



Outbreak Response Protocols: Pre K-12 Schools

Guidance for COVID-19 Outbreak Response in Pre K-12 Schools

Version 10.2 (Updated February 23, 2023)

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Summary of Changes to the Playbook

Version 10.2 (February 23, 2023)

New

- Resources for ordering self-test kits (slides 5-6)

Updated

- Revised precautions to protect those at higher risk of getting sick (Slide 12)
- Removal of Test to Stay language

Testing for COVID-19

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COVID-19 Testing Options for the Education Population

Vendor*	Test Name	Amount per purchase	Cost per purchase**
Quidel	QuickVue OTC (25-pack)	2 tests	\$23.99
Abbott	Binax NOW COVID-19 AG CARD Kit 40T EUA	2 tests	\$23.99
Merrow	Celltrion Dia-Trust (25-pack)	25 tests	\$162.00
Siemens	Clinitest COVID-19 Rapid	5 tests	\$25.99
OraSure	OraSure IntelliSwab	2 tests	\$17.52
CVS	Acon Flow Flex	1 test	\$9.99
Access Bio	Access Bio – Care Start	2 tests	\$13.98
Henry Schein	BD Veritor SARS-CoV (30-pack)	30 tests	Contact Vendor
	BD Veritor SARS-COV & FLU A+B	30 tests	Contact Vendor
Henry Schein	BD Veritor Analyzers (needed for BD Veritor tests)	1 analyzer	Contact Vendor
* Test Vendors may vary. Schools / EDU entities should explore multiple vendors for price and stock availability.			
**Prices as of January 2023 are subject to change depending on availability and demand			

Additional Self-Test Kit Updates

- Siemens Healthineers is offering **discounted** CLINITEST Rapid COVID-19 Antigen **Self-Tests**.
 - Priced at <\$1.00 per test;
 - Several million available; and
 - Multiple pack sizes.
- If interested and would like to discuss specific pricing and delivery schedules, please reach out to Brian Becker at brian.becker@siemens-healthineers.com.
- Private fee-for-service insurance in Rhode Island must cover 8 self-tests/month **until May 11**. Eligible individuals should consider utilizing this coverage and stock up on test kits through May.
- Rhode Island Medicaid recipients will continue to receive free self-tests through the end of 2023.

How to Get Tested for COVID-19 Outside of School

Test At Home

- Self-tests are available at local pharmacies, online retailers, and from the federal government.
- Private health insurers are required to cover the cost of up to eight tests per month.
- Find more information about what to do when using a self-test at home at portal.ri.gov/s/self-test.
- Videos on how to accurately and safely perform a self-test swab kit is available [here](#).

Test in the Community

There are many ways to get tested for COVID-19 in Rhode Island. Find the location most convenient for you at covid.ri.gov/testing:

- Primary Care Provider, and Pediatrician;
- [Respiratory Clinics or Urgent Care Centers](#);
- [Retail Pharmacies \(e.g., CVS, Walgreens, etc.\)](#); and
- [Free testing](#) for people who don't have insurance. Federal programs, like the [Increased Community Access to Testing \(ICATT\) Program](#) or the [Test to Treat Program](#) offer free testing for everyone.

Accessing and Reporting Test Results

Accessing Community Test Results

- If you were recently tested for COVID-19 in the State of Rhode Island, you can access a record of your test result at portal.ri.gov/results.
- The [COVID-19 Test Result Portal User Guide](#) is available if you need assistance.
- If you cannot access your results through the Test Result Portal please contact the location where you were tested for results.

Reporting Positive At-Home Tests

- Report **positive self-test results** to RIDOH through portal.ri.gov/s/self-test.
- [The 401Health app](#) is available to track symptoms; report self-test results; find vaccine records; and learn about COVID-19 mitigation.
- **Self-test results reported to RIDOH will be available in the Pre K-12 School Quarantine and Isolation portal.**
 - Students and staff can select their affiliated school when entering their results in the self-test portal to expedite the matching.

Reporting Positive School Tests (CLIA)

- Schools should enter all **positive results for Point of Care (PoC) tests and Over the Counter (OTC) tests administered at school** in portal.ri.gov/reportcovidresult.
- **Do not enter self-tests results into the PreK-12 School Portal.**
- Note: When the school nurse teacher/designated school officials administer self-tests at school, they are considered **Point of Care tests (CLIA-approved)**.

Prevention Strategies by COVID-19 Community Level

CDC's COVID-19 Community Levels Framework

CDC's [COVID-19 Community Levels](#) framework is a tool to help communities and individuals make decisions about COVID-19 prevention strategies. Each county's risk level is assessed weekly as either low, medium, or high. These levels account for local COVID-19 hospitalization rates, healthcare burden, and COVID-19 cases.

- The recommendations outlined for schools according to COVID-19 Community Levels are the same as those outlined for the community.
- Schools that serve students from multiple communities should follow prevention recommendations based on the COVID-19 Community Level of the community in which the school is located.
- Find the current COVID-19 Community Level for each county in Rhode Island on RIDOH's [COVID-19 Data Portal](#).

COVID-19 Community Levels – Use the Highest Level that Applies to Your Community				
New COVID-19 Cases Per 100,000 people in the past 7 days	Indicators	Low	Medium	High
Fewer than 200	New COVID-19 admissions per 100,000 population (7-day total)	<10.0	10.0-19.9	≥20.0
	Percent of staffed inpatient beds occupied by COVID-19 patients (7-day average)	<10.0%	10.0-14.9%	≥15.0%
200 or more	New COVID-19 admissions per 100,000 population (7-day total)	NA	<10.0	≥10.0
	Percent of staffed inpatient beds occupied by COVID-19 patients (7-day average)	NA	<10.0%	≥10.0%

The COVID-19 community level is determined by the higher of the new admissions and inpatient beds metrics, based on the current level of new cases per 100,000 population in the past 7 days

Overview: COVID-19 Mitigation in Schools

In line with [CDC guidance](#), Rhode Island recommends schools implement **baseline infection control** strategies and consider extra steps to protect against COVID-19 during outbreaks and periods of higher risk.

Prevent COVID-19 At All Community Levels

Schools should take [steps to manage all infectious diseases, including COVID-19](#), by

- Promoting [vaccination](#);
- Optimizing [ventilation](#);
- Promoting [hand](#) and respiratory hygiene;
- [Cleaning and disinfection](#);
- Integrating **staying home when sick**, isolation, and **managing exposure** protocols into illness policies;
- Offering **school-supported diagnostic testing**;
- **Masking** in nurse offices/spaces; and
- Maintaining the **capacity for screening testing**.

During High COVID-19 Community Levels or Outbreaks

Schools should consider implementing extra steps for protection during periods of **higher risk**, including

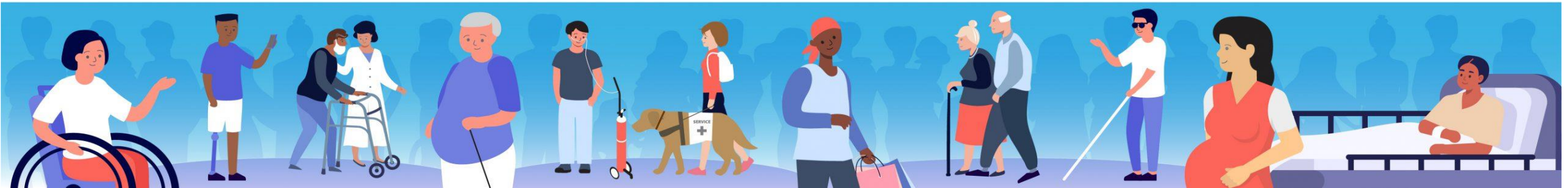
- **Screening testing** for students and staff regardless of vaccination status for:
 - High-risk activities (i.e., close contact sports, band, choir, theater);
 - At key times in the year, before/after large events (i.e., prom, tournaments, group travel); and
 - When returning from breaks or holidays.
- Recommending universal **indoor masking**; and
- **Additional strategies** recommended by RIDOH during an outbreak.

Precautions To Protect Those at Higher Risk of Getting Sick

Schools should consider the needs of [people who are at risk for getting very sick with COVID-19](#), or who have family members at risk for getting very sick with COVID-19, in order to provide the critical protection necessary for in-person learning.

Some students and staff may need additional protections to ensure they can remain safely in the classroom. Schools may consider

- [Following isolation guidance for high risk settings](#);
- Mask-wearing by people who are immunocompromised or at risk for getting very sick with COVID-19 at medium and high COVID-19 Community Levels;
- Mask-wearing by people who spend time indoors with others who are at risk for getting very sick with COVID-19, even when the COVID-19 Community Level is not high; and
- Screening testing at all COVID-19 Community Levels to reduce transmission and improve health outcomes.



*Students with immunocompromising conditions or other conditions or disabilities that increase risk for getting very sick with COVID-19 should not be placed into separate classrooms or otherwise segregated from other students.

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COVID-19 Infectious Period, Isolation, and Managing Exposure

Definitions: Infectious Period and Isolation

Isolation

- **Isolation** is for the **ill or infected**:
 - Isolation separates individuals who are infected with COVID-19 from other people.
 - People in isolation must stay home and separate from household members as much as possible.

Infectious Period

- For **symptomatic cases**, the infectious period is 2 *calendar* days prior to [symptom](#) onset until 10 days after symptom onset.
- For **asymptomatic cases**, the 2 *calendar* days prior to testing (the date the swabbing was conducted) until 10 days after the date of testing.

* Use the [CDC's Isolation and Quarantine Calculator](#) to help determine duration of isolation.

Isolation Guidance

Everyone who tests positive for COVID-19 should isolate and follow [recommendations](#) for return to school.

People should isolate at home for at least 5 full days after the date of their first positive test (asymptomatic) or when symptoms first appeared (symptomatic).

- They may leave isolation after 5 full days* if they
 - Are fever-free for at least 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medicine and COVID-19 symptoms have improved or are improving;
 - Wear a high-quality mask around others through day 10; and
 - Avoid being around people who are immunocompromised or at high risk for severe disease.

People who have **compromised immune systems** or are experiencing moderate or severe illness should isolate at home for at least 10 full days since the date of their first positive test or when symptoms first appeared.

- They may leave isolation after 10 full days if at least 24 hours have passed since last fever without fever-reducing medications and COVID-19 symptoms have improved.
 - They should consider consulting a healthcare provider about the safest time to end isolation.

* If a mask is unable to be worn, the individual should isolate at home for 10 full days.

- People who have **COVID-19 symptoms recur or worsen**, should isolate again and consult a healthcare provider with any questions about the symptoms or when to end isolation.

Removing Masks After Isolation

After isolation, people who have access to antigen tests and return to school before 10 full days may consider using a **test-based strategy** to potentially remove their mask earlier.

People may remove their mask before day 11* if they get two negative antigen tests in a row 48 hours apart (first test on day 6 at the earliest).

- If the antigen test results are negative, they may remove their masks around others (day 8 at the earliest).
- If the antigen test results are positive, they may still be infectious and should continue wearing a mask and wait at least 48 hours before taking another test.
- People could choose to continue taking antigen tests at least 48 hours apart until they have two negative test results in a row.
- This may mean they should continue wearing a mask and testing beyond day 10.

* *This strategy may be considered by people who are unable to mask in order to return to school before 10 full days.*



Managing Exposure to COVID-19

Regardless of vaccination status or previous infection, all students and staff who were exposed to COVID-19

- Monitor COVID-19 symptoms for 10 days;
- Wear a well-fitting mask for 10 days; and
- Get tested after 5 full days (on day 6).
 - Schools may consider using serial antigen testing (at least 2 rapid antigen tests 48 hours apart during a 7-day period) Find more information on the CDC's web page for [school testing](#).
 - Find more information about understanding exposure risks on the [CDC's web page](#).

Accommodations may be necessary for exposed people who cannot wear a mask or have difficulty wearing a well-fitting mask.

Schools should decide how to manage exposures based on the approach that works best for their communities.

Recommendations for Exposure Within the Household

Individuals exposed within the household should take the same precautions while attending school as those exposed at home and other settings. However, they should consider taking extra steps to protect against infection while in the household if they can't separate from the infected individual.

Recommendations for household members that CAN separate from the positive individual

- Monitor COVID-19 symptoms for 10 days.
 - If symptoms develop, stay home and get tested.
- Wear a high-quality mask for 10 days.
- Get tested after 5 full days (day 6).

[Additional Measures for Household Exposure- CDC](#)

Recommendations for household members that CANNOT separate from the positive individual

- Monitor for symptoms and wear a high-quality mask for the duration of the household member's isolation (at least 5 days) then an additional 10 days (at least 15 days total from positive case's isolation start date).
 - If symptoms develop, stay home and get tested.
- Get tested on day 6 and again on day 11 OR implement serial antigen testing throughout the 15-day period.

Sports Exposure Risks & Recommendations

RIDOH recommends schools consider using a testing program for higher-risk sports.

Parents, students, and coaches should understand the risk associated with playing sports

- High-contact and indoor sports, like wrestling, hockey, soccer, and football have a higher risk of transmission. ([CDC | Understanding Exposure Risk](#))
- Athletes should not attend practices, games, or tryouts if they have symptoms of COVID-19.
- Athletes should not be penalized for missing tryouts, practices, or games due to COVID-19 symptoms, isolation.
- Tryouts should be extended for symptomatic athletes or athletes in isolation in accordance with athletic department rules.

Recommendations for Returning to Sports & School Activities

The CDC and RIDOH strongly recommend that all students and staff wear a well-fitting mask during days 6-10 if they return to school/activities after a shortened isolation period (5 days):

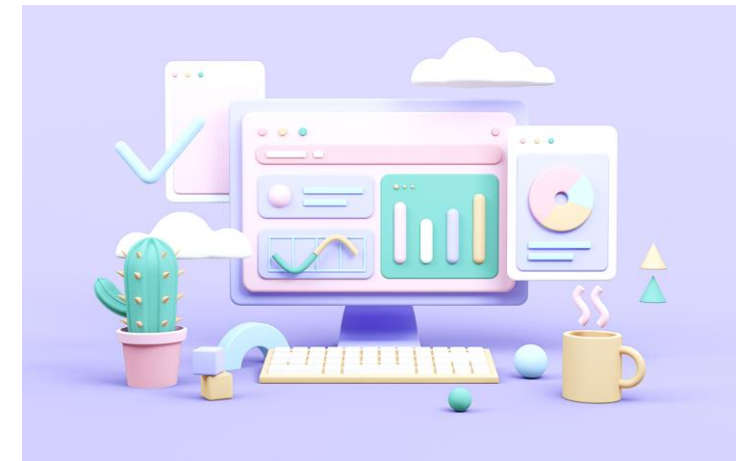
- Masking on days 6-10 helps to **protect the entire team from exposure.**
- If masks can't be worn at school or while participating in sports, it is recommended that the individual **avoid higher-risk activities** (such as participation in high contact sports) for 10 full days.
- Additionally, it may be beneficial to utilize the **antigen test-based strategy (see slide 17) on days 6 and 8** in order to lessen the risk that the student/athlete is still contagious before returning to participation in sports.

Rhode Island School COVID-19 Portal

The Pre K-12 School COVID-19 portal enables districts and schools to have real-time access to student/staff lab results and isolation dates. Staff can enter results from tests performed at school and find results that are reported to RIDOH through other channels.

Schools should enter all positive test results from testing administered at school.

- Public schools will find student records preloaded in the portal, so they can quickly enter test results.
- Private and parochial schools can provide student records to RIDOH to preload.
- Districts/schools can add or change portal users or get support for technology issues by emailing RCSxsedehelp@health.ri.gov.
- For general questions about the portal, email ridoh.covidk12questions@health.ri.gov.
- Individuals who must isolate and need assistance or support can call 401-222-8022 to request services.



Outbreak Management

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Outbreak Definition & Reporting

Outbreak Definition	Reporting to RIDOH
<p>Outbreaks are defined as multiple cases comprising of at least 20% of a core group (e.g., classroom, sports team, musical/theater group), OR at least five (5) cases within a core group, identified with symptom onset within seven (7) days of each other.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Schools should continue to report outbreaks to RIDOH that meet this criteria.	<p>Schools should email RIDOH [SEND SECURE] when there is an outbreak of COVID-19 cases at RIDOH.COVIDK12Questions@health.ri.gov and include the setting of the outbreak (i.e., grade, classroom, team, etc.) and the following specific case information for each case in a secure email:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Full name of case;Date of birth;Symptom status and date of symptom onset;Type of test (self-test at home, antigen, or PCR);Date of specimen collection; andLast day of school attended

Additional Considerations When Notifying RIDOH

Schools may reach out to RIDOH when

- Identifying a potential COVID-19 outbreak within a school or within a core group based on reported COVID-19 infection cases that **meet the outbreak definition** for K12 population;
- School identifies clusters of ill students and/or staff that are in the same classroom, grade, or have attended a common event, or are members of an extracurricular activity;
- School has **high levels of identified transmission** in the school, core group, or associated with school sanctioned extracurricular activities;
- Schools have COVID-19 infections which are **impacting staffing, spreading rapidly, or causing severe disease;**
and
- Identifying COVID-19 cases among a **medically vulnerable population** and seeking guidance.

Please continue to reach out to ridoh.covidk12questions@health.ri.gov with any questions or concerns, **even if it is not relating to an outbreak**

Extra Steps to Take During Outbreaks

Schools may consider additional strategies to reduce transmission during an outbreak.

Strategies that can help reduce transmission during an outbreak include

- Wearing well-fitting masks or respirators;
- Improving ventilation by increasing outdoor air intake and improving air filtration;
 - For example, safely opening windows and doors, including on school buses and ECE transportation vehicles, and using portable air cleaners with HEPA filters, are strategies to improve ventilation.
 - Schools may also consider holding some activities outside if feasible.
- Screening testing; and
- Case investigation and identifying potentially exposed individuals.

Schools may also consider suspending high-risk activities during outbreaks.

COVID-19 Vaccination

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COVID-19 Vaccine

Everyone should stay up to date with their COVID-19 vaccines. This means getting all recommended COVID-19 vaccines, [including a booster dose](#) when eligible.

Find COVID-19 vaccine recommendations in [this chart](#) and clinical guidance in the [CDC's Interim Immunization Schedule](#). Please contact your primary care physician/pediatrician for recommendations unique to you.

Bivalent Booster

- ✓ [Bivalent boosters](#) are recommended for everyone age 5 or older. “Bivalent” means that these boosters protect people against two strains of COVID-19, the original strain and the Omicron variant.
- ✓ This recommendation applies no matter how many booster doses a person has already received.
- ✓ Kids can get *both* the COVID-19 booster and the flu shot at the same time if they are [eligible](#) and the timing works.
- ✓ The booster from Pfizer eligible for ages 5 or older. The booster from Moderna eligible for ages 6 or older.

Where to get Vaccinated

- ✓ You can find vaccines near you at [Vaccines.Gov](#). For more information on COVID-19 and COVID-19 vaccines, please visit [C19VaccineRI.org](#).
- ✓ Schools that want to hold vaccination clinics can email RIDOH's Office of Immunization at RIDOH.C19VaxClinics@health.ri.gov.

Questions? Contact Us!

Contact Name	Phone Number/ Email/Website	When to Reach Out:
Center for COVID-19 Epidemiology (CCE), Education Team	ridoh.covidk12questions@health.ri.gov 401-222-8022 RI COVID-19 Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting outbreaks; and General or clinical questions related to COVID-19.
Center for Acute Infectious Disease Epidemiology (CAIDE)	401-222-2577 CAIDE Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information and reporting respiratory illnesses (Flu, RSV, Pneumonia, Croup, Enterovirus.)
RIDOH Office Of Immunization	<p>For Clinical Vaccine Questions: Tousin Ojugbele: olutosin.ojugbele@health.ri.gov</p> <p>For General Vaccine Questions: Lisa Gargano: Lisa.Gargano@health.ri.gov</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All vaccine questions or information.
Pre K-12 School Portal	ridoh.rcshelp@health.ri.gov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School portal support; and Access or reset requests.