

Rutherford County Schools

Pandemic/Epidemic Reporting, Containment, and Reentry Procedures

ADM 1-4(c)

1 **Approved: August 23, 2021**

2 The authority to quarantine individuals related to COVID-19 lies with the Rutherford County
3 Department of Health. To the extent possible, Rutherford County Schools will support the Rutherford
4 County Department of Health's mission by implementing the following procedure for the 21-22 school
5 year. This procedure is subject to change in response to the needs of the schools and with input from
6 the Rutherford County Department of Health. **If an individual is given instructions by Federal, State,
7 or Local Health Department, the health department instructions supersede this procedure.**

8 **Definition of a Contact**

9 A "contact" is any person who has been in close proximity (less than six feet) with an infected person
10 for fifteen cumulative minutes or more over a twenty-four-hour period, or an intense shorter interaction
11 (e.g. coughed directly on someone, physically touched, etc.).

12 The sole authority to quarantine an individual is the State and Local Health Departments; however,
13 RCS does have authority to control attendees and visitors on its property. RCS will recommend
14 quarantine to any identified contacts, and those identified as contacts, positive cases, and probable
15 cases cannot return to school unless they have complied with this procedure.

16 **When does a student or employee have to be sent home or told to stay home?**

17 If a student or employee:

- 18 1. Tests positive for COVID-19; OR
19 2. Exhibits two or more symptoms from the COVID-19 symptom list; OR
20 3. Runs a fever over 100.4; OR
21 4. Identifies a loss of taste or smell as a symptom; OR
22 5. Is identified as a contact of a probable or confirmed case.

23 **If a student or employee becomes ill while at school/work (with two or more COVID-19
24 symptoms) or answers YES to two or more of the screening questions, or answers YES to loss of
25 taste/smell OR has a fever of 100.4 or higher, and COVID-19 is suspected:**

- 26 1. Ensure surgical mask is covering individual's mouth and nose. Provide individual with a mask
27 if needed.

- 1 2. Move individual to a designated “isolation” room where minimal contact with others is
- 2 possible but where the individual can still be observed.
- 3 3. Anyone assisting this individual closely should wear:
- 4 a. Mask
- 5 b. Eye protection
- 6 c. Gloves
- 7 d. Gown
- 8 4. Notify individual’s emergency contact to pick them up.
- 9 5. Clean the area where the individual has been in the building.

10 **When can a student/employee who was ill (with two or more symptoms of COVID-19) or**
11 **answered YES to two or more of the screening questions, or answers YES to loss of taste/smell**
12 **OR has a fever of 100.4 or higher, and COVID-19 was suspected return to work/school?:**

13 The individual may return to work or school when one of the four following statements is true. No
14 exceptions will be made:

- 15 1. A health care provider has confirmed in writing that the illness was NOT COVID-19-related
16 because of an alternative diagnosis. **Other viral illnesses, upper respiratory infections,
17 pneumonia, seasonal allergies, and allergic rhinitis do not exclude COVID-19 and are not
18 adequate to authorize return.
19 a. Documentation is required.
- 20
- 21 2. The individual had a positive test and isolated for ten days plus twenty-four hours after fever
22 has resolved without fever-reducing medications and symptoms have been improving for
23 twenty-four hours, including ALL respiratory symptoms.
- 24
- 25 3. The individual chooses NOT to be tested but chooses to isolate for ten days plus twenty-four
26 hours after fever has resolved without fever-reducing medications and symptoms have been
27 improving for twenty-four hours, including ALL respiratory symptoms.
- 28
- 29 4. The individual tests negative while actively having symptoms, never tested positive at any time
30 during the illness, and fever has resolved without fever-reducing medications and symptoms
31 have been improving for twenty-four hours. All respiratory symptoms MUST be improved.
32 a. Documentation is required.

33 **When can a student/employee who tests positive for COVID-19 or is deemed a probable case by**
34 **the Health Department return to work/school?:**

- 35 • Cases *with symptoms* must isolate for a minimum of 10 days after illness onset. They may be
36 released from isolation when they have been without fever for 24 hours (without fever-
37 reducing medication) and are showing improvement in symptoms.
- 38 • Cases *without symptoms* must isolate through 10 days after their specimen collection date.

39 **Notes:**

- 1 • If a follow-up PCR test is positive, cases do not need to re-enter isolation as long as they have
2 completed the minimum 10-day isolation and had symptom resolution for a minimum of 24
3 hours.
4 • If a case has been released from isolation and symptoms return, individuals do not need to re-
5 enter isolation as long as they have completed the minimum 10-day isolation and had symptom
6 resolution for a minimum of 24 hours.

7 **Someone in the school was positive or a probable COVID-19 case. What do we do?**

8 If RCS becomes aware of a confirmed positive/probable case at a school, RCS will notify confirmed
9 contacts from the most recent day the contact was at school or a school sponsored event in the last 24
10 hours since the positive case tested positive, or from the onset of symptoms, and request the contacts
11 follow this procedure. The contact is encouraged to call the health department after being notified in
12 order to receive instructions. If the contact does not receive specific instructions from the health
13 department, this procedure applies.

14 **When can a contact return to work/school?**

15 Individuals identified as a contact should work with the local health department to determine an
16 appropriate quarantine period; however absent additional/different guidance from the department of
17 health, contacts MUST quarantine and they may return to school on the 7th day of quarantine if they
18 remain symptom-free the whole period they were quarantined.

19 A contact should work with the department of health to determine when they are able to return to
20 school/work if they are a contact of a household member; they must quarantine and they may return to
21 school on the 17th day of quarantine if they remain symptom-free for the whole period they were
22 quarantined. If they can isolate away from the positive case in their household, they may return on the
23 7th day of quarantine, if they remain symptom-free for the whole period. If a household contact cannot
24 isolate away from the positive case, they must complete the full quarantine, regardless if the contact is
25 FULLY vaccinated or had a positive test WITHIN THE PAST 90 DAYS.

26 Any contact who IS experiencing symptoms should comply with the procedure as if they are a positive
27 COVID-19 case and contact the school immediately. Household contacts that are unable to isolate
28 away from the positive case in their home must quarantine even if the contact is vaccinated or tested
29 positive in the last ninety days, regardless of symptoms/lack thereof.

30 **All contacts should continue to self-monitor for symptoms through the full period recommended**
31 **by the CDC (14 days for contacts; 24 days for household contacts).**

32 **What about contacts that had been positive or had a test for antibodies?**

33 While RCS will follow any directions provided by the Rutherford County Health Department, close
34 contacts that can provide documentation of a positive SARS-CoV-2 antigen (Rapid Test) or positive
35 COVID-19 test (PCR test) within 90 days of the last contact with the case do not have to quarantine so
36 long as they are symptom-free. They are considered “immune” for at least 90 days per CDC research.
37 This does NOT include antibody tests. NOTE: This exception does NOT apply to household contacts.

1 **What if an identified contact has had a COVID-19 Vaccine?**¹

2 Vaccinated persons with an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 are not
3 required to quarantine if they meet all the following criteria:

- 4 1. Being fully vaccinated (i.e., ≥ 2 weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose
5 series, or ≥ 2 weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine);
6 2. Remained asymptomatic since the current COVID-19 exposure.

7 Persons who do not meet all of the above criteria should continue to follow current quarantine
8 guidance after exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.¹ NOTE: This does not
9 apply to household contacts.

10 **SROs**

11 SROs shall follow the protocol provided to them by the Rutherford County Sheriff's Office.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/info-by-product/clinical-considerations.html>