

COVID-19 Release From Isolation and Return-to-School Guidance

When can a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case return to school?
Under guidance of a medical professional, the following strategies may be used:

Symptom-Based Strategy

Patients With Symptoms

At least **10 days+** have passed since onset of first symptoms

Improvement in symptoms

At least **24 hours** since last fever*

Time-Based Strategy

Patients With No Symptoms

At least **10 days** have passed from collection date of first positive test

No Symptoms have developed since the first positive test

Test-Based Strategy

Critically ill or severely immunocompromised patients

Two negative PCR test results collected **≥ 24 hours** apart

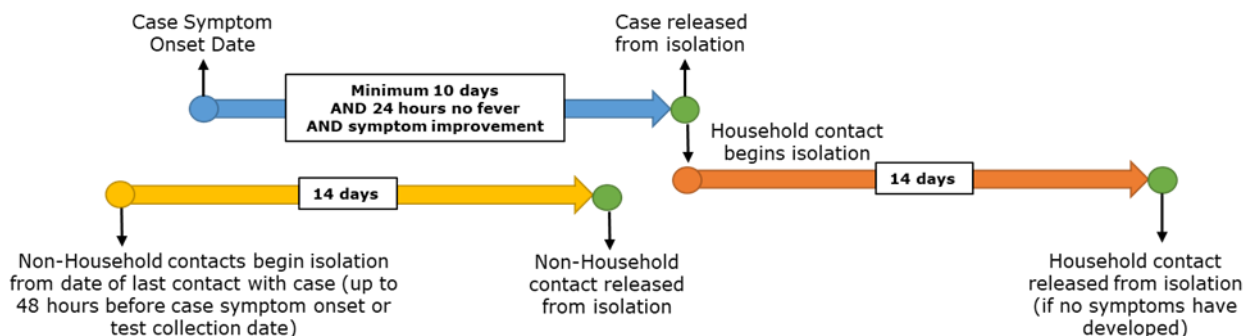
Improvement in symptoms

Resolution of fever*

†For patients with severe illness, duration of isolation for up to **20 days** may be warranted

*Without the Use of Fever-Reducing Medications

When can an individual exposed to a positive case return to school?



Useful References:

[CDC Guidance for Schools & Childcare Programs](#)
[TEA Public Health Guidance](#)

[CDC Guidance for Disposition of Home Isolation Patients](#)
[CDC Toolkits for K-12 Schools](#)

Strategy Differences

Test-Based Strategy

Only recommended for:

- Severely Immunocompromised persons

Symptom and/or Time-Based Strategy

Consider for:

- Persons not meeting criteria for test-based strategy
- Suspected COVID-19 cases that are never tested
- Note: For persons with severe illness, duration of isolation for up to **20 days** may be warranted

Release from Isolation of Case Contacts

Household Contacts

- ✓ Must be Quarantined for **14 days** after positive case is released from isolation

Non-Household Contacts

- ✓ Must be Quarantined for **14 days** from the date of last contact with the case (identified as contact with case up to 48 hours before case symptom onset or test collection date).

Considerations for Schools

When reporting a known or suspected case, remember to collect the following information:

- Patient Name
- Patient Date of Birth
- Patient Address
- Parent/Guardian Contact Information
- Where patient was tested (hospital, doctor office, etc)
- Date the test was collected
- Date symptoms started, if known
- Last date at school

Identification of close contacts & exposures

Close contact is defined as:

- Direct exposure to infectious secretions (e.g., being coughed on) from a sick case;
- Being within 6 feet of a sick case for ≥ 15 minutes