

# COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDANCE: RETURN TO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS, EMPLOYEES & VISITORS

This guidance reflects the [Ontario COVID-19 School and Child Care Screening Tool](#). It can be used by school administrators, with employees, visitors, students and/or their families to help determine screening recommendations and timelines for return to school.

## Is the student, employee or visitor fully vaccinated\* or aged 11 and/or younger?

<b>1A. In the last 5 days, has the student, employee or visitor had one or more of the following symptoms?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Fever and/or chills</li><li>Cough or barking cough (croup)</li><li>Shortness of breath</li><li>Decrease or loss of taste or smell</li></ul>	<b>1B. In the last 5 days, has the student, employee or visitor had two or more of the following symptoms?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Sore throat or difficulty swallowing</li><li>Runny or stuffy/congested nose</li><li>Headache</li><li>Extreme tiredness</li><li>Muscle aches or joint pain</li><li>Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea</li></ul>	<b>1C. In the last 5 days, has the student, employee or visitor tested positive for COVID-19? (Rapid Antigen or PCR)</b>  <b>IF YES:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>They must stay home and <b>isolate for 5 days</b> and until symptoms have been improving for 24 hours (48 hours for nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea).</li><li>The days start from the date symptoms began OR the date they tested positive (whichever was first).</li><li><b>Siblings and all household members must isolate for the same amount of time, regardless of vaccination status.</b></li></ul> <b>If NO to both questions 1A &amp; 1B, proceed to next page.</b>
<b>IF YES to 1A or 1B</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>They <b>must stay home and isolate for 5 days</b> from when symptoms started and stay in isolation until symptoms have been improving for 24 hours (48 hours after nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea), whichever is longest.</li><li><b>Siblings and all household members must stay home for the same amount of time regardless of vaccination status.</b></li></ul>		

**NOTE:** If a student, employee or visitor who had **only one symptom listed in question 1B or any other symptom not listed on the COVID-19 School and Child Care Screening Tool**, they can return to school when they are fever free and symptoms have been improving for 24 hours (48 hours for nausea, vomiting, diarrhea).

## Is the student, employee or visitor aged 12 or older and not fully vaccinated\*, OR immune compromised?

<b>2A. In the last 10 days, has the student, employee or visitor had one or more of the following symptoms?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Fever and/or chills</li><li>Cough or barking cough (croup)</li><li>Shortness of breath</li><li>Decrease or loss of taste or smell</li></ul>	<b>2B. In the last 10 days, has the student, employee or visitor had two or more of the following symptoms?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Sore throat or difficulty swallowing</li><li>Runny or stuffy/congested nose</li><li>Headache</li><li>Extreme tiredness</li><li>Muscle aches or joint pain</li><li>Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea</li></ul>	<b>2C. In the last 10 days, has the student, employee or visitor tested positive for COVID-19? (Rapid Antigen or PCR)</b>  <b>IF YES:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>They must stay home and <b>isolate for 10 days</b> and until symptoms have been improving for 24 hours (48 hours for nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea).</li><li>The days start from the date symptoms began OR the date they tested positive (whichever was first).</li><li><b>Siblings and all household members must isolate for the same amount of time, regardless of vaccination status.</b></li></ul> <b>If NO to both questions 2A &amp; 2B, proceed to next page.</b>
<b>IF YES to 2A or 2B</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>They <b>must stay home and self-isolate for 10 days</b> from when symptoms started and stay in isolation until their symptoms have been improving for 24 hours (or 48 hours after nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea symptoms), whichever is longest.</li><li><b>Siblings and all household members must self-isolate for the same amount of time regardless of vaccination status.</b></li></ul>		

**NOTE:** If a student, employee or visitor who had **only one symptom listed in question 2B or any other symptom not listed on the COVID-19 School and Child Care Screening Tool**, they can return to school when they are fever free and symptoms have been improving for 24 hours (48 hours for nausea, vomiting, diarrhea).

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Questions 3-5 apply to all students, employees or visitors, regardless of their age or vaccination status.

3. Does the student, employee or visitor live with someone who is isolating because of COVID-19 symptoms, a positive COVID-19 test, or is waiting on COVID-19 test results?

IF YES:

- The student, employee or visitor can return to school when their household member is cleared from their isolation.
- Siblings and all household members, regardless of vaccination status, must stay home until their household member is cleared from isolation.

4. Has the student, employee or visitor been identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19 and told to self-isolate?

IF YES:

- The student, employee or visitor can return to school when they have completed their isolation. **If symptoms develop, refer to question 1 or 2.**
- Siblings and all household members can go to school, child care, or work, but must not leave the home for other non-essential reasons.

5A. In the last 14 days, has the student, employee or visitor travelled outside of Canada and been told to quarantine?

IF YES:

- If they **were told to quarantine**, they must stay home and self-isolate for 14 days after their return to Canada following [federal guidelines](#).

5B. In the last 14 days, has someone the student, employee or visitor live with travelled outside of Canada and is isolating while waiting for COVID-19 test results?

IF YES:

- They must stay home until the household member gets a negative PCR test result.

5C. In the last 14 days, has the student who is not fully vaccinated travelled outside of Canada but is exempt from federal quarantine because they travelled with a vaccinated companion?

IF YES:

- The student **must not go to school for 14 days** after their return to Canada following [federal guidelines](#).

**IF NO TO ALL QUESTIONS, THEN THE STUDENT, EMPLOYEE OR VISITOR IS CLEARED TO RETURN TO SCHOOL.**

## Additional Information:

Return to school guidance when testing is available:

- If a **single PCR test or a rapid antigen test is positive**, the student, employee or visitor should follow the guidance above in **question 1 or 2**.
- A **single negative PCR test** supports students, employees or visitors to return to school when their symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours (48 hours for nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea).
- **Two rapid antigen tests (RATs) collected 24-48 hours apart are both negative**, supports students, employees or visitors to return to school when their symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours (48 hours for nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea).

\*In Ontario, an individual is considered **FULLY VACCINATED** if they have received:

- A full series of a COVID-19 vaccine authorized by Health Canada, or any combination of such vaccines,
- One or two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada, followed by one dose of a COVID-19 mRNA vaccine authorized by Health Canada, or
- Three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada;
- and they received their final dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at least 14 days ago.

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