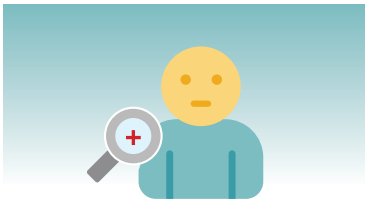
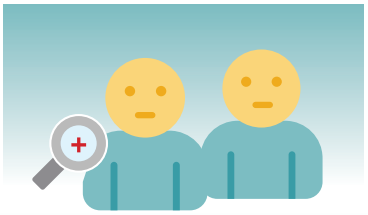
GREENVILLE COUNTY SCHOOLS
Inspire | Support | Prepare

COVID REPORTING IN GCS | 2021

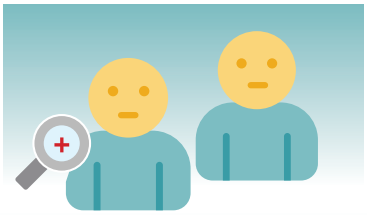
A STUDENT OR EMPLOYEE IN GCS



TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID, OR



IS IDENTIFIED TO BE A CLOSE CONTACT OF A COVID POSITIVE INDIVIDUAL, OR



BELIEVES THEY MAY QUALIFY AS A CLOSE CONTACT OF A COVID POSITIVE INDIVIDUAL, OR

IS DIRECTED BY DHEC OR ANOTHER PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY TO QUARANTINE

IN RESPONSE:

The individual in question is immediately excluded from work/school and the designated COVID Reporter *(school administrator, department head, etc.)* for each school or department completes an electronic questionnaire with the assistance of the parent or employee. A team of trained personnel use the responses generated by this questionnaire to determine isolation/quarantine guidance based on DHEC protocols.

EXAMPLES:

If an individual is not COVID positive, but has been around a person with COVID, questionnaire responses help determine whether an "exposure" *(aka close contact)* as defined by DHEC has occurred. If exposure did occur, additional questions help determine whether the exposure was one time or ongoing (in the case of a family member who is COVID positive) which impacts the appropriate start and end dates for quarantine, and what type of monitoring is required.

If an individual *(or DHEC)* is reporting a positive COVID test, questionnaire responses will identify when the test was taken, whether the individual was symptomatic, when symptoms *(if any)* started, and whether the individual was present in a school facility during the contagious period. Contact tracing must be completed within 24 hours. A questionnaire must be submitted for any individuals identified through the contact tracing process as a "close contact."

In some cases, individuals report a possible close contact, but based on responses to the questionnaire our medical team determines that these individuals are NOT "close contacts" as defined by DHEC. As a result, they are not required to quarantine. In most situations this is because social distance was maintained, contact occurred for less than 15 minutes, or the individual had contact with another close contact rather than an infected individual.

EXCEPTIONS

In some cases, entire teams or classrooms may be quarantined even though there is no evidence that all individuals were in close contact with a COVID-positive individual. This occurs when multiple individuals in a team or class develop COVID within a seven *(7)* day period *(the number depends on the total population of the team or class, whether or not there are physical groupings within the team or class, and/or the layout of unique rooms like welding labs)*. Once again, a questionnaire must be completed for each individual quarantined in this situation.

Mandatory quarantines can be avoided if close contacts have documentation that they have been vaccinated or, in the last 90 days, have recovered from COVID.

COVID positive cases are added to the GCS dashboard once all protocols are complete and final guidance regarding isolation has been given.

WHAT ABOUT STUDENTS/EMPLOYEES EXHIBITING SYMPTOMS?

Students and employees experiencing COVID symptoms such as new/worsening cough, shortness of breath, or loss of taste/smell are excluded from school/work and directed to obtain a COVID test. They can return to school/work with a negative COVID test or a doctor's note clearing their return and requiring no further exclusion.

This system is very time consuming for administrators and response teams, but it helps ensure all isolation *(COVID-positive)* and quarantine (precautionary for those who may have been exposed) procedures established by the Department of Health and Environmental Control *(DHEC)* are carefully followed in Greenville County Schools. It also allows district administrators to monitor in real time COVID activity in the district.