



Prevent • Promote • Protect

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El Paso County Public Health (EPCPH) and school leaders share a common goal of maintaining in-person education, which supports the safety, physical health, mental health and wellness of all children and youth in El Paso County. Isolation of ill individuals and quarantine of known contacts are important tools in preventing the spread of COVID-19 and maintaining the health and safety of school environments.

Consistent with the [Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment’s \(CDPHE\) guidance](#) and in accordance with Colorado Revised Statute 25-1-122 and [Board of Health Rule 6 CCR 1009-1](#), EPCPH will continue to require isolation and quarantine to limit the transmission and spread of infectious diseases. Isolation and quarantine are **required** by state law, including the provisions in Colorado Revised Statute 25-1-114. Schools are required by state law to follow these isolation and quarantine requirements for their staff, teachers, employees, and students.

To achieve safe and healthy in-person learning, we need your consistent cooperation with the following:

- COVID-19 cases must complete isolation. Cases need to isolate until **all three** of the following criteria have been met:
  - 10 days have passed from the symptom onset date (or date of positive test if asymptomatic or symptom onset date is unknown),
  - **AND** fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine,
  - **AND** improvement in symptoms.
- Close contacts of a case of COVID-19 must complete quarantine.
  - A close contact in a traditional classroom setting is defined as someone who:
    - Was within three feet for 15 cumulative minutes over a 24 hour period, OR
    - Lives in the same household, OR
    - Sleeps in the same space (e.g., roommate), OR
    - Had direct contact with sick individuals, OR
    - Is identified as a close contact based on public health determination
  - Quarantine is required for the timeframes listed below. Please note, the length of quarantine below includes the last day an individual should be excluded, i.e., an individual must quarantine for the full seven days and will be eligible to return on day eight, as long as they are asymptomatic with a negative test result.

Length of quarantine?	Is testing required?	Who should use this option?
14 days	No	People who have regular close contact with high-risk individuals. This includes people who live or work in residential or congregate living facilities.

<b>10 days</b>	No	This quarantine period is appropriate for most people who do not have contact with high-risk individuals.
<b>7 days</b>	Yes	The 7-day quarantine with testing is the least preferred option and <b>not recommended by EPCPH in most cases.</b>  People who do not have contact with high-risk individuals and have a negative test collected 48 hours before the quarantine is discontinued (on day 5 or later).

- Once a close contact of a case of COVID-19 is identified, they are required to quarantine unless they meet one of the below exemptions:
  - Both the COVID-19 case and close contact are MASKED; OR
  - The close contact is fully vaccinated; OR
  - The close contact has had a positive COVID-19 test within 90 days of exposure to the COVID-19 positive individual.

Please see below for county population, school community and individual protections that may impact quarantine decisions.

<b>County Population Protections</b>	<b>School Community Protections</b>	<b>Individual Protections</b>
<p><b>High rates of community COVID-19 vaccination</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counties with <math>\geq 70\%</math> of people aged 12 and older with at least one COVID-19 vaccination</li> <li>• <a href="#">Find county-level vaccination data</a></li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <p><b>Low community transmission</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counties with <math>&lt; 35</math> cases per 100K per 7 days</li> <li>• <a href="#">Find county-level transmission data</a></li> </ul>	<p><b>High rates of school community COVID-19 vaccination</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <math>\geq 70\%</math> of staff and students aged 12 and older with at least one COVID-19 vaccination</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <p><b>High rates of weekly school screening testing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <math>\geq 70\%</math> of unvaccinated staff and students participating in weekly testing</li> </ul>	<p><b>Fully vaccinated (two weeks after last recommended vaccine dose)</b></p> <p>OR</p> <p><b>Previously positive in the past 90 days</b></p> <p>OR</p> <p><b>Participating in weekly screening testing</b></p> <p>OR</p> <p><b>Both parties wearing a mask at the time of exposure*</b></p>
<p>Quarantine of close contacts does not need to be required by local public health authorities for routine classroom exposures if any of the above are met by the county, school or individual considered a close contact (*and the ill individual for mask use).</p>		

There are many resources available in El Paso County to assist schools and individuals.

- **COVID-19 vaccinations**
  - With more than 30 providers and over 100 convenient locations to get vaccinated in El Paso County, it is free, easy and convenient to get a COVID-19 vaccine. Get connected to a provider here: [www.elpasocountyhealth.org/how-can-i-get-a-vaccine](http://www.elpasocountyhealth.org/how-can-i-get-a-vaccine).
  - Schools, businesses and community organizations can request a mobile vaccine clinic to come to your location by emailing [healthinfo@elpasoco.com](mailto:healthinfo@elpasoco.com).
- **COVID-19 testing**
  - There are several free, community-based COVID-19 testing sites in El Paso County: [www.elpasocountyhealth.org/covid-19-testing-information](http://www.elpasocountyhealth.org/covid-19-testing-information).
  - NOTE: The Chapel Hills and Citadel Mall sites offer both COVID-19 tests and COVID-19 vaccines.
  - CDPHE is offering all K-12 Colorado schools (public, private, charter, and tribal) a free and voluntary screening testing program for the 2021-22 school year that provides weekly rapid antigen tests and screening resources. Learn more [here](#).
- **Free masks for schools**
  - As part of ongoing efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19, the state and Gov. Polis are offering free KN95 and surgical masks to school districts, BOCES, charter schools, private schools and facility schools for staff and students. To learn more, [click here](#).
  - In a traditional classroom setting, if both parties are masked, quarantine is not required for an exposed individual.

Please reach out to the schools team with any questions regarding available resources, quarantine exemptions or to report positive COVID-19 cases.

### **COVID-19-Related Reporting or Inquiries**

- To report a positive case of COVID-19 or an exposure during business hours (Monday – Friday, 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.):
  - Phone – (719) 578-3220 (must leave a message)
- To report a positive case of COVID-19 or an exposure after hours (24/7):
  - Phone – (719) 235-2278 (must leave a message)
- To email any of the above:
  - [SchoolsCOVID19@elpasoco.com](mailto:SchoolsCOVID19@elpasoco.com)
- To report a positive case through our online reporting tool:
  - [Click here](#)