



Guidance in SC

When to Send Children Back to School After Having COVID-19 or Being Exposed

SOUTH CAROLINA SCHOOL GUIDANCE

These are general guidelines. There may be some differences between counties as well as public vs. independent schools within counties. And some school districts may require new forms to be filled out. **Please refer to your child's school for guidance.**

For more information, view this guide from the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC): <https://scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/COVID19-Interim-DHEC-Guidance-for-School-Response-to-COVID-19-12.8.2020.pdf>

TESTING

PCR/molecular tests are the most accurate tests currently available to diagnose COVID-19. Because PCR tests are typically processed in a lab, it can take several days for patients to get their results.

Although rapid point-of-care tests deliver fast results, they are not as accurate, and false negative results are possible.

Find a Testing Location

SCDHEC describes several different ways to [access COVID-19 testing](#), including no-cost options. You can also contact your child's primary care provider or visit any [Atrium Health Urgent Care location](#) for testing.

COVID-19 Screening Flow Chart

- No Flags** | **Proceed to school**
- Exposure,* No Symptoms** | **Cannot go to school today**
 - Home for 14 days since exposure; or 10 days if no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring; or 7 days if no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring and the individual has received results of a negative PCR/molecular test on a test taken no earlier than day 5 of quarantine.
- Diagnosis, No Symptoms** | **Cannot go to school today**
 - Home for 10 days since first positive COVID-19 test
- At Least 1 Symptom**** | **Cannot go to school today**
(Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, new loss of taste or smell, new or worsening cough)
 - If confirmed positive COVID-19 OR person has not been tested: Home for 10 days since first symptoms, no fever for 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medicine), AND symptom improvement, including coughing and shortness of breath.
 - If negative PCR/molecular COVID-19 test: May return to school.
 - If confirmed diagnosis other than COVID-19 (e.g., stomach virus, ear infection): May return to school with a doctor's note asserting the individual is clear to return to school based on a more likely diagnosis that requires no further exclusion or states the return criteria based on some other exclusion.

*Exposure refers to being within 6 feet of someone diagnosed with COVID-19 for 15 minutes or more within a 24-hour period.

**This is not a complete list of all COVID-19 symptoms, but only those that should trigger an automatic exclusion and evaluation for COVID-19. If these symptoms are explainable by an underlying condition (such as shortness of breath for an individual with asthma) exclusion from school may not be necessary.