

Protocol When Student/Staff Tests Positive for COVID-19

*Note: The following process is intended as a general guide and may be adapted based on circumstances. Last revised: March 11, 2021

Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) receives the positive test result and contacts the staff, student (or student's parent/guardian) to conduct case and contact management. Confirms that individual attended school / child care during period of communicability.

SMDHU COVID-19 Lead or designate will contact School Board COVID-19 Lead, Private School and/or Child Care Operator to inform of positive case.

School Board COVID-19 Lead contacts school principal to inform that case and contact management have begun and specific information that needs to be gathered and shared with SMDHU.

SMDHU's COVID-19 Outbreak Management Team in collaboration with school public health nurses contacts the school administration to investigate.

Students/staff who test positive for COVID-19 will remain in isolation until three conditions have been met:

- 1) They have isolated for a minimum of 10 days after the onset of symptoms **AND**
- 2) They no longer have a fever **AND**
- 3) Their symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours.

*Students or staff do not need clearance testing or medical notes to return to school or child care; however, school boards, schools or child care centers may request that an attestation form is completed.

SMDHU will provide guidance and conduct regular follow-up with the student/staff who have tested positive.

School board/school administrator provides information regarding contacts/cohorts to SMDHU for student/staff who tested positive for COVID-19 (as soon as feasible).

SMDHU will:

- 1) Perform risk assessment of contacts / cohorts of positive person and provide direction as needed.
- 2) Support school board / school / child care operator with parent communication
- 3) Determine if an outbreak will be declared and when the outbreak is over.

School board/school/child care operator distributes communications to parents, guardians, and staff and implements additional infection prevention and control measures.

Information needed may include:

- Attendance records
- Class/cohort lists and seating charts
- Before/after school child care lists
- Transportation lists & seating charts
- Current contact information for students/staff
- Special assignments/programs/activities (e.g. Special Education)
- Records of essential visitors.

SMDHU is committed to protecting the personal and personal health information that may be disclosed to schools for the purpose of contact tracing and should only be used for that purpose.

School boards/schools/child care operators have an obligation to protect the personal and personal health information of their students and staff.

The identity of cases should not be disclosed to parents, or to other students unless deemed necessary by public health.

Administrator Responsibilities

If a school board / school / childcare operator or SMDHU are made aware of a positive COVID-19 diagnosis for staff or students, it is essential that the school board / school administrator/childcare operator prepare the key information above pertaining to staff and students quickly for the purposes of contact tracing. This information needs to be accessible on short notice, both during and outside of school hours.

School boards and schools may be required by the Ministry of Education to post information to their websites if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 that involves a student or staff member and/or if there is an outbreak of COVID-19 in a school setting. School boards and schools are recommended to initiate communication protocols and plans to update and inform necessary stakeholders with the school community (including before and after school programs) when there is a positive COVID-19 diagnosis in the school. In the interests of privacy, information provided to school communities will not identify the student or staff member who has received a positive COVID-19 test.

Public Health Responsibilities

SMDHU will be responsible for conducting case and contact management activities. Measures will be taken to ensure privacy and avoid disclosure of details to the school community that would lead to the identification of any individual.

SMDHU will post information about cases and outbreaks in schools / child care centres on their [COVID-19 dashboard/website](#).

SMDHU will provide school boards / schools / child care with information that can be used to communicate with their school / child care community. The purpose of this communication would be to provide reassurance and guidance and would **not** provide specific information or identifying details.

Declaring an Outbreak

SMDHU will be responsible for determining if an outbreak exists, declaring an outbreak, and providing direction on outbreak control measures to be implemented. SMDHU will assist in determining which cohort(s) should be sent home, or if a partial, or full, school / child care closure is required. SMDHU will also determine when an outbreak can be declared over.

Last revised: March 11, 2021