

Shortened Isolation & Quarantine Guidance Update to Families and Staff

January 13, 2022

Dear Alfred-Almond Central School District Families and Staff,

The Allegany County Department of Health (ACDOH) shared with school districts that they are adopting the shortened isolation and quarantine guidance from the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH). This guidance update is for the general population and impacts students and staff members.

Definitions:

1. Fully vaccinated is (this applies to Schools ONLY, not the general population, per the 1/10/2022 guidance document from the NYS DOH):
 - Two doses of the Pfizer/Moderna (mRNA) or one dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine regardless of booster status. The booster should be received at least two (2) weeks prior to the first date of exposure.
2. Not fully vaccinated is:
 - Student who had not received any vaccines
 - Students who had only one Pfizer/Moderna (mRNA) vaccine received
 - Students who had received two doses of the Pfizer/Moderna (mRNA) or one dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, but were exposed to COVID-19 within two (2) weeks of the last vaccination
3. Tight-fitting mask: A surgical, disposable, K N95, non-transparent cloth mask that covers the mouth and the nose at the same time, all of the time.

ISOLATION – Positive test result for COVID-19

The following applies to everyone, regardless of vaccination status. If a student/staff member test positive for COVID-19 (Isolate):

- Isolate for five (5) days, where day zero (0) is the day you were tested that resulted in a positive test.
 - If asymptomatic at the end of five (5) days or if symptoms are resolving, isolation ends. As a reminder, a well-fitting mask is required on our campus.
 - From day six (6) through ten (10), students will not be permitted to participate in physical education classes, choir, band, extracurricular or after school activities (including interscholastic sports, musical practice, school dances, ski club, etc.).
 - Athletes will need to be cleared by their primary care provider to be eligible to return to play post COVID-19 infection.
 - Immune compromised students or school staff are expected to isolate for the full ten (10) days.

QUARANTINE – Exposed to An Individual With COVID-19

If fully vaccinated:

- **No quarantine** is required but these individuals must wear a well-fitting mask while around others for ten (10) days after the last date of exposure.
- If possible, test at day five (5) with a PCR, NAAT, or antigen test.
- **If symptoms appear**, quarantine and seek testing. In this situation, quarantine would end when the test is negative (PCR, NAAT, or antigen test). If testing is not done, isolate according to the guidance above.

If fully vaccinated and eligible for a booster but does not have a booster:

- Extracurricular or after school activities: Individuals 12 years and older who are eligible for a booster but not boosted, and who have been exposed to an individual with COVID-19, cannot participate in extracurricular or after school activities and, aside from school attendance for instruction and bus travel, must adhere to a 5-day quarantine at home. Fully vaccinated 5-11-year-old children are not eligible for a booster and have no further restrictions.

If not fully vaccinated:

- Quarantine for five (5) days and wear a well-fitting mask while around others for an additional five (5) days.
- Unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated students and staff will have to quarantine for 5 days after the last date of exposure to the COVID-19 positive person while that person remains contagious (a total of 10 days if exposed to a household member who could not isolate properly).
- If possible, test at day five (5) with either a PCR, NAAT or antigen test.
- **If symptoms appear**, quarantine and seek testing. In this situation, quarantine would end when the test is negative (PCR, NAAT or antigen). If testing is not done, isolate according to the guidance above.

We are still expected to isolate and exclude the symptomatic students from the school immediately. Similar to what the University of Rochester Medical Center recommends, it remains our position to only accept students/staff back to school following negative PCR testing.

The rapid antigen tests that were provided to the students and parents were to be accepted only in case the results were positive. Because of the low sensitivity of such tests (high false negative values) a negative rapid antigen test done at home on symptomatic students would not exclude an infection and cannot be used as an acceptable test for return to school. Our goal remains to keep our school open safely, we owe it to our staff, students and their parents, not to expose them unnecessarily to COVID.

TEST TO STAY (TTS): (for Faculty/Staff ONLY at this time)

- Test to stay will have to be discontinued should the staff member become symptomatic. In that case, the staff member would be excluded from school and require PCR or NAAT testing
- During the test to stay period, the staff member will wear a tight-fitting mask

We will revisit TTS for Students when testing supplies are readily available and have adequate staff to complete the testing prior to students entering the building.

Summary:

1. Students or school staff members who tested positive for COVID-19 will have to isolate at home for at least 5 days
2. Such student or school staff member may be allowed to return to school after 5 days only if:
 - They have had no fevers for 24 hours with no antipyretics
 - Symptoms have resolved or significantly improving
 - May be asked to complete a 10-day isolation at home if the school nurse in consultation with the school physician and school administration deem the student or staff member to be too symptomatic to return after 5 days.
 - A tight-fitting mask will be required for an additional 5 days after return to school. During this period, such students will not be participating in physical education, band, choir classes or sports, or extracurricular activities
3. Immune compromised students or school staff are expected to isolate for the full 10 days.

COVID-19 guidance and information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), NYSDOH, and ACDOH are rapidly changing. Ultimately, authority is given to local health departments to adopt guidelines pertaining to schools and the general population. Our district personnel are working diligently with ACDOH as well as our School Medical Director to make sure information is updated, accurate, and available as a resource. Please know that when ACDOH formally adopts guidance from NYSDOH for schools, our information is then updated to reflect those changes. **Masking and distancing continue to be required in school settings.** Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Sincerely,

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