

The Health Department will work closely with schools, child cares, camps and out of school programs with concerns about COVID-19. If a case of COVID-19 is confirmed in a child or staff member at a facility, the Health Department will provide detailed guidance and information, perform contact tracing, and work in consultation with leadership on closure decisions. Below is a general list of what to expect and actions to take if someone develops COVID-19 symptoms while at your facility or when there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in your facility.

What to do when a child or staff member becomes symptomatic at school:

- Many of the symptoms of COVID-19 are also common in other childhood illnesses like the common cold, the flu, or seasonal allergies. Follow your protocols for suspected cases of flu, norovirus and other infections. Taking everyday actions to reduce the spread of these infections will also help reduce the potential spread of COVID-19.
- If a child develops a fever or any of the symptoms asked about in screening, immediately ensure that they put on a surgical mask, if they are not already wearing one. Place them in an isolation area separate from staff and other children and contact their parent/caregiver to take them home immediately. If a staff member develops symptoms throughout the day, they should immediately go home or to a healthcare facility depending on how severe their symptoms are. Individuals should follow [guidance for those who are sick](#),
- Once a person is sent to isolation, clean and disinfect all high-touch areas potentially used by the person no less than one hour after the sick individual has left the room. This may include the child's desk and chair, door handles, etc.
- Ensure [safe and correct use](#) and storage of [cleaning and disinfection products](#).
- If possible, increase ventilation in the areas used by the person by opening outside doors and windows or using ventilation fans to increase air circulation.

What to do when someone with confirmed COVID-19 was at your school, child care, camp or program:

- Review and follow the [Checklist for Handling COVID-19 in Schools, Camps and Child Cares](#).
- Schools, child cares and programs will only be informed by the Health Department about an individual with COVID-19 if they were in school, child care or program while infectious. If someone tests positive for COVID-19 but was not in the facility while they were infectious, there are no additional steps necessary because others at the facility are not at risk for COVID-19 exposure.

- The infectious period is when someone with COVID-19 can spread the virus to others. It starts two days before symptoms begin – or for people with COVID-19 who don't have symptoms, two days before they got tested – and continues [until they have recovered](#). The Health Department will work with you to determine if the person with COVID-19 was in your facility while they were infectious and notify you if there was an exposure to the facility.
- There may be misinformation circulating and concerns about getting COVID-19. Remember to treat staff and children with respect and confidentiality.
- You may be notified of a case of COVID-19 in the following ways:
 - The Health Department may contact you
 - You may be informed by a parent/caregiver or a staff member of a positive test result
- If you need support call 802-863-7240 x 8 during 7:45am–4:30pm Monday–Friday. After hours, follow the guidance in the check list and go remote for 24 hours so you can investigate.
- [Clean and disinfect](#) areas that the person with COVID-19 spent longer than 15 minutes

Information and questions to address during your contact tracing investigation:

- Basic information about the case
 - What is the name, age, demographics of the person with COVID-19?
 - When did symptoms begin? Or, if the person was asymptomatic, what day was their test collected?
 - Are they/were they symptomatic while at the school?
 - When was the last time they were at the school?
- What steps have already been taken to notify potential contacts and stakeholders?
- Where in the school, child care or program did the person with COVID-19 spend longer than 15 minutes? This could include classrooms, bathrooms, offices, gym, cafeteria, etc.
- Do you have a [line list](#) of people who had close contact (within 6 feet of the sick person, with or without a mask, for more than 15 minutes cumulatively or consecutively), or had contact with the individual during [high risk activities](#)? This could include classmates, teachers, other staff, paraeducators, specialty class instructors, contractors, etc.
 - This list can be built by using any of the following:
 - Seating charts,
 - Class schedules,
 - Staff movement, including teachers, paraeducators, custodial staff, contractors, and others
 - Bus seating charts,
 - Attendance records,
 - Activity participation records, etc.

- Have any of the close contacts had symptoms?
- Describe the layout of the spaces where the person with COVID-19 spent longer than 15 minutes.

Next Steps

- Support the Health Department's efforts by notifying people associated with the school, child care or program who have been identified as [close contacts](#). The school, child care or program will provide them with Health Department guidance and information on quarantine and testing.
- Consider notifying parents/caregivers and staff that a person with COVID-19 has been identified at the school. [A template letter in different languages can be found here](#). Encourage them to answer calls from the Health Department and participate in contact tracing.
- Children and staff who have positive test results for COVID-19 [isolate](#) at home until
 - At least 10 days have passed since symptom onset – or if no symptoms, date of test collection – **and**
 - At least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
 - Other symptoms have improved.
- Children and staff who were in close contact with a person with COVID-19 [should quarantine](#) up to 14 days since the last day they had close contact with the person with COVID-19.

Resources

- [Vermont Guidance for Schools](#) (AOE)
- [Information on accessing testing](#) (Vermont Department of Health)
- [Information on Contact Tracing](#) (Vermont Department of Health)
- [Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting \(CDC\)](#)
- [COVID-19 and Children](#) (CDC)
- [Helping Children Cope with Emergencies](#) (CDC)

For more information, visit
healthvermont.gov/COVID19