

*MDHHS would like to clarify that schools must report aggregate COVID-19 cases to LHDs on a daily basis **at minimum** based on interpretation of the public health code and communicable disease rules. LHDs should consider adding any local requirements if sending this message to school districts in their jurisdiction.*

See message below.

With the first day of fall approaching, the below information and updated infographic (attached) are intended as an update local health departments may share with schools as the weather begins to cool and students and staff begin to spend more time indoors.

COVID-19 continues to impact Michigan communities, including school-aged children. To assist with an anticipated fall surge in cases, the following tools are available to support in-person learning. Vaccines are available for those as young as six months of age, tests are in sufficient supply, and medications are available to prevent and treat COVID-19 illness. Schools are encouraged to continue to work closely and communicate with their local health department (LHD) regarding COVID-19 and current conditions in their community.

The CDC provides guidance on mitigation measures for schools in [Operational Guidance for K-12 Schools and Early Care and Education Programs to Support Safe In-Person Learning](#).

Some schools may wish to use all available mitigation routinely, while other schools might elect to recommend specific mitigation measures at different points in time in response to an increasing number of cases in the school, school outbreaks, increases in community transmission, a new variant, etc.

Considerations When Implementing Layered Mitigation Measures

- [Local COVID-19 Community Level](#).
- Vaccination coverage of staff and students.
- Presence of COVID-19 or COVID-19 outbreaks in the school.
- Returning from break/holidays.
- Local COVID-19 case trends.
- Local health care capacity.
- Emergence of new variants of concern.
- Variation in individual-level or group-level risk (e.g., persons with disabilities).

Vaccination

COVID-19 vaccines are now available for persons as young as six months of age. Schools should recommend and promote [up to date](#) COVID-19 vaccination for students and staff. Vaccines can be obtained from your local health department, local pharmacy, or check with your health care provider.

- Michigan.gov/COVIDvaccine

Testing

Schools may consider broad or targeted testing of their students and staff, especially when case rates are rising, there are known exposures within the school, there are school outbreaks, or when returning to school after breaks and holidays.

MDHHS will continue to make testing resources available to schools including COVID-19 antigen tests to be conducted by the school, at-home tests to be distributed to staff, parents, and guardians, testing vendors to assist with school testing, and health resource advocates to support keeping schools safe.

School testing programs will continue for the 2022-2023 school year and include the following resources:

- [School District Antigen COVID Test Ordering Form](#)
- [MI Backpack OTC Program ordering form](#)
- Questions for MDHHS- supported school testing programs can be sent to MDHHS-COVIDTestingSupport@Michigan.gov

Other opportunities for free at-home testing include:

- Michigan health insurance companies are required to [cover the cost of eight at-home COVID-19 tests per month](#) for each person covered under the plan.
- Rapid at-home test kits are available through the [Rockefeller Project Act](#).
- At-home COVID-19 tests are available [at participating libraries](#).
- Additional resources for free at-home tests are available at Michigan.gov/COVIDtest.

Personal Protective Equipment

Schools could recommend masking broadly, but especially when case rates are increasing or there are outbreaks present in the school. Schools could consider supplying masks and respirators to those who wish to use them.

Some people may choose to mask while in the classroom due to [personal or household risk](#), and these individuals should be supported in their decision. Promote acceptance for those who choose to wear masks, including students who need to wear masks for any

reason. Recognize that some younger students have not experienced school without everyone being masked.

Ventilation

Schools can take additional [steps to increase outdoor air intake and improve air filtration](#). For example, safely opening windows and doors, including on school buses, and using portable air cleaners with HEPA filters. Schools may also consider holding some activities outside if feasible.

Isolation and Exposures

Schools should follow guidance outlined in [Managing Communicable Diseases in Schools](#) for isolation of students who have symptoms of COVID-19, e.g., fever, and those who have confirmed COVID-19. Current CDC Guidance emphasizes staying home for five days and masking for the five days after staying home.

- Persons experiencing symptoms of any infectious disease, including but not limited to COVID-19, should not attend school activities.
- People with COVID-19 symptoms should stay home from school and get tested.

Schools can decide how to manage exposures based on local context and benefits of preserving access to in-person learning in response to additional transmission concerns or outbreaks of illness. Current CDC Guidance says people exposed to COVID-19 do not need to stay home, but should mask when in public for ten days, get tested five days after exposure, and monitor for symptoms.

Reporting

New for the 2022-2023 school year, schools must report COVID-19 aggregate cases in staff and students to the LHD daily.

Reporting of communicable diseases by parents to schools and subsequently, from schools to the LHD is critical to understanding the risk of illness and exposure. Reporting of illness is foundational to implementing measures to keep students and staff safe.

- Staff, parents, and guardians should report illness, including but not limited to COVID-19, to their school.
- Schools are required to report illnesses to their LHD.

Michigan Law requires that schools and childcare centers report [specific diseases](#) according to Act No. 368 of the Public Acts of 1978. When schools are aware of the

identification of any [reportable disease](#) in students or staff, it must be reported within 24 hours.

- Schools must report any unusual occurrence, outbreak or epidemic within 24 hours.
- Schools must document individual-level information for COVID-19 referrals (see below).
- At a minimum, schools must report COVID-19 aggregate cases in staff and students to the LHD daily.
- School must produce case-based information should the LHD request.

Individual-level information that should be documented by schools for COVID-19 cases:

- Name of the disease.
- Student demographic information including full name, date of birth, grade, classroom, street address along with zip code, name of parent/guardian, and phone number(s).
- The date the student was first absent.
- The individual who identified the disease (e.g., health care provider, parent/guardian, etc.).

Orders

A number of epidemic orders issued under MCL 333.2253 remain in effect, primarily relating to reporting of tests and administration of tests and vaccines. Those orders can be located [on the MDHHS Epidemic Orders web page](#).

COVID-19 Infection

Who is Impacted

Any individual who tests positive for COVID-19 and/or displays COVID-19 symptoms (without an alternate diagnosis or negative COVID-19 test) regardless of vaccination status.

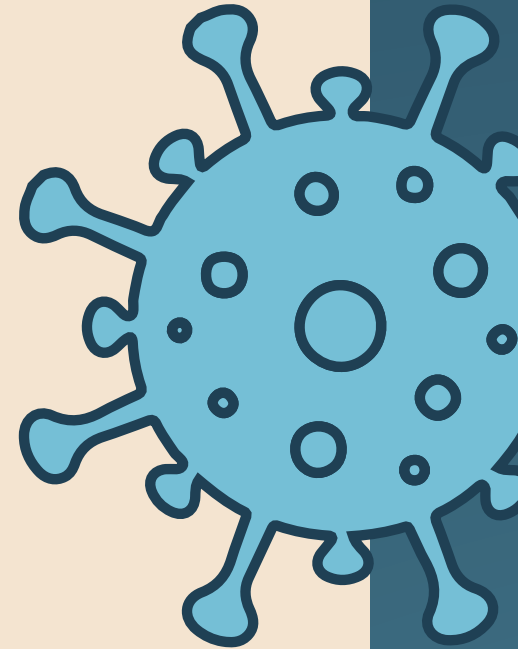
Public Health Recommendations



Isolate at home for 5 days (day “0” is day symptoms begin or day test was taken for those without symptoms); and



If symptoms have improved or no symptoms developed, may leave isolation after day 5 and wear a well-fitting mask, for 5 more days (ending after day 10).*



COVID-19 Exposure

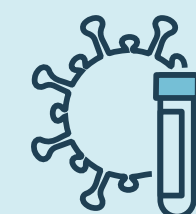
Close contact exposed to someone with COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status.



Monitor symptoms for 10 days.



Wear a well-fitting mask around others for 10 days after exposure.



Test 5 days after exposure and if symptoms develop.



Avoid unmasked activities or activities with higher risk of exposing vulnerable individuals.**

* You may remove your mask sooner than day 10 with two sequential negative antigen tests 48 hours apart. If a mask cannot be worn, 10 days of home isolation is recommended.
** Activities with immunocompromised or other high-risk individuals, social/recreational activities in congregate settings or when community levels are high.