

# GUIDANCE for SCHOOLS and CHILD CARE REGARDING INDIVIDUALS with SYMPTOMS

Follow guidance below if an individual presents with or reports any of the following symptoms:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache

- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

1. If the symptomatic individual is in the school setting, they should be **isolated from others immediately** and plans should be made to get the individual home.
2. If the symptomatic individual **has had close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19** they are presumed to be positive and should isolate until 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared AND at least 24 hours have passed since the last fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers AND other symptoms have improved. They may be referred for evaluation by their healthcare provider and possible COVID-19 testing.
3. If the symptomatic individual **has no known contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19**, they may or may not be referred to a healthcare provider for evaluation and may or may not be tested for COVID-19.
  - a. If they are tested and are negative for COVID-19, they should be excluded from school in accordance with existing school illness management policy (e.g., until symptom-free for 24 hours without fever reducing medications).
  - b. If they are tested and are positive for COVID-19, they should be excluded from school to isolate until 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared AND at least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers AND other symptoms have improved.
  - c. If they are not tested, they are presumed positive and should follow the instructions as if positive above. If a healthcare provider determines a laboratory-confirmed alternative diagnosis or attests that the condition is part of a known chronic condition and provides documentation as such, the individual should be excluded from school in accordance with existing school illness management policy. Clearance to return to school should be determined by the healthcare provider assigning the alternative diagnosis (e.g., until symptom-free for 24 hours without fever reducing medications).

In general, a doctor's note and/or negative test are NOT NEEDED if an individual meets the time and symptoms criteria covered above and in the [release from isolation and quarantine guidance](#). If an individual is symptomatic and is not tested (3.c. above), they NEED a doctor's note to provide the alternate diagnosis and recommendations for return to school.

