



**Chester County Health Department**  
**Coronavirus COVID-19**

Public and Private School Guidance

Issued: June 19, 2020

Updated: July 3, 2020; July 6, 2020; July 22, 2020, July 31, 2020; August 14, 2020;  
 September 1, 2020; September 14, 2020

**Exclusion From and Return to School Requirements**

Please note that individuals cannot “test” out of quarantine.

Exclude Under These Scenarios	Return to School Under These Conditions
<p><b>Current COVID-19 Symptoms<sup>1</sup></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>One</b> of the following symptoms: cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, or lack of smell or taste (without congestion).</li> </ul> <p align="center"><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Two</b> of the following symptoms: fever/elevated temperature<sup>2</sup>, sore throat, chills, muscle pain, fatigue, headache, congestion/runny nose, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea</li> </ul>	<p>Individual should be tested for COVID-19; individuals awaiting test results should be excluded from school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ If test result is negative, return to school following readmission criteria illustrated in PA Code, § 27.73. <i>Readmission of excluded children, and staff having contact with children.</i> If no alternative diagnosis is known, return to school 24 hours after symptoms are improved.</li> <li>➤ If test result is positive, follow return to school guidance for Positive COVID-19 PCR Test with symptoms.</li> </ul> <p>If individual is not tested, exclude for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 24 hours with no fever without using fever-reducing medicines <b>and</b></li> <li>➤ improvement in symptoms <b>and</b></li> <li>➤ 10 days since symptoms first appeared</li> </ul> <p>If individual is using medication to treat or suppress a fever, he/she should be excluded until medication is no longer needed.</p>



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Exclude Under These Scenarios	Return to School Under These Conditions	
<p><b>Positive COVID-19 PCR Test</b></p>	<p><u><b>With Symptoms</b></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 24 hours with no fever without using fever-reducing medicines <b>and</b></li> <li>➤ improvement in symptoms <b>and</b></li> <li>➤ 10 days since symptoms first appeared</li> </ul>	<p><u><b>Without Symptoms</b></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 10 days after the PCR test was collected</li> </ul> <p>If symptoms develop during 10 days, follow return to school guidance for Positive COVID-19 PCR Test with symptoms.</p>
<p><b>Close Contact of COVID-19 Positive Individual</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals within 6 feet distance for ≥15 minutes with the COVID-19 positive individual</li> </ul> <p align="center"><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Household members of COVID-19 positive individual</li> </ul>	<p><u><b>With Symptoms</b></u></p> <p>Individual should be tested for COVID-19.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ If test result is negative, return to school 14 days after last exposure to the person with COVID-19 and symptoms have resolved.</li> <li>➤ If test result is positive, follow return to school guidance for Positive COVID-19 PCR Test with symptoms.</li> </ul> <p>Individuals awaiting test results should be excluded from school until results are received.</p> <p>If individual is not tested, return to school 14 days after last exposure to the person with COVID-19 and symptoms have resolved.</p>	<p><u><b>Without Symptoms</b></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 14 days after the date of last exposure to the person with COVID-19</li> </ul> <p>If symptoms develop during 14 days, follow return to school guidance for Close Contact with symptoms.</p>



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<p><b>Travel History</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Travel to <a href="#">areas with travel restrictions</a>, as identified by the PA Department of Health or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>With Symptoms</u></b></p> <p>Individual should be tested for COVID-19.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ If test result is negative, return to school 14 days after last exposure to the person with COVID-19 and symptoms have resolved.</li> <li>➤ If test result is positive, follow return to school guidance for Positive COVID-19 PCR Test with symptoms.</li> </ul> <p>Individuals awaiting test results should be excluded from school until results are received.</p> <p>If individual is not tested, return to school 14 days after last exposure to the person with COVID-19 and symptoms have resolved.</p>	<p><b><u>Without Symptoms</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 14 days since return to PA from travel</li> </ul> <p>If symptoms develop during 14 days, follow return to school guidance for Close Contact with Symptoms.</p>



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<sup>1</sup> For a current list of symptoms see CDC’s website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>. Individuals with a known chronic condition that presents symptoms like those in either Group A or B may be exempt for those symptoms with documentation from a physician.

<sup>2</sup> Fever/elevated temperature is based upon the mode by which the temperature is obtained:

Mode	Temperature for Fever
Walk through scanner	97.5°F or higher
Axillary and temporal	99.5°F or higher
Oral	100.4°F or higher

#### Notes:

- The 10 day period focuses on the time during which an individual is contagious (estimated infectious period). This is the focus of individuals with a positive test result.
- The 14 day period (quarantine) focuses on the time between exposure and development of illness (estimated incubation period). This is the focus for close contacts and for travel, because the exposed person could develop the illness at any time during the 14 days. They may be contagious even without symptoms. A negative test during quarantine does NOT end quarantine early.

### Contacting the Health Department

The Chester County Health Department has a team of staff who conduct school investigations, conduct contact tracing, and address questions from schools. Schools can contact the Health Department as follows:

- Telephone: 610-344-6225 (follow prompts during business hours or after hours)
- Email: [disschools@chesco.org](mailto:disschools@chesco.org)