

## Appendix E. Frequently Asked Questions

**1. Q: Are schools and daycares required to follow AHD's recommendations?**

**A:** AHD's recommendations are best practices set down in consultation with the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance for preventing spread of COVID-19. AHD's recommendations are not requirements. Daycares and schools may adopt modified versions or alternative solutions. The [CDC](#) indicates the following regarding daycare settings:

"Because of the importance of access to learning and care, when determining isolation policies, [daycare] programs should consider multiple factors, including education loss and social and emotional well-being of children, and the needs of the families served when they cannot attend [daycare] programs in person. [Daycare] programs should also consider the level of community transmission of COVID-19, presence of other people who are at higher risk for severe illness, and the ability to use additional prevention strategies, such as improved ventilation and cohorting."

**2. Q: Continuous Exposure: Mrs. Brown tests positive for COVID-19 on 1/1/2022 and is unable to stay isolated from her unvaccinated infant, Sam. When can Sam return to daycare?**

**A:** Sam's quarantine period begins when Mrs. Brown's isolation period ends. If Mrs. Brown ends isolation on 1/6/2022 (Day 5), Sam can't start his quarantine until Day 6. Sam's quarantine begins on 1/7/2022. Sam should quarantine for 10 days and return to daycare on 1/17/2022 (Day 11). Since Sam is under what AHD calls "continuous exposure" to his mother and because Sam cannot mask, best practice is to quarantine for a full 10 days.

**3. Q: There has been an exposure at Mickey Mouse Daycare in the Butterfly classroom on 1/3/2022. The whole class and each of the teachers were deemed close contacts. Does the classroom need to close?**

**A:** The classroom can remain open for attendees who are fully vaccinated, staff who are boosted, and attendees/staff who had COVID-19 within the last 6 months. Close contacts that cannot mask effectively should quarantine for 10 days through (1/13/2022). Close contacts that can mask effectively may quarantine for a shorter duration: at least 5 days (through 1/8/2022) or follow a Test to Stay protocol. Please consult your daycare/school administrator for details regarding the daycare's policy.

**4. Q: John is 11 years old. He received his first and second dose of the Pfizer vaccine 7 months ago, but he has not received his booster although he is eligible. John was also exposed to COVID-19 while at basketball practice recently. Does John need to quarantine from school?**

**A:** John may need to quarantine from school depending on his school's booster dose requirements. Schools may consider forgoing quarantine for students 5-11 years old who have completed their primary vaccine series but have not yet received all boosters for which they are eligible.

## Appendix E. Frequently Asked Questions

- 5. Q: Ms. Frizzle teaches 4th grade. She tested positive for COVID-19 on 1/5/2022. Ms. Frizzle does not have symptoms. Does Ms. Frizzle need a negative PCR test or antigen test to return to her classroom?**

**A: No.** Individuals with COVID-19 may continue to test **PCR positive for months** following a recent infection even if they are no longer infectious. For this reason, **Ms. Frizzle should not get a PCR test. PCR tests should not be used to determine whether a case can exit isolation.** Ms. Frizzle can get an **antigen** test on or after 1/10/2022 (Day 5) if it is part of her school's return-to-class policy. If the test is negative and Ms. Frizzle still does not have any symptoms, she can return to the classroom on 1/11/2022 (Day 6). **If Ms. Frizzle is unable to get an antigen test on 1/10/2022, she can still return to the classroom on 1/11/2022.** If the test is positive, Ms. Frizzle should continue to isolate for the full 10 days through 1/15/2022.

- 6. Q: Dewey is being asked to wear a mask at school on Days 6-10 of his quarantine following an exposure to COVID-19. Donald Duck, his guardian, does not want Dewey to wear a mask. Does Dewey need to wear a mask for these days while at school?**

**A:** Yes. Schools may require masking as a tool to support quarantine and isolation protocols to promote in-person instruction. During Days 6-10 of their quarantine period, schools may require students to wear a well-fitted mask at school/school activities. Donald Duck may opt for Dewey to complete his quarantine at home through Day 10 instead of wearing a mask on those days.

- 7. Q: Mr. McQuack runs the Little Ducklings Preschool in Alexandria. He is alerted to a case in the junior preschool class on Monday. On Tuesday, he receives an email saying another child in the same class is sick. Does Mr. McQuack need to fill out [AHD's COVID-19 Outbreak Reporting Form](#)?**

**A:** Not yet. Mr. McQuack should keep an ongoing list of cases and contacts in the classroom (see Appendix H and I for details). However, he is only required to report outbreaks to AHD. In schools and daycares, that often means when an exposure in a class/sports team that results in 3 or more cases in a two-week period.

- 8. Q: Do I have to "air out" my classroom after a COVID-19 exposure?**

**A:** No. If less than 24 hours have passed since the exposure, [clean and disinfect](#) the space. If more than 24 hours have passed since the exposure, routine cleaning is generally sufficient, but you may choose to disinfect high-traffic areas and high-touch surfaces. *If possible*, AHD recommends not using the physical space and allowing for ventilation in the space for 24 hours after the exposure ("airing out"). This allows virus particles in the air to settle on surfaces, making it easier to clean and disinfect the space. This may not be feasible in all settings, and administrators should consider the impact to in-person learning that an "airing out" of a space may cause.

- 9. Q: A child Jo has no symptoms but tests positive for COVID-19 on 1/17/2022 and cannot fully isolate from their sibling, Sam. Both are under**

**two years old and unvaccinated. Sam tested negative for COVID-19 on 1/17/2022. When should each of the kids return to daycare?**

**A:** Please see Appendix F for a visual aid. For children too young to mask, a 10-day quarantine and isolation schedule is the safest option in terms of preventing spread of COVID-19. Following a 10-day isolation and quarantine period, Jo would return to daycare on 1/28/2022 (Day 11) and Sam would return to daycare on 2/2/2022 (Day 11). Daycares and preschools are encouraged to consider other acceptable alternatives to support in-person care and instruction when a 10-day quarantine is not feasible.

**10.Q: Can daycares and childcare centers adopt the 5-day quarantine and isolation schedules used by K-12 schools?**

**A:** Daycares and childcare centers may adopt the 5-day quarantine and isolation schedule for children ages 2 years and older if the children can mask reliably. Please consult your administrator as these are facility-specific policies dependent on multiple factors (transmission in the community, testing availability, risk tolerance of the families a daycare serves and its staff, etc.).

**11.Q: My child caught COVID-19 recently. They just became eligible for the vaccine. Do we need to wait to get them vaccinated?**

**A:** If your child has completed their isolation period, they may be vaccinated. We do ask that your child not get vaccinated until after their **10-day window of isolation is complete** (even if their symptoms have resolved and they are back in school on Day 6).

**12. Q: A third grade student has COVID-19 but has no symptoms. My school does not have enough space in the cafeteria for them to eat 6 feet away from others. Can the student still go back to school on Day 6 of isolation?**

**A:** Yes. In order to promote in-person learning, schools may let children return to class on Day 6 of isolation despite spacing concerns during lunch time. Best practice is to space children out at least 6 feet from others when masks cannot be worn on Days 6-10 of isolation.

**13. Q: Donald Duck attends my school, he has no symptoms but tested positive for COVID-19 on Feb 14, 2022? When does his infectious period start? When does his isolation period start?**

**A:** Donald's **infectious** period starts 2 days before his positive test. If Donald did have symptoms, his infectious period would start 2 days before his symptoms started. Note: The start of Donald's **isolation** period is slightly different. His isolation period starts the day his positive test was collected (Day 0) if he has no symptoms. If he has symptoms, his isolation period starts the day his symptoms start (Day 0).

**14. Q: What is Test to Stay?**

**A:** Test to Stay (TTS) is a testing protocol schools and daycares may use as an alternative to traditional quarantine. When someone has been exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19, they take a rapid test each day for 5 days following the

## Appendix E. Frequently Asked Questions

exposure instead of quarantining at home (provided they are feeling well and not exhibiting any COVID-19 symptoms). VDH has published guidance on how to implement TTS in a K-12 facility. Appendix K explains how TTS can be implemented in daycare settings.

**15. Q: What is AHD's guidance regarding travel?**

A: AHD defers to the CDC on guidance regarding preventative actions to take before, during, and after travel. The CDC has separate guidance for [domestic](#) and [international](#) travel.

**16. Q: My child had COVID-19 four months ago. They were just exposed to someone with COVID-19 yesterday. Do they need to quarantine from camp?**

A: It depends if your child's camp is following VDH's quarantine guidance or the CDC's quarantine guidance. According to VDH's quarantine guidance, your child would not need to quarantine so long as they were exposed to COVID-19 within 6 months of a previously confirmed COVID-19 infection (tested positive with a viral test). According to the CDC's quarantine guidance, your child would need to quarantine if they were exposed to COVID-19 more than 90 days after a confirmed COVID-19 infection (tested positive with a viral test). Check with your camp administrator to know which policy they have chosen to implement for their facility regarding quarantine.