

SOMEONE AT A SCHOOL OR CHILD CARE CENTRE TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

Last revised: December 21, 2021

THERE IS A POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST RESULT AT SCHOOL/CHILD CARE, WHAT DO WE DO?

We understand that getting information from the school/child care centre that a person has tested positive for COVID-19 is stressful. If your child has not been identified as a close contact, the general information you receive from the school may be the only communication you get.

If you do not get a separate letter from the health unit identifying your child as a close contact, then they can continue to go to work, school and child care. Complete the [COVID-19 School and Child Care Screening Tool](#) before going to work, school or child care and go for [testing](#) at an assessment centre if [symptoms of COVID-19](#) develop.

HOW DO WE KNOW WHO HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED AS A CLOSE CONTACT?

The health unit will send a specific letter to **only** the people who have been identified as close contacts through the school or child care. This letter will outline the actions they need to take such as isolation and testing. It will also include isolation instructions for other members of their household. Due to privacy laws, the health unit will not release personal or identifying information about any staff or student who is ill unless deemed necessary. If you don't get a letter that says you are a close contact, that means our investigation determined you have not been exposed or at risk.

NEW: All close contacts are required to self-isolate, **even if they are fully vaccinated* or had a recent COVID-19 infection.**

They must:

- Stay home (self-isolate) from team activities, school and cannot join in additional activities or interact in person with others outside of their home.
- Get tested at a local assessment centre (do not use home rapid antigen test kits).
- Not leave their property unless it is to go for testing or to seek medical attention

Also, if the close contact is not fully vaccinated*, all members of the close contact's household that are not fully vaccinated are required to self-isolate for the same timeframe as the close contact is isolating, as directed in the letter received from the health unit.

*Fully Vaccinated means that you 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
- Your final dose of the COVID-19 vaccine was at least 14 days ago or prior to the exposure date.

HOW DOES THE HEALTH UNIT DECIDE WHO IS A CLOSE CONTACT?

A close contact is generally someone who was closer than 2 metres (6 feet) away, in the same room or area for at least 15 minutes in total (e.g. at one time, or through smaller interactions adding up to 15 minutes), when either person was not wearing a mask or face covering. It may include being in the same classroom. The health unit decides who is a close contact by looking at what personal protective equipment (PPE) was worn by the person who has COVID-19, who they were close to, as well as what type of interaction they had. For this reason, the definition of close contact may not be the same in every situation.

HOW DOES THE HEALTH UNIT INVESTIGATE A POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST RESULT?

When the health unit learns that a person in a school or child care centre has received a positive COVID-19 test result, we:

1. Confirm the test result with the laboratory.
2. An investigator contacts the person who has tested positive and gathers more information from them or their parent/guardian. The investigator does an in-depth investigation which can include understanding:
 - when they were last at school or child care,
 - where they have been during the period that they could have passed the virus to others,
 - who they were in close contact with during these times.
3. The investigator will contact the school principal/ child care manager to ask for additional information for their investigation if needed (e.g. class lists, seating charts, staffing assignments, information about buses, etc.)

If the health unit finds that there may be a risk to other members of the school community or child care, they will work together with the school principal, the school board, the child care centre and others (e.g. Transportation Consortium) to ensure that students, families, and employees are properly notified.