

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

Last revised: September 2, 2021

WE GOT A LETTER SAYING THERE IS A POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST RESULT IN A SCHOOL/CHILD CARE CENTRE, 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. It is part of a collaborative process to communicate with the school/ child care community when a positive test result is confirmed. For most people this may be the only communication they receive.

WE DIDN'T GET A LETTER SAYING THAT WE WERE IDENTIFIED AS A CLOSE CONTACT, WHAT DO WE DO?

You 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. Go for [testing](#) if [symptoms of COVID-19](#) develop. Only people who were identified as a close contact need to isolate and stay home.

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 all details for those identified as a close contact and the actions they need to take such as isolation and testing. 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. 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. All efforts will be made to protect the privacy of individuals who have been diagnosed.

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.

Note: Students who are not fully immunized and in close contact (in a cohort, class, bus, etc.) with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, should generally expect to be excluded from school. Those who are fully immunized should generally expect to be able to continue to attend school.

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.

For more information about COVID-19 please contact Health Connection at 1-877-721-7520.

Public health professionals are available Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.