



JOHNSON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Fall 2021 Back to School Guidance

August 4, 2021

The Johnson County Health Department recommends all schools in Johnson County adhere to the following COVID-19 guidance:

- Any student, teacher, or staff member who tests positive for COVID-19 should complete a 10-day isolation period. If the individual is symptomatic, but obtains a negative test result, they may return once symptoms have resolved.
- Anyone who is identified as a close contact to an individual who has tested positive should complete a quarantine period. A close contact is defined as anyone who has been within 3 feet of the positive individual for more than 15 minutes in the 48 hours prior to symptom onset. Cases of physical contact, such as athletics or extra-curricular activities, will be handled on a case-by-case basis, as the need for quarantine will depend on the type of contact.
- There are three options to return from quarantine per the CDC.
 - **Return on day 15 – no enhanced precautions**
 - **Return on day 11 – must use enhanced precautions on days 11-14 (masked at all times throughout the school day, no exceptions; distance of at least 3 feet in the classroom; lunch to be eaten separately because masks will be off while eating, must maintain a distance of at least 6 feet in this setting; symptoms monitored daily by parents and school staff)**
 - **Return on day 8 – must use enhanced precautions on days 8-14 and obtain a negative antigen (rapid) test on day 8 as long as the individual has remained asymptomatic while quarantined.**
- **Masks must be worn on school buses due to federal mandate. This must be enforced and buses should keep disposable masks on hand in the event a student does not have a mask of their own.**
- It is a recommendation of the CDC that masks be worn inside K-12 buildings regardless of vaccination status, however, if schools choose to make masks optional, the Health Department will support that decision.
- The schools may accept a positive antibody test in order to eliminate the need for quarantine.
- Any individual who has been fully vaccinated will not need to quarantine due to exposure.
- Any individual who has tested positive within the previous 6 months will not need to quarantine due to exposure.
- If an individual presents with symptoms, and COVID-19 is suspected, the Health Department recommends obtaining an antigen test in order to determine how to proceed. School nurses should assess symptoms and risk factors in order to make this determination. These tests are available at no cost Monday through Friday at the Johnson County Health Department vaccination clinic located at Compass Park behind the Indiana Masonic Home. If the antigen test is negative, and the individual is symptomatic, the result should be confirmed by a PCR test. Schools should not accept antigen tests performed at home, only those performed at an authorized facility should be considered valid.

These guidelines will be evaluated on a regular basis and updated as needed.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this guidance, please contact the Health Department.

Thank you,

Jefferson M. Qualls, MD
Johnson County Health Officer