

# Carver Public Schools

## COVID Frequently Asked Questions

January 11, 2021

### 1. When should a student stay home from school?

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Per guidelines from the Department of Education and the MA Department of Public Health, parents are asked to closely monitor the health of their children and conduct a brief daily screening. If the child has any of the following symptoms, they must stay home from school:

- Fever (100.0 or higher), chills, or shaking chills
- Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Headache, *when in combination with other symptoms*
- Muscle aches or body aches
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Fatigue, *when in combination with other symptoms*
- Nasal congestion or runny nose

#### **A student MUST also stay home if they:**

- Have been diagnosed with COVID-19
- Are awaiting the results of a COVID-19 test
- Have been identified as a close contact of a person diagnosed with COVID-19
- Have been instructed to quarantine or isolate

### 2. Can my student(s) come to school if someone in my house is symptomatic and is being tested/awaiting test results?

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Given the recent rise in cases of COVID-19 in the Carver community, we ask that if someone in the student's home is ill with symptoms of COVID-19 and is being tested/awaiting test results, we ask that your student stay home and you notify the school nurse.

### 3. What do I do if my student is staying home from school?

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All absences MUST be reported to the school nurse by emailing either the elementary school at [cesabsent@carver.org](mailto:cesabsent@carver.org) or the middle high school at [mhsabsent@carver.org](mailto:mhsabsent@carver.org). Please leave your student's first and last name, grade level, and reason for the absence. If more information is needed or you do not report an absence, the school nurse will contact you. Please make every effort to respond to their communication, as students will not be allowed to return to school unless cleared to do so by the nurse.

**Note:** Any student who returns to school following an absence without clearance from the school nurse, will not be allowed to attend class.

#### **4. When will my child be cleared to return to school?**

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A student experiencing any of the above symptoms will be cleared to return to school after one of the following:

- Student receives a negative COVID-19 test result, has symptom improvement, and has been without a fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- Student receives an alternate diagnosis from a physician for the COVID-19-like symptoms. The student may then return to school based on the recommendations for that alternative diagnosis (ex: strep throat).
- If the student is not tested or alternatively diagnosed, they may return to school 10 days from the start of symptoms, as long as the symptoms have improved and they have been without fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.

#### **5. What if my child becomes ill at school?**

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Students who become ill at school will be assessed by the nurse. In order to reduce exposure to other students and staff, ill students will be required to be picked up in a timely manner. It is important that we are able to reach parents/guardians during the school day. If you list alternate contacts on your student's emergency form, please ensure they are willing and able to pick up an ill child. Sick children *may not* return home on the bus. At the high school level, students who drive may drive themselves home, after the nurse speaks with a parent.

#### **6. What should I do if my child tests positive for COVID-19?**

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In the event that a student tests positive for COVID-19, please let an administrator or the school nurse know as soon as possible. This information will be kept confidential but is extremely important so that we may assist with contact tracing, identify close contacts, and limit the spread of the virus. The school nurse will assist your family as needed and work with you to determine when your student may return to school.

#### **7. What should I do if another household member tests positive for COVID-19?**

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A student who is identified as a close contact of a person testing positive for COVID-19, including a member of the immediate household, must self-quarantine for 14 days. *Updated 11/19/2020*: quarantine may be reduced to 10 days if all of the following criteria are met: no symptoms developed at any time during the quarantine period, a PCR test was done on day 8 or later of quarantine, the result of that test was negative, and you agree to self-monitor for symptoms and get an additional test if any symptoms develop.

**8. Will I be notified if there is a positive case of COVID-19 in the school?**

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Those determined to be close contacts of the positive case will be notified as soon as possible. General status updates involving the school community will be sent as needed by the building principals or the superintendent.

**9. What is a "Close Contact"?**

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A close contact is defined as a person who has been within 6 feet of a COVID-19 positive individual for at least 15 minutes, while that person is infectious. The infectious period begins 2 days prior to the onset of symptoms. For an asymptomatic person, the infectious period is considered to begin 2 days prior to the collection of their positive test.

**10. What should I do if I plan to travel?**

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If your child will be absent due to travel plans, please report the absences in advance to the elementary school at [cesabsent@carver.org](mailto:cesabsent@carver.org) or middle high school at [mhsabsent@carver.org](mailto:mhsabsent@carver.org) so that we can best advise you on when it is safe to return to school. We follow the Massachusetts guidelines and travel orders, which include a required 14 day quarantine upon return to MA or a negative COVID test result. Your student must remain home while waiting for test results. For additional details and the most updated information, please visit <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-travel-order>.

**Additional Questions?**

We realize that this year is going to look very different than years past, and you may have many questions. The new guidelines can be confusing and the health information changes frequently. We are happy to answer any questions, not only related to COVID-19, but about any concerns you may have for your student. Please reach out to the contact info below and we will be happy to help.

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Event	Testing Result	Return to School
<p><b>Individual is Symptomatic</b></p>	<p>COVID-19 test is <b>negative</b></p>	<p>Return to school once symptoms improve and without fever for at least 24 hours, <i>without</i> using fever reducing medications.</p>
	<p>Alternate Diagnosis (ex: influenza, strep, etc)</p>	<p>Return to school based on the recommendations for that alternative diagnosis.</p>
	<p>COVID-19 test is <b>positive</b></p>	<p>Remain home (except to get medical care), monitor symptoms, notify the school, notify close contacts, assist school in tracing efforts, and answer the call from the local Board of Health or MA Community Tracing Collaborative.</p> <p>Stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days <b>and</b> until at least 24 hours have passed with no fever and improvement in other symptoms.</p>
	<p><b>Not tested</b> for COVID-19</p>	<p>Remain home in self-isolation. May return to school 10 days from the start of symptoms, as long as symptoms have improved and you have been without fever for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever reducing medication.</p>
<p><b>Individual is exposed to/identified as a "Close Contact" of COVID-19 positive individual</b></p> <p>Note: If there are no symptoms, testing is not recommended prior to 4-5 days from last contact with the COVID-19 positive individual</p>	<p>COVID-19 test is <b>negative</b></p> <p><b>***Updated 1-11-2021</b></p>	<p>Must remain out of school, self-quarantine for 14 days</p> <p><b>*** OR</b> Must remain out of school/self-quarantine for at least 10 days, provided all of the following are satisfied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● You have not had, and do not have, any symptoms;</li> <li>● <b>***</b> You are tested after day 5 of your quarantine period using a molecular diagnostic test (PCR) or a rapid test</li> <li>● You receive a negative test result; and</li> <li>● You monitor yourself for symptoms for the full 14 days. If you develop symptoms you should contact your health care provider and be re-tested.</li> </ul>
	<p>COVID-19 test is <b>positive</b></p>	<p>Remain home (except to get medical care), monitor symptoms, notify the school, notify close contacts, assist school in tracing efforts, &amp; answer the call from the local Board of Health or MA Community Tracing Collaborative.</p> <p>Stay in self-isolation for at least 10 days <b>and</b> until at least 24 hours have passed with no fever &amp; improvement in other symptoms.</p>
	<p><b>Not tested</b> for COVID-19</p>	<p>Must remain out of school, self-quarantine for 14 days</p>