



Guidance for Schools Regarding COVID-19 Infection and Exposure

The purpose of the guidance is to help Schools and their members determine next steps when being notified that a person has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or has been exposed to a person diagnosed with COVID-19. This guidance is not intended to replace medical evaluation or any other recommendations by the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](https://www.cdc.gov/) or the [California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\)](https://www.cdph.ca/).

All information is subject to change.

BACKGROUND

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is an infection caused by a virus that can spread from person to person through respiratory droplets when a person coughs or sneezes. While it is primarily spread by coming into close contact (about 6 feet) of a person who is infected with COVID-19, it may also be spread by touching a surface with the virus on it and then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to protect yourself is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19. This includes staying home as much as possible, avoiding close contact with others, cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surface, and washing your hands with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

[EPA-approved disinfectants](https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2) can be found online at <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>. Bleach solutions (for example 1/3 cup bleach added to 1 gallon of water) and 70% alcohol solutions are also effective alternatives if the EPA-approved disinfectants are in short supply.

Anyone who is ill should stay home. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. Symptoms of COVID-19 include, but are not limited to:

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

Everyone is at risk of getting COVID-19, but some people are at higher risk for more severe illness, including hospitalization and death. Persons who are at higher risk include those who are over 65 years of age and people with [serious underlying medical conditions](#), particularly if not well controlled. More details regarding people who may be at higher risk can be found online at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html>.

When an Employee/Student tests positive for COVID-19

Butte County Public Health will be notified of positive cases and will reach out to the school. If you are notified by an employee or student that they have tested positive for COVID-19, contact Butte County Public Health immediately.

Butte County Public Health will guide the school through the following steps.

If Infected Employee/Student is at home, instruct to stay home. If Infected Employee is at work, send home immediately. If Infected Student, mask and isolate until parent/guardian arrives.

BCPH will Determine whether the Infected Employee/Student has had prolonged direct contact (within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes) with other employees or students of the school during the two days before symptoms first started or since the case tested positive.

BCPH and school will assess full or partial closure of the school based on employee/student close contact during infectious period and physical presence on campus.

In conjunction with BCPH, school will identify individuals who may have had close contact with the Infected Employee/Student and the last date of exposure.

School performs assessment of school site and arranges for thorough cleaning and disinfecting of areas where the infected employee/student was present on campus.

BCPH will call all close contacts of Infected Employee/Student.

School may allow Infected Employee/Student to work remotely if they are well enough and are able to perform work duties or distance learning from home or other off-site location.

Infected Employees/Students should not return to School site until meeting criteria (see page 3 Returning to School). Butte County Public Health will determine when the Infected Employee/Student is released from isolation.

Written documentation of release from isolation may be provided by Butte County Public Health.

Schools will communicate necessary messaging to parents and school community via letters, email, robo calls, etc.

Returning to School after Testing Positive for Covid-19

Infected Employees/Students who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 may not return to school until they meet the CDC criteria for discontinuation of isolation. Butte County Public Health will utilize the following Symptom/Time based strategy.

BCPH will determine if the patient has had symptoms consistent with COVID-19 infection (regardless if before or after testing)

No Symptoms

At least 10 days have passed since positive test result AND

No symptoms have developed since positive test result

Note: Positive results after 10 days do not necessarily mean that the Infected Employee/Student is still infectious to others. There are reports of patients having positive tests for weeks and months after no longer being infectious.

Butte County Public Health will determine when the Infected Employee/Student is released from isolation.

Symptoms

Infected Employee/Student must have no fever (without the use of fever-reducing medication) for 72 hours AND

Infected Employee/Student must have improved, resolving respiratory symptoms AND

At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared

Written documentation of release from isolation may be provided by Butte County Public Health.

Recovered Employee/Student may return to school. Employee/Student should follow all recommendations by their healthcare provider and Public Health, maintain good hygiene practices, and continue to self-monitor for any symptoms.

Close contacts to a lab-confirmed COVID-19 case

BCPH will provide follow up to close contacts. Close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of a person during their infectious period for 15 minutes or longer. This can occur 2 days before symptoms appear or the positive test is collected, and during the first 10 days from symptom onset or the positive COVID test.

BCPH will monitor Employee/Student for symptoms during their quarantine period. It is recommended that all those in quarantine get tested for COVID-19 on day 3 to 5 and day 14 of their quarantine period.

Allow Exposed Employee/Student to work remotely or distance learn during their self-quarantine if able to perform duties from home.

Exposed Employee/Student becomes symptomatic.

No Symptoms

Exposed Employee/Student may return to work/school 14 days after their last exposure to the person who tested positive, as long as they remain asymptomatic.

COVID test recommended for symptomatic individuals.

Exposed Employee/Student is diagnosed with COVID-19.

Exposed Employee/Student tests negative for COVID-19, or diagnosed with an illness other than COVID-19.

Exposed Employee/Student should continue their quarantine period. Exposed Employee/Student may return to work/school after 14 days have passed since they last had exposure to the Positive Case during the infectious period.

Follow Guidance for Employee/Student is Diagnosed with COVID-19.

Written confirmation of release from quarantine may be provided by BCPH.

Action items are designated by color:
School - Blue
BCPH - Yellow
Collaboration - Green



**COVID - 19
Schools Guidance
Internal Use Only**

Butte County Public Health Resources

The following resources can be used by school personnel, parents, and students for general questions regarding COVID-19, testing, community guidance, etc.

Butte County Public Health Website: <http://www.buttecounty.net/publichealth/>

Butte County COVID-19 Call Center: (530) 552-3050