible, stay away from others, especially people who are at higher risk for getting very sick from COVID-19

Note: People who have tested positive for COVID-19 do not need to quarantine or get tested again for up to 3 months as long as they do not develop symptoms again. People who develop symptoms again within 3 months of their first bout of COVID-19 may need to be tested again if there is no other cause identified for their symptoms.

For more information on possible exposure or how to quarantine visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

SCHOOL PROCEDURES FOR A POSITIVE COVID-19 CASE

1. Immediately upon learning of a positive COVID-19 case within the school community, the school principal will contact the local health department and the Department of Catholic Schools to report the case.

Boone, Campbell, Kenton counties - Northern Kentucky Health Department

Harrison County - Wedco District Health Department

Mason County - Buffalo Trace District Health Department

2. The school response will follow the instructions provided by the local health department and the Department of Catholic Schools. This will include contact tracing, proper disinfection techniques, communications, school closure, and other preventative actions.
3. The school principal will keep the school community informed of the action steps to be taken.
4. Individuals in the school community who have been identified as close contacts to a positive case of COVID-19 may receive additional instructions from the Health Department.

COVID-19 MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF REQUIREMENTS

In order to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus and keep our school communities safe, the Diocesan Coronavirus Task Force has developed procedures to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the “COVID-19 Return to School Requirements.” This oversight is necessary to ensure strict adherence to the requirements and to determine if procedure changes are needed to keep all those in our communities safe.

- **School Visits** – Members from the task force team will conduct drop-in visits to evaluate school procedures.
- **Weekly Evaluations** – Principals and selected teachers will complete a weekly evaluation of the requirements and submit their findings to the Department of Catholic Schools. This data will be used to provide additional guidance and/or make changes to procedures.
- **Attendance Monitoring** – Schools will submit weekly attendance reports to the Department of Catholic Schools to monitor absenteeism.
- **Parent Feedback** – A parent survey will be distributed to gather parent input on the school procedures.
- **Reporting Concerns** – Schools will communicate the procedures for reporting COVID-19 implementation concerns.
 - **Parents** – Each school will notify parents/guardians of the person they should contact with any COVID-19 questions or concerns. The contact’s name, email, and phone number should be provided and listed on the school website.
 - **Students** – Each school will develop procedures to allow students to report COVID-19 concerns. These procedures should be communicated to students upon their return to school. Each school will create an environment where students feel safe expressing their feelings, personal challenges, or concerns regarding the implementation of COVID-19.