

May 18, 2022

Notice to School Nurse Teachers:

Thank you for your continued collaboration with the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH). Given the uptick of cases in the K-12 community, our team would like to provide you with specific steps for reporting outbreaks to RIDOH in order to streamline the process.

1. **Report clusters/outbreak to RIDOH by emailing [RIDOH.COVIDK12Questions@health.ri.gov](mailto:RIDOH.COVIDK12Questions@health.ri.gov).** Please refrain from emailing K-12 RIDOH staff directly as that may cause a delay in follow up.
2. **Provide complete information in the initial email.** Upon detection of an outbreak, please provide RIDOH with the setting of the outbreak (i.e., grade, classroom, team, etc.) as well as specific case information related to each positive case.
  - *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*
  - *Last day of school attended*
3. **Expect a K-12 nurse to contact you to follow up** to offer guidance and collect additional details that may be relevant to the outbreak.

For reference, **outbreaks are defined** as multiple cases comprising at least 10% of students, teachers, or staff, within a specified core group\* OR at least three (3) cases within a specified core group\* that:

- Meet criteria for a probable or confirmed school-associated COVID-19 case with symptom onset or positive test result within 14 days of each other;
- Were not identified as close contacts of each other in a setting (e.g., household) outside of the school setting; and
- Are epidemiologically linked in the school setting or a school-sanctioned extracurricular activity.

*\*A core group includes, but is not limited to, an extracurricular activity, classroom, school sport team, or school cohort.*

- *Example I:* Two students in the same math classroom of nineteen students and one teacher (twenty people total)
  - *Why this meets criteria:* Two students out of twenty in the class total equals ten percent of the classroom testing positive for COVID-19.
- *Example II:* Five students on the school basketball team
  - *Why this meets criteria:* A school basketball team fits the definition of a specified core group.
- *Example III:* Ten students have tested positive after attending the school dance with 200 other students and staff members.
  - *Why this meets criteria:* The prom is a common setting that defines a core group.
    - **NOTE:** This would **not** be considered an outbreak if there are 10 sporadic cases across the grade without a link to an event or group.