



When to Return to School/When to Stay Home

COVID-19 Guidance

Requirements to Return to School

Experiencing a Symptom of Illness

If you are experiencing a symptom of illness		
NO MEDICAL DIAGNOSIS OR COVID-19 TEST	ALTERNATE MEDICAL DIAGNOSIS	NEGATIVE COVID-19 TEST
<p>You may return if: It has been at least 10 days since you first had symptoms AND It has been at least 24 hours since you had a fever (without the use of fever reducing medicine) AND Symptoms are improving, including cough and shortness of breath</p>	<p>You may return if: You have a confirmed diagnosis other than COVID-19 (like a stomach virus, ear infection, etc.) from a health care professional to explain the COVID-19-like symptoms AND It has been at least 24 hours since you had a fever (without the use of fever reducing medicine) AND You have felt well for 24 hours NOTE: The health care provider is not required to detail the specifics of the alternate diagnosis.</p>	<p>You may return if: You have a negative PCR COVID-19 test AND It has been at least 24 hours since you had a fever (without the use of fever reducing medicine) AND You have felt well for 24 hours NOTE: If you have a negative rapid antigen** test, you must receive a follow-up negative PCR/Molecular test.</p>

Exposure to COVID-19 and No Symptoms of Illness

NCDHHS, the CDC, and Wake County Public Health continue to recommend quarantine for 14 days after your last exposure to COVID-19. However NCDHHS and Wake County Public Health have provided options to reduce the duration of quarantine, if you meet the associated requirements. Health officials stress that to prevent additional exposures, illnesses, and COVID-19 clusters, it is critical for you to closely monitor yourself for any symptoms of illness and stay home if you have experienced a symptom of illness until you meet the requirements to return for someone who has experienced a symptom of illness.

If you were exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the last 2 weeks and have no symptoms of illness

7 DAY QUARANTINE OPTION	10 DAY QUARANTINE OPTION	14 DAY QUARANTINE OPTION (NCDHHS recommends this option)	QUARANTINE REQUIREMENTS FOR HOUSEHOLD EXPOSURES
<p>You may return after 7 days if: It has been at least 7 days since the last date of exposure AND You have not experienced any symptoms of illness during daily at-home monitoring AND You have a negative antigen** or PCR/Molecular* test result from a COVID-19 test taken no earlier than day 5 after your last date of exposure. You must provide proof of your negative test result to return after 7 days. AND You must continue to monitor yourself for symptoms and strictly follow all required health precautions at school through 14 days after the date of last exposure.</p>	<p>You may return after 10 days if: It has been at least 10 days since the last date of exposure AND You have not experienced any symptoms of illness during daily at-home monitoring AND You must continue to monitor yourself for symptoms and strictly follow all required health precautions at school through 14 days after the date of last exposure.</p>	<p>You may return after 14 days if: It has been 14 days since the last date of exposure. AND You have not developed any symptoms of COVID-19.</p>	<p>If you live with someone who has COVID-19, your quarantine for exposure does not begin until the end of the 10th day of isolation for the person with COVID-19. You may return after 17 days if you meet all of the requirements of the 7-day quarantine. OR You may return after 20 days if you meet all of the requirements of the 10-day quarantine. OR You may return after 24 days if you meet all of the requirements of the 14-day quarantine.</p>

NOTE:

If you start experiencing a symptom of illness: You must stay home or go home immediately until you meet the criteria requirements for someone experiencing a symptom of illness.

If you test positive for COVID-19: You must remain home until you meet the criteria requirements for someone diagnosed with COVID-19.

Diagnosed with COVID-19

If you were diagnosed with COVID-19 within the last 10 days	
NO SYMPTOMS	EXPERIENCING SYMPTOMS
<p>You may return if: It has been 10 days since the date of your first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test, if you have not developed any symptoms of COVID-19. NOTE: If you develop symptoms of COVID-19, you must remain home until you meet the criteria requirements for someone experiencing a symptom.</p>	<p>You may return if: It has been at least 10 days since you first had symptoms AND It has been at least 24 hours since you had a fever (without the use of fever reducing medicine) AND Symptoms are improving, including cough and shortness of breath</p>

After Vaccination or Previous COVID-19 Diagnosis

Vaccination Side Effects - If you experience side effects during the first few days after receiving a COVID-19 vaccination, you should stay home until you are no longer experiencing symptoms and have been without a fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine. You are not required to present an alternate diagnosis, negative COVID-19 test, or stay home for 10 days in order to return to school or work. Employees who experience side effects from the vaccination that delay their return to the worksite may take available leave.

Waiver of Quarantine Requirements After Vaccination or COVID-19 Diagnosis

Following guidance from [NCDHHS](#), [CDC](#), and in consultation with the ABC Science Collaborative, as long as a person can meet all of the following criteria, they are considered fully vaccinated and do not have to quarantine if they are exposed to someone with COVID-19 or if a household member is sick. **The person must self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days and must stay home if they develop a symptom of illness.**

Note: NCDHHS no longer requires that the vaccination series was completed within the past 3 months.

VACCINATED	PREVIOUSLY DIAGNOSED WITH COVID-19
<p>You do not have to quarantine if: It's been at least 2 weeks since you received the second dose in a 2-dose series, or it's been at least 2 weeks since you received a vaccine that only requires a single-dose AND You have not developed any symptoms of COVID-19 since the current COVID-19 exposure NOTE: Anyone who does not meet both criteria must quarantine and follow current policy after an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.</p>	<p>You do not have to quarantine if: You were diagnosed with COVID-19 within the past 3 months AND You have not developed any symptoms of COVID-19 since your COVID-19 diagnosis without another identified cause for the symptoms NOTE: Anyone who develops symptoms again within 3 months of their first bout of COVID-19 may need to be tested again if there is no other cause identified for their symptoms.</p>

Process to Return to School Without Quarantine

A person who has been fully vaccinated or who has previously been diagnosed with COVID-19 will need to show the following documentation to their school or supervisor in order to be allowed to return to school or work without fulfilling the quarantine requirements outlined in CDC guidance:

- If vaccinated: must present vaccine record with vaccination dates
- If previously diagnosed: must present proof of diagnosis, including the date

It is the responsibility of the supervisor (for employees) or school staff (for students) to check the presented documentation and dates to ensure that the person meets all of the requirements to return to school or work without quarantine. Supervisors do not need to keep a copy or record of an employee's presented documentation. The school will keep a copy of a student's presented documentation with their medical records.