



COVID-19 Isolation & Quarantine Guidance

(revised 1/13/2022)

Changes Highlighted

If You Were Exposed to Someone with COVID-19 AND Are NOT Sick (Quarantine)**

“Close contact” occurs when an individual is within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 2 days (or 48 hours) before the infected person’s onset of symptoms.

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| <p>If you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have been boosted <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine (both shots) within the last 6 months <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed the primary series of J&J vaccine within the last 2 months <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were exposed in a mask-required setting, even if the exposure happened unmasked (e.g. during lunch) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wear a mask when around others at all times for 10 days. • Test on day 5, if possible. Documentation of a negative test is not required to return. • If you develop symptoms, assume you have COVID-19. Get a test and follow the isolation guidelines (below). |
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| <p>If you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are exposed in a non-school setting or a GCS setting that is considered mask-optional such as a classroom with students who cannot tolerate masks due to developmental needs <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are not fully vaccinated (including the booster if eligible) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay home for 5 days. After that continue to wear a mask around others at all times for 5 additional days. • Test on day 5, if possible. Documentation of a negative test is not required to return. • If you develop symptoms, assume you have COVID-19. Get a test and follow the isolation guidelines (below). |
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** these guidelines apply to the K-12 setting only. See Page 2 for Q&A on unmasked classes and Pre-K

If You Have Symptoms OR Test Positive for COVID-19 (Isolate)

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| <p>Everyone, regardless of vaccination status</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay home for 5 days from the first day of symptoms OR the COVID-19 specimen collection date. • If you have a fever, continue to stay home until it has been at least 24 hours with no fever without using any fever-reducing medicine. • If you have no symptoms or your symptoms are resolving after 5 days, you can return to school or work. • Documentation of a negative test is not required to return. • Wear a mask at all times around others for 5 more days. |
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Q. What is the quarantine/isolation period for students and staff members who are in classroom settings where students cannot tolerate masks due to developmental, medical or behavioral health needs (such as an adapted curriculum classroom)?

A. In the [StrongSchoolsNC Toolkit](#), the NCDHHS rules for mask-optional settings apply to these settings in GCS. Because students who cannot tolerate masks are also often medically fragile, keeping them safe from the spread of illness is critical. Per the guidelines for these settings, the student must quarantine for 5 days AND wear a mask when around others for the next 5 days after that. If the students cannot wear their mask for the 5 days upon return then the student will need to stay home for 10 days. Students can get tested on day 5 and quarantine until day 7 if test results are negative and they have no symptoms. Then, they can return to school on day 8. If symptoms occur, the student should immediately isolate until a test either confirms COVID-19, or a negative result rules it out.

Q. What is the quarantine/isolation period for students and staff members who are in Pre-K classrooms?

A. The new guidance reducing quarantine to 5 days does not yet pertain to child care settings, but the [ChildCareStrongNC Public Health Toolkit](#) states that programs are required to follow the recommendation of the local health department regarding isolation requirements. Per the Guilford County Health Department, unless an exception applies (page 12), Pre-K staff and students will continue to follow the guidance provided in the charts on pp. 13-14, using the 10-day quarantine, contact tracing, etc.