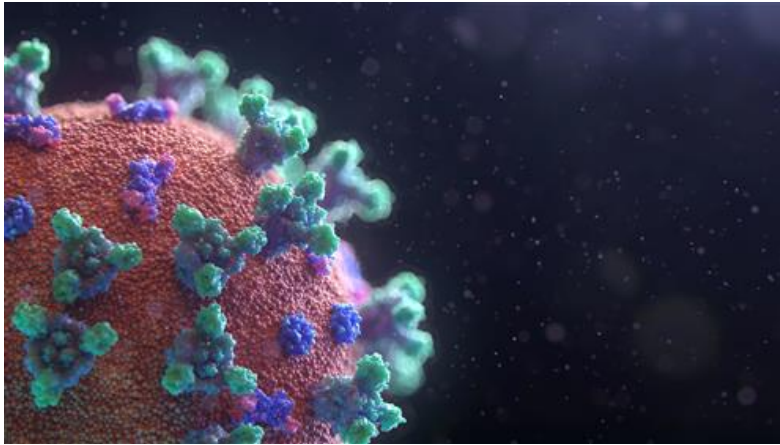


## CONTACT TRACING @ AACPS

When an AACPS school or office is made aware of a COVID-19 positive case involving a student or staff member, the AACPS Contact Tracing Team, working in collaboration



with the Anne Arundel County Department of Health, begins an investigation to determine “close contacts” – those who were in a defined close proximity, either indoors or outdoors, to the COVID-positive person during the exposure period.

Those identified as close contacts may have to quarantine, depending their vaccination status and other factors. Such determinations are arrived at in consultation with the Anne Arundel County Department of Health.

Below are answers, based on guidance from federal, state, and county health agencies to frequently asked questions about the contact tracing process. [Additional information regarding COVID-19 can be found here](#) and on the [Department of Health website here](#).

### Answers to general COVID-19 questions

#### Can someone identified as a close contact test out of quarantine?

No.

#### What types of COVID-19 test results does AACPS accept?

AACPS accepts rapid or PCR test results that are read by a medical professional and entered into the county or state health portal. This includes home PCR tests, but not home rapid tests. The latter is not read by a medical professional and results are not entered into the aforementioned portals.

### Answers to contact tracing questions

#### In what cases is contact tracing conducted?

AACPS conducts contact tracing in these cases:

- When a person has a lab-confirmed COVID-19 positive test (rapid or PCR test)
- When a person is designated a “probable case,” which occurs when an individual with COVID-19 symptoms is found to have had close contact with someone who is positive.
- When a person is designated as having “COVID-19 Symptoms” and does not get a tested or doctor’s note explaining an alternate medical diagnosis within 72 hours of the onset of symptoms.

For contact tracing purposes, all of the above instances are treated as positive cases.

### **What is the exposure period?**

When the COVID-positive case involves a symptomatic person, the exposure period begins 48 hours prior to the onset of symptoms.

When the COVID-positive case involves an asymptomatic person, the exposure period begins 48 hours prior to the date of the test (not the date of the delivery of results).

### **What is the definition of a close contact?**

With some limited exceptions, those determined to have been within 6 feet of the COVID-positive person for 15 total (not consecutive) minutes over a 24-hour period are identified as “close contacts.”

### **When must a close contact quarantine?**

Close contacts who are unable to be vaccinated or who have not been vaccinated must quarantine for 10 days. In Anne Arundel County Public Schools, the quarantine period may not be shortened by a negative test.

### **When is a close contact excluded from quarantine?**

If a close contact is fully vaccinated for more than 14 days and is asymptomatic, that person does not have to quarantine. However, that person must mask in public indoor settings for 14 days and is recommended to be tested 3 to 5 days from exposure. Masking (except where required by AACPS) can be removed upon receipt of a negative test. AACPS requires proof of vaccination status for this quarantine exclusion to apply.

### **Is there a close contact exception for students in classrooms?**

Yes. According to guidance from the CDC, in the K–12 indoor classroom setting, the “close contact” definition *excludes* students who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student (not adult) where both students were engaged in consistent and correct use of well-fitting masks; and other K-12 school prevention strategies (such as

universal and correct mask use, physical distancing, increased ventilation) were in place in the K–12 school setting. This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting and it only applies to indoor classroom settings during school hours. It does not apply to before- or after-school activities. It also does not apply to students less than 3 feet from the COVID-positive student. Those students are still considered close contacts.

### **How are families and employees notified of positive COVID-19 cases and close contacts?**

When there is a COVID-19 positive case in an AACPS school or office, those in the school or directly impacted office will be notified. Employees and families of students who are close contacts are notified individually. In the event of a COVID-19 case at a school, families and employees at the school will receive a communication providing as many details as possible. Due to health privacy provisions, in most cases the information provided will not include the exact classroom in which a case occurs.

### **COVID-19 outbreaks**

In instances where there are multiple laboratory-confirmed positive cases of COVID-19, the Anne Arundel County Department of Health, in consultation with the Maryland Department of Health, may declare an “outbreak.”

**An outbreak is defined as:** Two or more laboratory-confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 in the same cohort in a 14-day period *and* in which there is no known exposure to a positive case outside the cohort. A cohort can be a class, a grade, a team or other group, etc. The makeup of the cohort may vary depending on the circumstances of the individual case.

Once an outbreak is declared, the Anne Arundel County Department of Health will offer guidance as to two potential next steps:

**In instances where the second or subsequent case is either a close contact of the first and has not been quarantining or has not been declared a close contact of the first and, therefore, has not been quarantining:** the Department of Health will evaluate all non-vaccinated persons in the cohort for quarantine.

**In instances where the second or subsequent case is either a close contact of the first and has not been quarantining or has not been declared a close contact of the first and, therefore, has not been quarantining:** the Department of Health may opt to quarantine all non-vaccinated persons in the cohort for 10 days from the date of the last exposure to a positive person.

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