

Return to Child Care Protocols

When Isolation is Required Because of Symptoms

Note: There is no requirement for parents/guardian(s) to report the result of their child's PCR/RAT to the child care. After completing the required isolation period, a negative test result is not required to return to child care.

COVID-19 Testing

Take home PCR self collection kits (while supplies last) or rapid antigen tests may be available to children/staff from their child care. At this time, it is not recommended or required that students seek testing from pharmacies or community assessment centres.

Child/Staff Tests Negative for COVID-19 with Either a PCR or 2 Rapid Antigen Tests

If a single PCR test is negative or **two** consecutive rapid antigen tests (RATs) collected 24 to 48 hours apart are both negative, the child/staff may return to child care if **all of these conditions are met:**

- Their symptoms have been improving for 24 hours (or 48 hours after nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea symptoms),
- They do not have a fever (without using medication),
- They feel well enough to attend, AND
- They pass the daily screening.

Child/Staff is Symptomatic for COVID-19 or Tests Positive for COVID-19

When an individual is experiencing symptom(s) of COVID-19 (as listed in the [Ministry of Health's COVID-19 Reference Document for Symptoms](#)) and **does not** have access to rapid antigen tests (RAT) or a PCR test, this individual is presumed to have COVID-19 based on their symptoms and must isolate.

When an individual tests positive for COVID-19 on a single PCR test or RAT, they must isolate. A positive RAT does not need to be confirmed by a PCR test.

Age 11 years or younger OR fully vaccinated

The child/staff **must isolate for 5 days** from their positive test date or from when their symptoms started, whichever is earlier. They must have no fever and their symptoms must be improving for 24 hours (or 48 hours if nausea/vomiting/diarrhea) before returning to child care. From days 6-10, child/staff must maintain masking in public settings, avoid activities that require mask removal in public (e.g. playing a wind instrument or playing high-contact sports), and avoid visiting high risk settings or anyone vulnerable. *Distancing is encouraged when masks are removed to eat in a school or child care setting.

Age 12+ years and partially vaccinated or unvaccinated OR immune compromised

The child/staff **must isolate for 10 days** from their positive test date or from when their symptoms started, whichever is earlier. They must have no fever and their symptoms must be improving for 24 hours (or 48 hours if nausea/vomiting/diarrhea) before returning to child care.

Note: When calculating your isolation period, count the first day of symptoms or positive result (whichever is earlier) as day zero. Day 1 is the first full day after your symptoms developed or test was positive.

Household Members:

Household members do not need to isolate if any of the following apply:

- » They have previously tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 90 days,
- » They are 18 + and boosted
- » They are under 18 years old and are fully vaccinated

Household members that do not meet the above criteria can return to school/child care/work when all symptomatic people/positive cases in the home have finished their isolation or tested negative on a PCR test or two consecutive RATs. Initial symptomatic household member(s) do not have to extend their isolation period based on other household members becoming ill.

Note: For 10 days after last exposure, all household members must wear a mask outside the home, avoid activities that require mask removal in public (like dining out or high contact sports), and avoid visiting high risk settings or anyone vulnerable.

Distancing is encouraged when masks are removed to eat in a school or child care setting.