

Barnstable Public Schools
COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions - Families
Updated October 8, 2020

Barnstable Public Schools prioritizes the health and safety of the school community during the reopening of schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. This document is aimed at answering frequently asked questions in order to clear up any confusion in regards to our protocols and procedures and will be updated with any changes in guidance or regulations.

1. What are the COVID-19-related symptoms?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Department of Public Health (DPH), COVID-19-related symptoms include:

- Temperature of 100.0 or higher
- Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Headache (when in combination with other symptoms)
- Muscle aches or body aches
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Fatigue (when in combination with other symptoms)
- Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known cause, such as allergies)

2. My child has seasonal allergies. I see sore throat, runny nose, and cough are on the list of COVID-19 related symptoms. I think my child just has allergies. Do I have to keep him/her out of school?

We understand that some students have chronic conditions like asthma or allergies with symptoms that are similar to those listed for COVID-19. If you believe his/her symptoms are related to their known condition, please contact your child's pediatrician for documentation about their chronic condition and symptoms, and provide this to the school nurse. If your child develops symptoms that are worse than their baseline, they will be sent home and you should contact his/her pediatrician.

3. What can I expect if my child is dismissed from school due to COVID-19 related symptoms?

If your child is sent to the nurse with a COVID-19 related symptom(s), you will be contacted to pick him/her up as soon as possible. If you have any other children in the Barnstable Public Schools system, they will be required to be dismissed as well. Symptomatic students CANNOT ride the bus home. You will be advised to contact the symptomatic child's pediatrician to report the symptoms and to determine next steps. The school nurse will provide you with information about when the student may return to school.

4. What should I do if my child has one or more of the COVID-19 screening symptoms at home?

Please check your child daily for signs of illness, including temperature. **If your child has any COVID-19 related symptoms, or has been notified that he/she is a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case, DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL, contact your child's pediatrician, and inform the school nurse of your child's absence.**

5. In what circumstances should siblings be kept home?

If you have a child at home who is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and has been advised to be tested by his/her pediatrician, we ask that you please do not send any other children who live in the same household to school until the test results are received. If the test comes back negative, household members may return to school. If the test comes back positive, the household members are considered to be close contacts and must follow quarantine procedures.

6. Can I keep my child with a stuffy nose home for a day to see if additional symptoms come on or are they expected to have a doctor's note to return?

We ask that you contact your child's pediatrician with any of the listed COVID-19 related symptoms. Your child will need a doctor's note listing an alternative diagnosis or have a negative COVID-19 test result to return to school.

7. If we travel to a red (high risk) state does my child need a negative COVID-19 test to return to school? (updated)

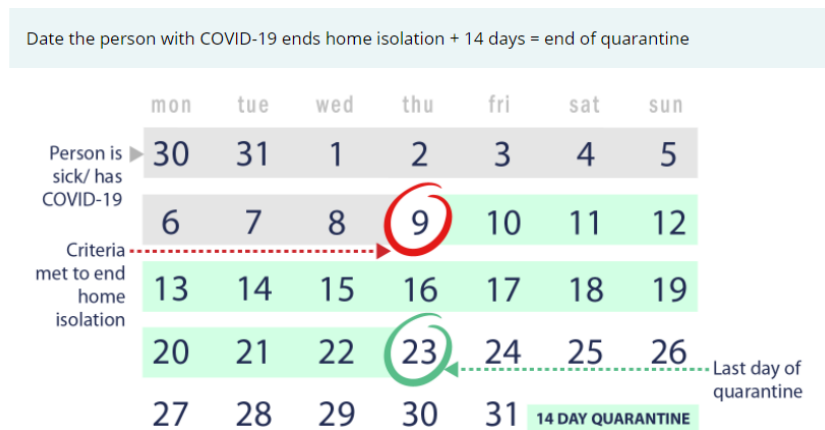
BPS is following Governor Baker's [travel order for individuals returning to MA](#) from states designated as high-risk for COVID-19 (red state), or internationally. If your family returns from a high-risk state, any student age 11 or above must quarantine for 14 days or produce a negative PCR test to return to school. Students age 10 and younger must "follow" the adult they traveled with - if the adult tests negative, the student may return to school with a copy of that negative test result. If the adult opts to quarantine for 14 days, the student must quarantine for 14 days. Students age 10 and younger may get their own test, but this is not required by the state.

8. I have been informed that I (or another household member) am a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case. Does my child need to stay home in quarantine as well?

If you are feeling well and have no symptoms of COVID-19, your child does not have to remain home in quarantine. It is advised that close contacts of positive cases of COVID-19 get tested 4-5 days after the last exposure. If you (or the close contact) tests positive for COVID-19 or develops symptoms, your child should be kept home, and the school nurse should be alerted.

9. Someone in our home has tested positive for COVID-19. When can our child(ren) return to school?

When a household member tests positive for COVID-19, a special isolation and quarantine procedure must be followed if the exposure to the positive case is ongoing (i.e. the positive case cannot be fully isolated from the rest of the household). In this situation, the 14 day quarantine period does not begin until the infectious person's isolation period (10 days) ends.



10. I have been alerted that my child has been identified as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case. What do I do?

Close contacts of positive COVID-19 cases MUST quarantine (not go to school) for 14 days regardless of test result. It is advised that he/she get tested 4-5 days after the exposure to the positive case for contact tracing purposes, but he/she must stay home for the full 14 days even if he/she is negative for COVID-19. Other household members do NOT need to quarantine if the close contact has no symptoms.

11. Where can I get my child tested?

We suggest that you contact your child's pediatrician to be directed for testing. If needed, you may also refer to the [COVID-19 Test Site Locator](#)

12. Will I know if a student in my child's school, class or on his/her bus has COVID-19?

If there is a positive case of COVID-19 in your child's school, classroom or on the bus, a notification letter will be sent home. Due to confidentiality requirements, the identity of the positive case cannot be disclosed. If your child is identified as a close contact of the positive case, you will be contacted directly by the school nurse to pick your child up from school and instructed on quarantine procedures.

13. If my child is home from school, can he/she take part in virtual learning?

Please contact your child's building principal at the elementary level, or assistant principal or dean at the secondary level for guidance about virtual learning. Students may take part in virtual learning if they are in isolation due to a positive COVID-19 test result or are in quarantine due to COVID-19 exposure. Students who are absent for any other reason including non-COVID-19 related illness or travel are not able to participate in virtual learning.

14. What should I do if a family member or I have been in contact with someone who is a close contact to someone that has COVID-19?

You are considered a contact of a contact and you do not need to do anything unless that close contact becomes positive. If they test positive, then you would be a close contact and call your health care provider and self-quarantine for 14 days.