



KALAMAZOO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

In the Pursuit of Extraordinary Governance...

TO: Kalamazoo County School Superintendents
FROM: Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department
DATE: January 25, 2022
RE: School contact tracing and testing option in lieu of COVID-19 Omicron variant

The highly infectious COVID-19 Omicron variant continues to cause many infections in Kalamazoo County. The increased COVID-19 caseload presents challenges for schools' capacity to perform effective contact tracing to reduce COVID-19 spread in K-12 school settings. Acknowledging this situational change, HCS outlines a new process for COVID-19 contact tracing, case notification and testing for staff and student exposures in K-12 school settings. Schools may also continue to employ current MDHHS test to stay options for exposed students and staff if preferred. Schools should continue to follow [CDC guidance for COVID-19 in K-12 schools](#) and refer to HCS and MDHHS guidance on isolation in K-12 settings. **The following process is specific to school setting exposures; community and household exposures should follow [general public guidance](#) for isolation and quarantine.**

Vaccination remains an essential way to reduce COVID-19 spread and the best way to prevent hospitalization and death due to COVID-19. [Incorporation of antigen testing is a key strategy to reduce spread of COVID-19 in K-12 settings.](#) MDHHS announced on January 20, 2022 that it is distributing more COVID-19 antigen tests to schools. HCS continues to recommend universal masking in K-12 settings and reminds schools of the importance of ventilation. HCS and MDHHS COVID-19 case notification requirements remain in place.

Importantly, staff or students with COVID-19 symptoms, including with an initially negative COVID-19 test result, should not come to school. These include those with "minor," subtle or nuisance symptoms. COVID-19 symptoms include the following:

- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Communicable Disease Surveillance Unit

311 East Alcott | Kalamazoo, MI 49001

Phone: 269.373.5044 | www.kalcounty.com/hcs

Case notification and post-exposure testing process

1. School learns of a positive COVID-19 case in a student or staff member.
2. School notifies students/families that there is a case in their class or school-associated activity. Classmates or activity members are considered “presumptive contacts.”
3. All students and staff who are presumptive contacts should monitor for symptoms and wear a [well-fitting face mask](#) for 10 days post-exposure in school and public settings.
4. Presumptive student and staff contacts not [up to date on COVID-19 vaccination](#)¹ according to CDC or who have not had COVID-19 infection² in the last 90 days, should test every other day for six days after exposure depending on COVID-19 test availability.

The following are testing options:

- a. School administered antigen testing (see 1/18/2022 MDHHS MI Safe School Antigen Testing Process Update)
- b. School distribution of home antigen tests performed by parents (see 1/18/2022 MDHHS MI Safe School Antigen Testing Process Update); schools are encouraged to develop a process for written attestation of test results from parents/legal guardians
- c. Parent acquisition and/or administration of a test with the understanding of needing to report results to the school; schools are encouraged to develop a process for written attestation of test results from parents/legal guardians
 1. Find a test site: https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus/0,9753,7-406-99891_99912---,00.html
 2. Federal distribution of antigen tests (limit 4 per household): <https://www.covidtests.gov/>
 3. Self-purchase at local pharmacies

Monitoring during days 1-10 following exposure

- Watch for symptoms, such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other COVID-19 symptoms.
- If symptoms develop, get tested immediately and isolate until receiving test results. If test positive, then follow isolation recommendations.
- If possible, stay away from people exposed person lives with, especially people who are at higher risk of getting very sick from COVID-19
- For the full 10 days after last exposure, avoid people who are immunocompromised or at high risk for severe disease, and nursing homes and other high-risk settings

¹ Note that MDHHS guidance includes a Pfizer booster vaccination for those 12-17 years 5 months after completion of the Pfizer primary series when defining what qualifies as [up to date on COVID-19 vaccines](#).

² COVID-19 infection with PCR or antigen test result confirmation (not antibody tests)

General Principles

For Parents and Guardians:

- Have the student stay home when ill and get tested for COVID-19
- If the student tests positive for COVID-19, isolate at home following CDC, MDHHS and HCS guidelines
- Report the student's positive test to the school
- If the student is exposed to COVID-19 outside of the school setting quarantine at home following [CDC guidelines](#)
- If the student is exposed to COVID-19 in the school setting follow local school/public health guidance on students exposed in the school setting

For School Administrators:

- Screen students for signs and symptoms of illness and ask parents/guardians to keep ill students at home until well
- If the school becomes aware of a COVID-19 case, identify students/staff that may have been a close contact of the case in the school setting
- Notify staff and the parents/guardians of students that have been exposed to COVID-19 in a classroom or school-associated setting
- Follow MDHHS and HCS guidelines related to isolation and quarantine of persons exposed to COVID-19 in the school setting