

# ResponsiveEd<sup>®</sup>

## ARKANSAS

### 2021-2022 Safe Return to Schools

In following the guidance provided by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH), our schools will adopt the following procedures.

#### **Continued Practices to Mitigate the Likelihood of COVID-19 Spread Inside the School**

##### **Vaccinations**

Fully-vaccinated students or staff do not need to quarantine if deemed close contacts, unless they have/develop symptoms.

##### **Masks/Face Coverings**

Although masks or other face coverings can no longer be mandated in Arkansas public schools, as prohibited by Act 1002 of 2021, the CDC currently recommends the following regarding the wearing of masks in school settings:

- Indoors: Mask use is *recommended* for people who are not fully vaccinated including students, teachers, and staff. Children under 2 years of age should not wear a mask.
- Outdoors: In general, people do not need to wear masks when outdoors. However, particularly in areas of substantial to high transmission, the CDC recommends that people who are not fully vaccinated wear a mask in crowded outdoor settings or during activities that involve sustained close contact with other people who are not fully vaccinated.

*Individuals exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19 will not need to be quarantined if they have no symptoms and both the infected and exposed individual consistently and correctly were wearing a mask.*

##### **Physical Distancing**

Based on studies from the 2020-2021 school year, the CDC recommends schools maintain:

- at least 3 feet of physical distance or partitions between students within classrooms, and
- at least 6 feet between students and adults, and between adults who are not fully vaccinated.

Additionally, we will limit large group gatherings (such as large assemblies).

##### **Hand Sanitizing**

Frequent hand sanitization will help ensure the health and wellness of students, staff, and visitors. To this end, students, staff, and visitors will be asked to adhere to the following guidance:

- Sanitize and/or wash hands upon entering and exiting the campus, classroom, restroom, cafeteria, and all other common areas (defined below).
- Wash hands after recess, before eating, and following restroom breaks.

- Students will be reminded of hand sanitization practices by staff and campus signage throughout the instructional day.

### **Disinfectants and Campus Cleaning**

Frequent cleaning and disinfecting will promote healthy learning and working environments for students and staff.

#### Classroom Mitigation Practices

- Classrooms: Each classroom will be outfitted with the following:
  - Visual reminders of distancing requirements,
  - Refillable hand sanitizer stations, and
  - Disinfectant wipes to sanitize working surfaces.
- Teachers: If rotating between classes, teachers will disinfect shared tools and equipment prior to leaving the classroom.
- Students: If rotating between classrooms, students will disinfect desks/eating surfaces prior to leaving the classroom/cafeteria.

#### Daily Campus Cleaning

- Each classroom and restroom will be disinfected daily.
- All high-touch areas will be cleaned frequently.
- Custodians will wear masks and gloves while on campus.
- The cafeteria will be disinfected between lunch periods.

#### Additional Cleaning Measures for Confirmed Cases of Covid-19 on Campus

- If a classroom or facility is closed due to COVID-19, quaternary disinfectant, which is recommended for use on the virus that causes COVID-19, will be used to defog and disinfect.
- Custodial staff will defog and disinfect classrooms, restrooms, gym, and all additional areas in the entire campus.

### **Water Fountains**

Water fountains will remain closed. Water bottle fillers have been installed, and will continue to be used.

### **Protocols for Campus Visitors**

- Campuses will utilize virtual meeting options to limit campus visitors when possible.
- All visitors who enter the building will be strongly encouraged to wear a face covering during “Substantial” and “Moderate” COVID-19 activity levels.
- All visitors will be required to fill out a symptom screening form responding to [screening questions](#), will sign and date the [form](#), and visitors will be screened by school staff by asking screening questions and taking temperature.

### **Food Service and School Meals**

We will establish procedures that maximize physical distance as much as possible when students are moving through the food service line and while eating (especially indoors). Using additional spaces outside of the cafeteria for mealtime seating, such as classrooms, the gymnasium, or outdoor seating, can help facilitate distance.

## **Responding to Positive COVID-19 Cases in a School**

### **Close Contact Determination and Responses**

The CDC defines a close contact as an individual confirmed to have been within six feet for 15 cumulative minutes or longer within a 24-hour period during the infectious period of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19.

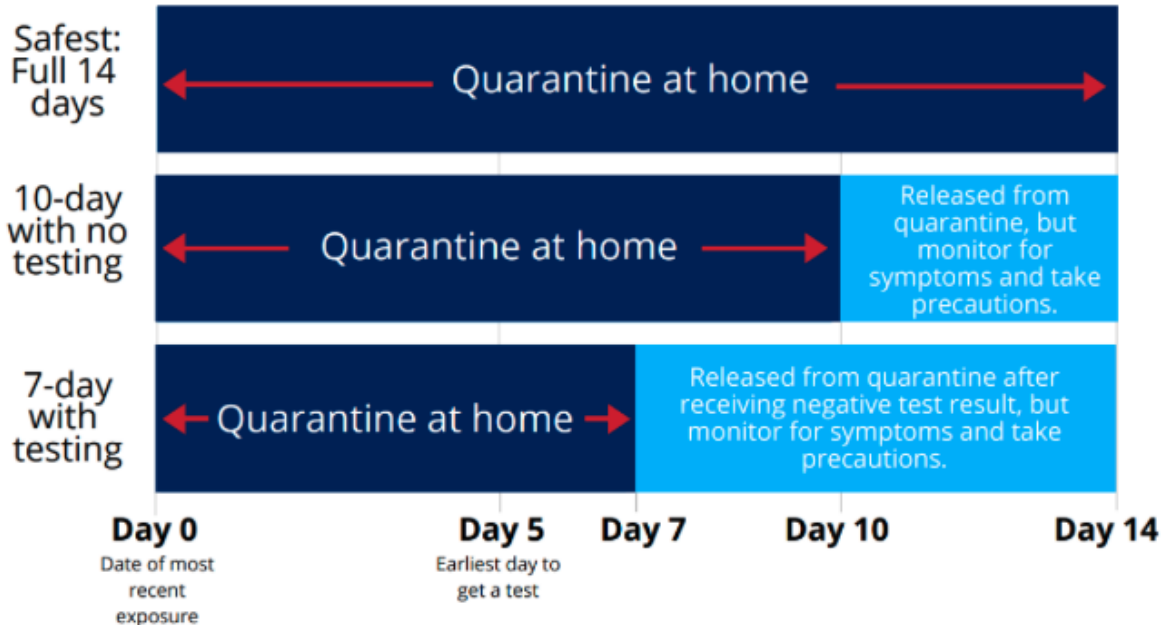
1. Individuals who have previously tested positive for COVID-19 and recovered and who are subsequently exposed to someone with COVID-19 within three months of their original diagnosis do not have to stay at home or get tested again, as long as they do not develop new symptoms. Individuals who develop symptoms again within three months of their first instance of COVID-19 should see their physician as they may need to be tested again if there is no other cause identified for their symptoms.

## QUARANTINE

In accordance with new CDC guidelines, quarantine can end after 10 days without testing if no symptoms have occurred. Or, it can end after 7 days if no symptoms have occurred and a test returned a negative result. Note that the test sample must have been collected at least 5 days after exposure. Send-off PCR tests are preferred, but rapid PCR or antigen tests are acceptable.

If the person is exposed again during quarantine, the period must start over again. If you develop symptoms or test positive for COVID-19 during the quarantine period, you must follow the instructions for isolating yourself.

### Quarantine for people with no symptoms



*\*If symptoms develop, isolate and get tested.*

### Calculating length of quarantine

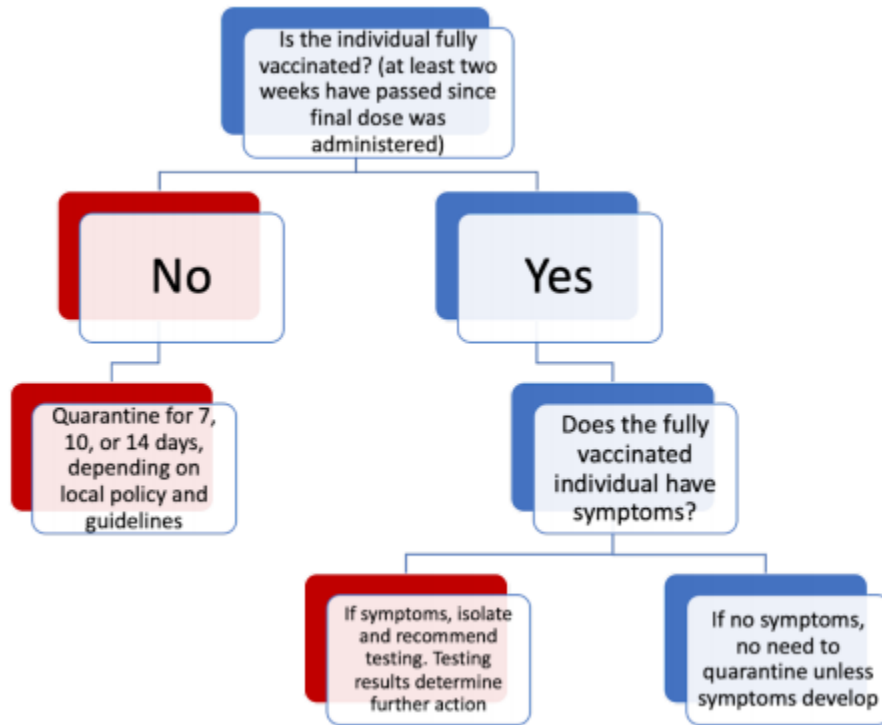


**14-day:** If you were exposed at **noon on Dec. 1**, you can be released from quarantine at **noon on Dec. 15**.

**10-day:** If you were exposed at **2 p.m. on Dec. 3**, you can be released from quarantine at **2 p.m. on Dec. 13**.

**7-day with testing:** If you were exposed at **9 a.m. on Dec. 5**, you can get tested after **9 a.m. on Dec. 10**. If the test is negative, you can be released from quarantine at **9 a.m. on Dec. 12**.

2. Individuals exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19 will not need to be quarantined if they have no symptoms and both the infected and exposed individual consistently and correctly were wearing a mask. 3. Individuals who are fully vaccinated may not have to quarantine. To help determine whether a fully vaccinated individual should quarantine, refer to the following chart:



### **Quarantine of those exposed to someone with COVID-19**

As of December 2, 2020, the CDC amended its guidance to allow two shorter options for the quarantine period. Based on current CDC guidance, the quarantine period can end for individuals experiencing no symptoms according to the following guidelines:

1. After 10 full 24-hour periods since close contact exposure without testing, or
2. After seven full 24-hour periods since close contact exposure and after receiving a negative test result (sample taken no earlier than five 24-hour periods after exposure).

If individuals return to school from these shorter quarantine windows, they should regularly monitor themselves for symptoms to ensure they remain symptom-free and take appropriate precautions (e.g., consistent mask usage) for the duration of the 14-day incubation period.