

May 13th, 2022
COVID-19 Related FAQs

What is Reading Public schools current mask protocol? RPS is mask optional as of 2/28/22. **Please note that per [CDC](#) Reading and Middlesex County are now considered high risk, and masking is highly recommended indoors.**

When are masks required in school? In health offices and returning from 5 day quarantine or isolation from testing positive for COVID-19, on days #6-10. Anyone who is identified as a close contact should mask for 10 days from exposure, regardless of vaccination status.

When are masks recommended? For all unvaccinated individuals. In addition, anyone with respiratory symptoms (cough, runny nose) even if COVID-19 negative, should wear a mask in school.

What kind of mask should I/my child wear? [Here](#) is CDC updated guidance on masks

What is current guidance on contact tracing and contact notifications?

DESE and DPH have updated their guidance to the following:

We are recommending that school health personnel increase their focus on identifying symptomatic individuals, rather than monitoring in-school close contacts. Testing options include a weekly at-home test for participating staff and students. In terms of notifications, all Massachusetts public schools are required to submit their results to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. These results are reported on the [State website](#) and locally. For the most up-to-date information about positive COVID-19 cases, we ask that you look at our RPS [local data dashboard](#). We currently are notifying families if we have seen more than one case in a specific classroom in the same week, or one case in a RISE classroom. In those situations, home test kits are given to all families.

What symptoms should I be looking for?

[Here](#) is a health screening with specific symptoms.

What if my child tests negative but still has symptoms?

If your child tests negative but symptoms continue, especially a fever, please consult with your pediatrician. In addition to COVID-19, we are also seeing an increase in [influenza A](#) in schools this spring.

What if I or my child test positive for COVID-19?

According to updated guidance from CDC and MADPH, anyone testing positive for COVID-19 should isolate for 5 days, with onset of symptoms or positive test being day 0. If fever free for 24 hours and symptoms have resolved, students may return to school and regular activities on day #6 but should wear a mask around others and monitor for symptoms for an additional 5 days. A negative antigen test to return is not required, but is appreciated. Please notify RPS if your child tests positive with a home kit [here](#). [Here](#) is the **DPH guidance on isolation and quarantine**.

What if there is a positive case in my household?

If you have a positive case in your household and your child is unvaccinated, they must stay home for 5 days since last exposure, monitor for symptoms, and return on day 6. Anyone who is up to date on vaccinations does not need to quarantine, however, they should mask around others for 10 days from exposure and an antigen test on day #5 from exposure is recommended. If your child is 6 months from vaccination without a booster, we ask you to consider quarantining as above due to the large number of cases with students in this situation. Testing is recommended on day 5. They must continue to wear a mask around others for 5 more days and monitor for symptoms for 10 days from exposure.

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Does my child need a booster to be considered fully vaccinated?

Although DESE guidance at this time still considers anyone 2 weeks post a second dose to be fully vaccinated, we have seen significant transmission in those more than 6 months out from a second vaccine and not yet boosted. If this situation applies to your child, we ask that you consider quarantine per DPH guidance above if they are exposed outside of school.

What are the testing programs being used by RPS? How do I sign up?

[Opt-in here](#) for our home testing protocol and to receive test kits. Staff and students who receive test kits are asked to test at home under the following situations:

- If symptomatic
- On day #5 from a known exposure
- On day #5 following a positive test before returning to school.
- If none of those situations apply, we recommend that individuals test on Monday before school

We will continue to offer symptomatic testing. Anyone with symptoms should stay home and be tested, however if students develop symptoms during the school day they may participate in symptomatic testing. [Here](#) is more information on the DESE testing programs.

Where do I find home tests?

Here is the opt in to the new [DESE home testing program](#)

Here is information about [government issued tests](#).

Here is DPH information about [testing](#).

Where can my child get a vaccine?

[Here](#) is a link to the next RPS vaccine clinic, Friday May 20th 2-4pm at Coolidge

[Here](#) is a link to local vaccination site availability.

What is the travel guidance?

[Here](#) is CDC travel guidance. We respectfully ask that families consider the health and safety of all of our students and staff and follow the travel guidance put in place by the CDC.

How do I reach Reading Public Health?

[Here](#) is the link to Reading Public Health. You can reach a Public Health Nurse at #781-942-6653.