



October 26, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ohio Department of Health Updates Quarantine Procedures for K-12 Students and Staff
New Guidelines Provide Expanded Opportunities for Students to Remain in School

BOWLING GREEN—Ohio Department of Health on Monday issued revised recommendations that allow K-12 students and staff who are exposed to COVID in school settings to use a combination of masks and testing to remain in school and continue to participate in extracurricular activities as long as they do not develop symptoms.

“In-person education is essential for the developmental and social support our students need. Our teachers, administrators and staff have worked tirelessly this year to keep kids safe, engaged and in the classroom, and these guidelines will increase opportunities for children to remain in school,” said Wood County Health Commissioner Benjamin Robison. Superintendents will communicate updated protocols directly with their staff and families as procedures are finalized.

The revised guidance was informed by a growing body of national evidence that indicates that wearing masks and testing of exposed students can help limit the spread of COVID when used in combination. Data show that wearing masks in schools and in other public settings is an effective strategy for reducing transmission of COVID. Individuals can maximize their protection by wearing a mask at all times, even if they are not aware they have been exposed. “Wearing masks indoors is important, not just for students and staff exposed in school, but for all of us as long as case levels remain high in our community,” said Robison.

The risk of spread can be further reduced by continuing to follow other measures, including maintaining as much distance as possible, staying home when sick and testing for anyone who could have COVID. “Vaccination against COVID remains the best way to protect students and staff while limiting the impacts of the disease within the community,” said Robison. “Currently, individuals 12 years old and older are eligible to be vaccinated, and children ages five to 11 may soon be eligible as well.”

Parents who wish to keep their children at home following a COVID exposure may do so. The updated guidelines do not apply to household exposures or other exposures that occur outside of the school setting or school-related activities.

The mission of Wood County Health Department is to prevent disease, promote healthy lifestyles and protect the health of everyone in Wood County. Our Community Health Center provides comprehensive medical services for men, women and children. We welcome all patients, including uninsured or underinsured clients, regardless of their ability to pay, and we accept most third-party insurance. For more information, visit woodcountyhealth.org.

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