

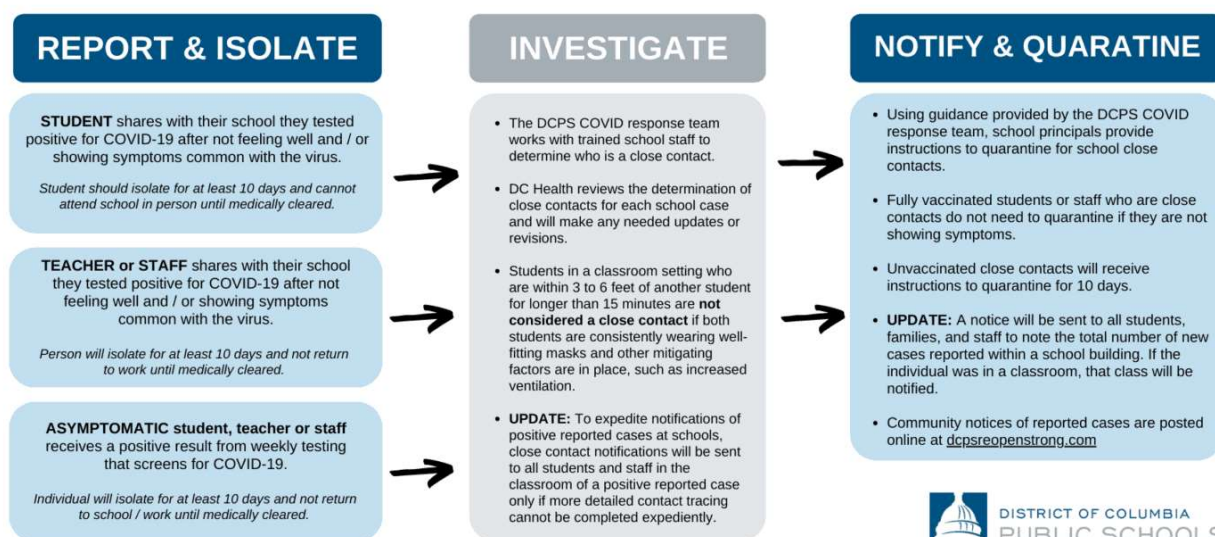
COVID-19 Response Protocol

Starting Wednesday, March 16, and consistent with the latest health guidance and the current low levels in DC, masks will be optional for students, staff, and visitors in DC Public Schools, DCPS offices, and on OSSE-DOT transportation. [Read more here.](https://dcpsreopenstrong.com/chancellor/update-on-mask-policy-at-dc-public-schools/) (<https://dcpsreopenstrong.com/chancellor/update-on-mask-policy-at-dc-public-schools/>)

Through the DCPS COVID-19 Response Protocol, every staff member will be trained to confidentially report potential exposure in a school building. If there are any confirmed cases of COVID-19 reported to DCPS by a student, family, or staff member — DCPS will follow DC Health's COVID reporting criteria — for contact tracing purposes.

HOW COVID-19 CASES AT SCHOOL ARE REPORTED

Learn more at dcpsreopenstrong.com/health/response



updated: 12/28/21

How Cases Are Reported At School (Updated January 2022)

Per DCPS' COVID-19 Response Protocol, notices of reported positive cases are shared with a school community if a person has been in the building during their infectious period.

To expedite notifications of positive reported cases at schools, close contact notifications are sent to all students and staff in the classroom of a positive reported case if more detailed contact tracing cannot be completed expeditiously.

Community notifications (see below) are now modified to note the total number of new cases reported within a school building and will be sent Sunday through Friday, except for school holidays. [Individual community notices are available here](https://dcpsreopenstrong.com/health/response/notifications/) (<https://dcpsreopenstrong.com/health/response/notifications/>).



January 7, 2022

Dear **SCHOOL NAME:**

This letter is to inform you that we have been notified of **#** reported positive cases of COVID-19 at your school. Any positive individuals are no longer on campus and will not return until medically cleared. **Unless you have received instructions directly**, you have not been identified as a close contact of a positive individual and do not need to self-quarantine.

We are seeing a city-wide and region-wide increase in COVID-19 cases, and as with previous case increases within our community, those trends are reflected in the number of reported positive cases at schools. We want to assure you that we are monitoring all our school cases closely and remain in constant communication with public health authorities.

DCPS continues to employ our layered mitigation strategy against COVID-19, including asymptomatic testing, universal masking, and enhanced air filtration. We wanted to take a moment to provide a few resources and reminders for our families:

1. **COVID-19 Testing:** If you need a COVID-19 test and your health care provider is unable to give one, you should utilize one of the free testing sites in DC, including an at-home testing kit option. Visit <https://coronavirus.dc.gov/testing> for more information.
2. **Free meals for students:** Grab and go breakfast and lunches are available to all DCPS students. Meal sites are located around the district and further information is available on the [DCPS Food and Nutrition Services](#) page. For additional meal resources, families are encouraged to visit coronavirus.dc.gov/food for information, including free grocery sites and more.
3. **Remember to follow Ask, Ask, Look and Continue:** Monitor your student for any symptoms of COVID-19 every day. If they are [showing any symptoms](#) and/or they are required to quarantine due to being unvaccinated and exposed to an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19, please keep them home. Follow all isolation guidance from DC Health and your child's healthcare provider.
4. **Quarantine periods for DCPS students:** DCPS will continue to follow a [10-day quarantine period](#). If an unvaccinated/partially vaccinated student or staff member is a close contact to someone who tests positive for COVID-19, they will be required to quarantine for at least 7 days. Students or staff may return to the classroom on day 8 if they take a COVID-19 PCR test on or after day 5 and receive a negative result. Unvaccinated students or staff who do not take a PCR test must quarantine for 10 days. If your student is identified as a close contact for a reported positive case at school, your principal will provide instructions to quarantine.
5. **Get Vaccinated:** Getting yourself and your child vaccinated is the best way to protect your family against COVID-19, and we urge our families to take this important step for all students 5 years or older. Visit vaccinate.dc.gov for free vaccine clinics across the city, including walk-up sites at schools.

We know that this has been a trying time for our community. We will continue to keep you informed about our health and safety measures and work together to ensure we continue to have a strong, robust, and safe school year.

Thank you,
DCPS COVID Response Team

1200 First Street, NE | Washington, DC 20002 | T 202.442.5885 | F 202.442.5026 | dcps.dc.gov

Sample Community Notice



12 de enero de 2022

Estimada **FULL SCHOOL NAME:**

Esta carta es para informarles que nos han notificado de **#** casos positivos de COVID-19 reportados en su escuela. Cualquier persona que dio positivo ya no se encuentra en la escuela y no regresará hasta que haya sido autorizado por un médico. **A menos que haya recibido instrucciones directamente**, no ha sido identificado como un contacto directo de una persona con resultado positivo y no es necesario que realice una cuarentena.

Estamos viendo un aumento en toda la ciudad y en toda la región en los casos de COVID-19 y, al igual que con los aumentos de casos anteriores dentro de nuestra comunidad, estas tendencias se reflejan en la cantidad de casos positivos reportados en las escuelas. Queremos asegurarles que estamos siguiendo de cerca todos los casos en las escuelas y nos mantenemos en constante comunicación con las autoridades de salud pública.

Las DCPS siguen empleando la estrategia de mitigación en niveles contra COVID-19, que incluye pruebas asintomáticas, uso de mascarillas universal y mejor filtración de aire. Les queremos brindar algunos recursos y recordatorios para nuestras familias:

- 1. Pruebas de COVID-19:** Si necesita una prueba de COVID-19 y su proveedor de atención médica no puede realizar una, debe utilizar uno de los centros de pruebas gratuitas en el Distrito de Columbia, incluyendo la opción de un kit de prueba para hacer en casa. Para más información visite <https://coronavirus.dc.gov/testing>.
- 2. Comidas gratis para los estudiantes:** Todos los estudiantes de las DCPS tienen a su disposición desayunos y almuerzos para llevar. Los sitios de comida están ubicados en todo el distrito y hay más información disponible en la página del [Servicio de Alimentación y Nutrición de las DCPS](#). Para ver cursos adicionales de las comidas, se anima a las familias que visiten coronavirus.dc.gov/food para más información, incluyendo los sitios de comestibles/abarrotes gratuitos y más.
- 3. Recuerde de seguir - Pregunte, Pregúntele, Olfateo** y supervise de cerca a su hijo diariamente para identificar algún síntoma relacionado a COVID-19. Si está mostrando [algunos síntomas](#) y/o debe ponerse en cuarentena debido a que no está vacunado y está expuesto a una persona que dio positivo en la prueba de COVID-19, manténgalos en casa. Siga todos los consejos de aislamiento del Departamento de Salud del Distrito de Columbia (DC Health) y el proveedor de atención médica de su hijo.
- 4. Períodos de cuarentena para el personal y para los estudiantes de las DCPS:** Las DCPS seguirán el [periodo de cuarentena de 10 días](#). Si un estudiante o miembro de personal no vacunado/parcialmente vacunado es un contacto directo con alguien que dio positivo en la prueba de COVID-19, se le pedirá que se ponga en cuarentena por un mínimo de menos 7 días. Los estudiantes o el personal pueden regresar al salón de clases el día 8 si se hacen una prueba de PCR de COVID-19 el día 5 o después y reciben un resultado negativo. Los estudiantes o el personal no vacunados que no se hagan una prueba de PCR deben permanecer en cuarentena por 10 días. Si su hijo es identificado como un contacto directo de un caso positivo reportado en la escuela, su director o directora le proporcionará instrucciones para realizar una cuarentena.
- 5. Vacúnese:** Vacunarse usted y su hijo es la mejor manera de proteger a su familia contra el COVID-19, les pido a nuestras familias a que tomen este importante paso para todos los estudiantes de 5 años en adelante. Visite vaccinate.dc.gov para identificar los centros de vacunación gratuitos en toda la ciudad, incluyendo los lugares sin tener que hacer cita previa en las escuelas.

Sabemos que este ha sido un tiempo difícil para nuestra comunidad. Seguiremos manteniéndolos informados acerca de nuestras medidas de salud y de seguridad, y trabajaremos juntos para asegurarnos de que sigamos teniendo un año escolar de buena calidad, sólido y seguro.

Gracias,
Equipo de respuesta de COVID de las DCPS

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Ejemplo de aviso a la comunidad escolar



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

January 12, 2022

Dear **Teacher Class Name:**

This letter is to inform you that a positive case was reported in your child's class. Any positive individual will not be permitted to attend classes in person until medically cleared. **Unless you have received instructions directly, your student has not been identified as a close contact of a positive individual and does not need to self-quarantine.**

DCPS continues to employ our layered mitigation strategy against COVID-19, including asymptomatic testing, universal masking, and enhanced air filtration. Please take a moment to review these resources and reminders for our families:

- **Remember to follow Ask, Ask, Look** and continue to monitor your student for any symptoms of COVID-19 every day. If they are [showing any symptoms](#) and/or they are required to quarantine due to being unvaccinated and exposed to an individual who tested positive from COVID-19, please keep them home. Follow all isolation guidance from DC Health and your child's healthcare provider.
- **COVID-19 Testing:** If you need a COVID-19 test and your healthcare provider is unable to give one, you should utilize one of the free testing sites in DC, including an at-home testing kit option. Visit <https://coronavirus.dc.gov/testing> for more information.
- **Get Vaccinated:** Getting yourself and your child vaccinated is the best way to protect your family against COVID-19, and we urge our families to take this important step for all students 5 years or older. Visit vaccinate.dc.gov for free vaccine clinics across the city, including walk-up sites at schools.

We know that this has been a trying time for our community. Your student's education and health are a priority. We will continue to monitor and implement all safety measures to ensure we continue to have a strong, robust, and safe school year.

Thank you,
DCPS COVID Response Team

1200 First Street, NE | Washington, DC 20002 | T 202.442.5885 | F 202.442.5026 | dcps.dc.gov

Sample Classroom Notice



January 12, 2022

Estimada clase del(de la) maestro(a) **Teacher Class Name:**

Esta carta es para informarles que se reportó un caso positivo en la clase de su hijo. Cualquier persona que haya tenido un resultado positivo, no se le permitirá asistir a clases en persona hasta que esté médicamente autorizado. **A menos que haya recibido instrucciones directamente, su hijo no ha sido identificado como un contacto directo de una persona que haya dado positivo y no necesita ponerse en cuarentena.**

Las DCPS continúan empleando la estrategia de mitigación en niveles contra COVID-19, que incluye pruebas asintomáticas, uso de mascarillas universal y mejor filtración de aire. Tómese un momento para revisar estos recursos y recordatorios para nuestras familias:

- **Recuerde de seguir - Pregunte, Pregúntele, Observe** y supervise de cerca a su hijo diariamente para identificar algún síntoma relacionado a COVID-19. Si está mostrando cualquier síntoma y/o debe ponerse en cuarentena debido a que no está vacunado y está expuesto a una persona que dio positivo en la prueba de COVID-19, manténgalos en casa. Siga todos los consejos de aislamiento del Departamento de Salud del Distrito de Columbia (DC Health) y el proveedor de atención médica de su hijo.
- **Pruebas de COVID-19:** Si necesita una prueba de COVID-19 y su proveedor de atención médica no puede realizar una, debe utilizar uno de los centros de pruebas gratuitas en el Distrito de Columbia, incluyendo la opción de un kit de prueba para hacer en casa. Para más información visite <https://coronavirus.dc.gov/testing>.
- **Vacúnese:** Vacunarse usted y su hijo es la mejor manera de proteger a su familia contra el COVID-19, les pido a nuestras familias que tomen este importante paso para todos los estudiantes de 5 años en adelante. Visite vaccinate.dc.gov para identificar los centros de vacunación gratuitos en toda la ciudad, incluyendo los lugares sin tener que hacer cita previa en las escuelas.

Sabemos que este ha sido un tiempo difícil para nuestra comunidad. La educación y la salud de su estudiante son nuestra prioridad. Seguiremos de cerca y seguiremos implementando todas las medidas de seguridad para asegurarnos de seguir teniendo un año escolar de buena calidad, sólido y seguro.

Gracias,

Equipo de respuesta de COVID de las DCPS

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Ejemplo de aviso de clase



Dear Parent/Guardian,

You are receiving this message as your child may have come in close contact with a COVID-19 positive individual at school. **If your child is not fully vaccinated, they must quarantine for the next 10 days.** Regardless of their vaccination status, you should still closely monitor your student for COVID-19 symptoms for 14 days.

We recognize this information is concerning and wanted to provide the below guidance on next steps:

1. If your child is fully vaccinated, they do not need to quarantine if they are not showing symptoms. It is recommended that fully vaccinated students who are a close contact take a COVID-19 test between 3 and 5 days after last day of exposure.
2. Please note, you are considered fully vaccinated 14 days after completion of a COVID-19 vaccination series (after the second dose of a 2-dose series or after one dose of a single-dose vaccine).
3. If your child is not vaccinated or partially vaccinated, they must quarantine for the next 10 days. Students may return to the classroom on day 7 if they take a COVID-19 PCR test on or after day 5 of quarantine and receive a negative result and report it to their school. Unvaccinated or partially vaccinated students who do not take a test must quarantine for 10 days.
4. Please visit coronavirus.dc.gov/testing for information on where to find a COVID-19 test near you.
5. Getting yourself and your child vaccinated is the best way to protect your family against COVID-19. Visit vaccinate.dc.gov for free vaccine clinics across the city, including walk-up sites at schools.

We understand this is a stressful time, and we hope this information is helpful as we all play a role in keeping our school community safe.

Sincerely,

DCPS COVID-19 Response Team

1200 First Street, NE | Washington, DC 20002 | T 202.442.5885 | F 202.442.5026 | dcps.dc.gov

Close Contact Instructions

Estimados padres/tutores,

Están recibiendo este mensaje ya que su hijo puede haber estado en contacto directo con una persona que dio positivo a COVID-19 en la escuela. **Si su hijo no está completamente vacunado, debe estar en cuarentena por los próximos 10 días.** Independientemente de su estado de vacunación, aún debe seguir de cerca a su hijo para identificar síntomas relacionados a COVID-19 durante 14 días.

Reconocemos que esta información es preocupante y queremos proporcionarles la siguiente guía de los próximos pasos:

1. Si su hijo está completamente vacunado, no es necesario que esté en cuarentena si no muestra síntomas. Se recomienda que los estudiantes completamente vacunados que sean un contacto directo se hagan una prueba de COVID-19 entre 3 y 5 días después del último día de haber estado expuestos.
2. Tenga en cuenta que se considera que está completamente vacunado 14 días después de realizar una serie de vacunación de COVID-19 (después de la segunda dosis de una serie de 2 dosis o después de una vacuna de sola una dosis).
3. Si su hijo no está vacunado o parcialmente vacunado, debe estar en cuarentena durante los próximos 10 días. Los estudiantes pueden regresar al salón de clases el día 8 si se hacen una prueba de PCR de COVID-19 el día 5 o después del 5to día de estar en cuarentena y recibir un resultado negativo e informarlo a su escuela. Los estudiantes no vacunados o parcialmente vacunados que no se realicen una prueba deben estar en cuarentena durante 10 días.
4. Para más información de dónde encontrar un centro de pruebas de COVID-19 cerca a usted, visite coronavirus.dc.gov/testing.
5. Vacunarse usted y su hijo es la mejor manera de proteger a su familia contra COVID-19. Para ver centros de vacunación gratuitos en toda la ciudad, incluyendo los lugares sin cita previa en las escuelas, visite vaccinate.dc.gov.

Entendemos que este es un momento estresante y esperamos que esta información sea útil, ya que todos tenemos una responsabilidad de la seguridad de nuestra comunidad escolar.

Sinceramente,

Equipo de respuesta de COVID-19 de las DCPS

1200 First Street, NE | Washington, DC 20002 | T 202.442.5885 | F 202.442.5026 | dcps.dc.gov

Instrucciones de contacto cercano

Frequently Asked Questions

Please use this list of frequently asked questions to help you better understand what happens when there is a positive reported case of COVID-19 at school.

— What if someone at my student's school tests positive for COVID-19?

If a student or staff member who was in the building during their infectious period and reports a positive test for COVID-19, schools will follow the [health and safety guidance released by DC Health](#)

(https://coronavirus.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/coronavirus/page_content/attachments/COVID-19_DC_Health_Guidance_For_Schools_Reopening_8-20-2021.pdf).

The positive individual will immediately begin working or learning from home and consult their healthcare provider, and DCPS will begin a contact tracing investigation. We will provide self-quarantine instructions to close contacts, notify the school community about the reported positive case if the person was in the building during their infectious period, and follow steps outlined by DC Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitizing of school spaces.

— What is a close contact?

Based on the updated guidance from DC Health, a person in a school setting is considered a close contact if they are within 6 feet of an infected person for more than 15 minutes within a 24-hour window within 2 days prior to illness onset or positive test result.

Please note that students who are within 3 to 6 feet of another student for longer than 15 minutes are not considered a close contact if all students are consistently wearing well-fitting masks and other mitigating factors that part of DCPS' health and safety measures are in place (physical distancing, increased ventilation, etc.). Assigned seating will be utilized in classrooms where students may be seated within 3 feet of each other to assist with contact tracing.

— What is DCPS' COVID-19 testing protocol?

As of August 27, students will now be automatically enrolled in the testing program which supports asymptomatic testing, symptomatic testing and testing for close contacts. Testing programs that screen for COVID-19, alongside other prevention strategies, can detect new positive cases of COVID-19 and work to prevent potential outbreaks. This not only protects the health and wellness of our school communities but supports schools to remain open for in-person instruction safely.

The test will be a non-invasive, saliva-based PCR test. Instead of a nasal swab, students will hold a small vial with a funnel attached and produce a saliva sample.

1. Asymptomatic Testing — DCPS will test 10 percent of students each week to screen for COVID-19 as part of our health and safety protocols, targeting unvaccinated students. Families will receive more information from their school and DC Health on how to receive their asymptomatic test results and how to keep their household safe if a student tests positive. Asymptomatic testing will begin on a rolling basis at schools starting September 2, 2021.

2. Symptomatic Testing — Will take place in a school's Health Isolation Room is intended for students displaying any red flag symptoms or at least two other COVID-19 symptoms while at school. This service is available daily.

This transition from an opt-in COVID-19 testing model to an opt-out model does not affect a parent's rights concerning their student's participation. **To opt-out, parents/guardians or students over the age of 18 will now need to email or provide their schools with a signed opt-out form available at osse.dc.gov/page/school-based-covid-19-testing (<http://osse.dc.gov/page/school-based-covid-19-testing>).** On the form, the District is providing detailed information on the testing program so that parents can make an informed decision whether to affirmatively opt out of the program.

— What if my student tests positive for COVID-19?

Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 should not attend school and should isolate for at least 10 days and show improvement of symptoms, including no fever for 24 hours. Please report the positive result to your school, so the school can work with contact tracers begin their investigation and determine next steps for notifying close contacts for this case.

A contact tracer will interview the individual who reported a positive test to identify other close contacts outside of the school; reach out to all quarantined contacts to provide information on the precautions to follow while in quarantine; and assist individuals in obtaining resources they may need during their quarantine period.

— When is it safe for a student to return to school if they tested positive for COVID-19?

After the quarantine period is concluded, DCPS requires students meet symptom-based criteria to return, have documentation from a healthcare provider or contact tracing force confirming that the student has met criteria to return after illness.

If symptomatic, a student may return only after:

1. At least 24 hours after the fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medication (e.g., Motrin, Tylenol) and respiratory symptoms have improved; AND
2. At least 10 days* after symptoms first appeared, whichever is later

**Note: Some individuals, including those with severe illness, may have longer quarantine periods per DC Health or their healthcare provider.*

If asymptomatic, a student may return only after 10 days from the date of a positive test.

— What happens if my student is a close contact?

If your student is identified as a close contact for a reported positive case at school, your principal will provide instructions to quarantine.

If an unvaccinated student or staff member is a close contact to someone who tests positive for COVID-19, they will be required to quarantine for at least 7 days. Students or staff may return to the classroom after 7 days if they take a COVID-19 test on or after day 5 and receive a negative result. Unvaccinated students or staff who do not take a test must quarantine for 10 days.

Vaccinated students and staff who are in close contact to someone who tests positive for COVID-19 do not need to quarantine if they are not showing symptoms but are recommended to take a test between 3 and 5 days after they are exposed.

— How will my student receive instruction if they are quarantining?

If a teacher is unable to provide in-person instruction, DCPS will first employ substitutes to continue in-person learning for the class.

Students who are required to quarantine will be provided with a DCPS device for learning at home. Course content will be available via Canvas for students learning at home. Instruction may be fully virtual, a mix of simultaneous in-person and virtual instruction, or self-guided, depending upon the number of students quarantining and the availability of the teacher. Families will be informed by their school about when and how virtual instruction will be provided.

— How will student attendance be reported if they are quarantining?

For students who are required to quarantine but not at the direction of DCPS (e.g., because a family member tested positive for COVID-19 and they were contacted by a contact tracer), the parent/guardian must provide written documentation of the quarantine. The written note must include the date of COVID-19 exposure; the length of time the student has been directed to quarantine by a medical professional or contact tracer; and the name, organization, and contact information of the medical professional or contract tracer.

Please note, students required to quarantine at the direction of DCPS (e.g., because a teacher tested positive for COVID-19) do not need to provide documentation.

— Are teachers and school staff required to receive the COVID-19 vaccine?

Per Mayor's Order 2021-099 (<https://coronavirus.dc.gov/page/mayor%E2%80%99s-order-2021-099-covid-19-vaccination-certification-requirement-district-government>), DCPS staff and school contractors are required to provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination by September 19, 2021. Any individual staff person who has a religious or medical exemption to the vaccine will be required to take a weekly COVID-19 test.

All students 12 and older are also highly encouraged to get vaccinated, but it is not a requirement to attend school. DC residents can visit vaccinate.dc.gov to find a free school clinic or public vaccination site near them.

— What happens if a student feels unwell with COVID-19 symptoms during the school day?

A Patient Care Technician at the school will escort the student to the Health Isolation Room (HIR). This is a safe identified space within the school building that will keep symptomatic individuals with potential COVID-19 symptoms separate from other people while they receive medical support, including COVID-19 testing, and await pick-up. Once a parent or guardian arrives, the student will be escorted to the entrance to go home or to a health care facility, depending on the severity of symptoms.

— Someone in my household tests positive for COVID-19, what should my student do?

DC Health recommends that students should get tested for COVID-19 if anyone in their household has symptoms of COVID-19, even if the student does not have symptoms. All members of the household should be tested at the same time.

COVID-19 Response Town Halls

Community Leader TeleTownHall: DCPS COVID Cas...



On September 29, DCPS held a tele-town hall to share what happens when someone tests positive for COVID-19 while in our school buildings.

Community Leader TeleTownHall: DCPS COVID Tes...



On October 6, DCPS held a tele-town hall to share how asymptomatic and symptomatic testing is available for students at school.

The next tele-town hall is on Wednesday, October 20 at 5:00 p.m.

You can RSVP here. (<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/dcps-covid-19-protocol-updates-telephone-townhall-series-tickets-175673152127>)

updated: January 16, 2022

Address: District of Columbia Public Schools
1200 First Street
Washington, DC 20002

Phone: (202) 442-5885



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

(<https://dcps.dc.gov/>)



GOVERNMENT OF THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

(<https://mayor.dc.gov/>)

En español
(<https://dcpsreopenstrong.com/en-espanol/>)

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