

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

Last revised: November 23, 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. Do not use an at home rapid antigen test.

Anyone who has been identified as a close contact, and other children (18 years and younger) in their household, need to isolate and stay home unless they are [fully vaccinated](#) OR have tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days and have been cleared by public health.

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.

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 vaccinated** and in close contact (in a cohort, class, bus, etc.) with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, and children (18 years or under) who live in the same house as someone identified as a close contact, should generally expect to be excluded from school. Those who are **fully vaccinated** 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.