



January 12, 2022

Dear Dumont families and staff:

Early yesterday, we received clarification from the Bergen County Health Department on updated guidance from the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) that was released late in the evening of January 10. As a result, effective immediately, we will be making changes to our existing COVID practices and protocols. This new guidance will be applied to any new COVID positive individuals or close contacts beginning immediately. If your child is currently being isolated or quarantined, and you feel that your child is eligible to return sooner than the date that was communicated to you by your child's school, please email your building principal for confirmation as to whether or not your child is eligible to return sooner.

The updated NJDOH guidance is now aligned to the newly released CDC guidance that recommends shortened timeframes (5 full days with a return on day 6) for isolation and quarantine **providing individuals (staff and students) are asymptomatic (*symptom free*)**. Upon return on day 6, individuals who are returning from ISOLATION or QUARANTINE must also adhere to additional precautions that are outlined in this overview.

Students or staff who report to school with symptoms will be sent home to continue their isolation or quarantine. Additional guidance will be sent home in the coming days.

The complete guidance document from the Department of Health is posted on the Coronavirus Information page for your review.

Also, if you have not already done so, please inform your child's school nurse about the vaccination status of your child as this information is needed to provide accurate information to your family in regards to isolation and quarantine guidelines. If your child has also received the booster, please update your school nurse in regards to this as well. Staff members should also continue to update their vaccination information (including booster status) with the district's central office.

ISOLATION (Applies to COVID-19 POSITIVE or Symptomatic Individuals):

Persons who test positive for COVID-19 and are symptomatic or persons with COVID-19 symptoms who weren't tested or who are waiting for test results.

- Stay home and isolate from other people for at least 5 full days (day 0 is the first day of symptoms).
 1. If symptoms resolve (fever-free for 24 hours and other symptoms improve), isolation can end after 5 full days (i.e., on day 6).
 2. If symptoms persist (fever or if other symptoms have not improved), continue to isolate until fever-free for 24 hours and other symptoms have improved.

Persons who test positive for COVID-19 but have no symptoms

- Stay home and isolate from other people for at least 5 full days (day 0 is the day of the positive viral test).
 1. If no symptoms develop, isolation can end after 5 full days (i.e., on day 6).
 2. If symptoms develop within one week of the positive test, the 5-day isolation period starts over with day 0 being the first day of symptoms. Follow recommendations for ending isolation for persons who have COVID-19 symptoms.

Additional precautions during/after ISOLATION (everyone)

- **MASK:** Continue to wear a well-fitted mask when around others at home and in public through day 10. For those ending isolation on day 5, this would be during days 6 through 10. Persons who are unable to wear a mask when around others should stay home and isolate from other people for a full 10 days.
- **TRAVEL:** Avoid travel until a full 10 days after your first day of symptoms or if asymptomatic, after the date of the positive test. If travel is *necessary* on days 6-10, wear a well-fitting mask when around others for the entire duration of travel. Persons unable to wear a mask should not travel during the 10 days.
- **AVOID HIGH-RISK ACTIVITIES:** Avoid people who are immunocompromised or at high risk for severe disease, including nursing homes and other high-risk settings; do not go to places where you are unable to wear a mask, such as restaurants and some gyms, and **avoid eating around others at home and at work until a full 10 days. (SEE NOTE BELOW)**

***Important Note about School Lunch:** If possible, arrangements should be made for students who are returning from isolation to eat lunch at home during this period of time. If this is not possible or practical for families, arrangements will be made to provide students with an appropriate space to eat their lunch.

QUARANTINE (APPLIES TO CLOSE CONTACTS EXPOSED TO SOMEONE WITH COVID-19)

Who does not need to quarantine? Individuals in the following groups who had close contact with someone with COVID-19 **DO NOT** need to quarantine but should wear a well-fitting mask around others for 10 days and get tested at least 5 days after the last close contact. If the test is positive or if COVID-19 symptoms develop, follow isolation recommendations.

- **Adults ≥ 18 years old** who completed a primary series of COVID-19 vaccine AND have received **all recommended vaccine doses, including boosters** and additional primary shots for some immunocompromised people.
- Children and adolescents 5-17 years old who completed the primary series of COVID-19 vaccine.
- Persons who had confirmed COVID-19 within the last 90 days (positive viral test).

Who should quarantine? Individuals in the following groups who had close contact with someone with COVID-19 **DO** need to quarantine and should take additional precautions during and after quarantine:

- Adults ≥ 18 years old who completed a primary series of COVID-19 vaccine **but have NOT received a recommended booster shot when eligible. (This is a significant change for our staff to understand).**
- Persons who are not fully vaccinated (haven't completed a primary vaccine series).

During quarantine

- Stay home and away from other people for at least 5 days (day 0 through day 5) after the last close contact with a person who has COVID-19. The date of the exposure is considered day 0.
- If COVID-19 symptoms develop, get tested and follow isolation recommendations.
- If asymptomatic, get tested at least 5 days after the last close contact .
 - If the test is positive, follow isolation recommendations.
 - If the test is negative, you can end quarantine after day 5.
 - If testing is not available, you can end quarantine after day 5 (as long as there were no COVID-19 symptoms throughout the 5-day period).

Additional precautions during and after quarantine

- **MASK:** Continue to wear a well-fitted mask when around others at home and in public through day 10. For those ending quarantine on day 5, this would be during days 6 through 10. Persons who are unable to wear a mask when around others should continue to quarantine for a full 10 days. *In very limited circumstances when a 5-day*

quarantine is not feasible, it is imperative that a well-fitted mask be worn when around others at home and in public through day 10.

- **MONITOR FOR SYMPTOMS:** Watch for fever (100.4°F or greater), cough, shortness of breath, or other COVID-19 symptoms for 10 days after last close contact. If symptoms develop, get tested and follow isolation recommendations.
- **TRAVEL:** Get tested at least 5 days after your last close contact and make sure the test result is negative and you remain without symptoms before traveling. If testing is not available, delay travel until a full 10 days after the last close contact. If travel is *necessary* before the 10 days are completed, wear a well-fitting mask around others for the entire duration of travel. Persons unable to wear a mask should not travel during the 10 days.
- **AVOID HIGH-RISK ACTIVITIES:** Avoid people who are immunocompromised or at high risk for severe disease, including nursing homes and other high-risk settings; do not go to places where you are unable to wear a mask, such as restaurants and some gyms, and **avoid eating around others at home and at work until a full 10 days. (SEE NOTE BELOW).**

****Important Note about School Lunch:*** If possible, arrangements should be made for students who are returning from quarantine to eat lunch at home during this period of time. If this is not possible or practical for families, arrangements will be made to provide students with an appropriate space to eat their lunch.

In the coming days, our District Restart Committee will be sending out additional information regarding recent school and district COVID statistics, local updates to our Safe Return Plan and the status of some of our activities that have been temporarily curtailed or paused due to the increased positivity rate in the district and in the county. We thank you for your patience and understanding as we navigate through this challenging time and through the ever-changing guidance from the NJDOH.

If you have any immediate questions about the new guidelines, please feel free to contact your school's principal or nurse. Let's continue to work together to keep our students and staff healthy and safe.

Sincerely,

Maria Poidomani

Maria A. Poidomani, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools