



What families should know for safe return to in-person school

Know how to screen for symptoms of COVID-19

Screen your child for symptoms every day before going to school.

Students must stay home if feeling unwell.

Everyone must do their part to protect others and not come to school if they are exhibiting any COVID-19 symptoms.

If your child has any of the symptoms below, do not send them to school and contact their health care provider. The alternative is to remain at home in self-isolation for 14 days from symptom onset.

- Fever (100.0° F 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 (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) *when in combination with other symptoms*

If you are notified that your child was a close contact of a COVID-19 case, we recommend your child get a test for COVID-19 and self-quarantine for 14 days after the last exposure to the person who tested positive, regardless of your child's test result.

A close contact is defined as being within six feet of the individual for at least 15 minutes, while the person was infectious.

Know your test site

Make a plan for where you will take your child to get tested. Boston Children's offers a [locator to find test sites that accommodate children](#) and the [State of Massachusetts has further resources](#). It is also a good idea to contact your child's primary care provider for further instructions.

Know what to do when you get your child's COVID-19 test results

Call the school nurse to discuss your child's test results as soon as you receive them, whether they are positive or negative. The nurse will provide further instructions.

For a positive test result, expect to do the following:

- Remain at home at least 10 days and until symptoms have improved and child has had no fever for at least 24 hours without fever reducing medicine.
- Answer the call from the contact tracing team (local board of health or Contact Tracing Collaborative) and help identify/ notify close contacts to help prevent transmission. The contact tracing team will ultimately clear your child for return to school.

For a negative test result, may return to school 24 hours **after resolution of symptoms** (without fever or other symptom reducing medicine) **AND** a note from (including fax, email) from the health care provider stating that the provider believes it's appropriate for the individual to return to school or documentation of negative lab results .

Know the three critical measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in school

Wearing masks

Children in all grades are required to wear a mask that adequately covers both their nose and mouth at all times, except for designated breaks, which will occur throughout the day.

Exceptions will be made for students with medical, behavioral, or other challenges who are unable to wear masks/ face coverings. A written note from a physician is required for a requested exemption. Parents may not excuse their child from the facemask requirement by signing a waiver.

You should provide your child with a mask to wear on the way to school and during the school day.

Face coverings should:

- Cover the nose, mouth, and secure under the chin (no bandanas, valves, gators, or buffs)
- Fit snugly, but comfortably against the face
- Be secured with ties or ear loops
- Allow for breathing without restriction
- If cloth, include at least two layers of fabric

You should also provide a backup mask in case the mask breaks or gets dirty. Cloth masks should be washed daily.

A [downloadable education sheet](#) with tips to help your child get used to wearing a mask is available from Boston Children's Hospital.

Hand hygiene

Your child will be required to perform hand hygiene (handwashing or sanitizing) upon arrival to school, before eating, before putting on and taking off masks, before and after using shared equipment, before dismissal, and whenever requested by teacher. Please help your child learn to [wash hands with soap and water](#) or hand sanitizer for 20 seconds at a time.

Physical distance

As COVID-19 is transmitted through respiratory droplets, distance between individuals reduces risk. Six feet of physical distance is required at all times.

What do I do if I have additional questions? Contact your school nurse, or email COVID19K12ParentInfo@mass.gov

Know how to communicate with your school nurse

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Make sure that the school has the best phone number to reach you during the day.

Adapted from: [Boston Children's Hospital](#) (scroll to Return to School Tip Sheet)