

## Post Exposure Testing Toolkit

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### General Guidance

Test to Stay can be used in schools and **early care and education (ECE)** as an alternative to exclusion of close contacts exposed in the school setting.

[Test to Stay \(per IDPH\)](#) allows individuals to remain in school under the following [guidelines](#):

- Test to Stay is only applicable for exposures occurring during the school/program day, and includes on the bus, in the lunchroom, and during physical education.
- The individual must be able to maintain physical distancing as much as possible, and masking at all times (indoors and outdoors) during the testing period.
- Individuals should be tested at least two times during the period between close contact notification/TTS enrollment and day 7 after exposure, with the last test occurring between days 5-7 after last exposure. **These tests can be performed at school or at home.**
  - It is critical to the success of Test to Stay that testing results are obtained same day. Therefore, rapid tests (antigen or PCR) are important for a successful program.
- Close contacts are permitted to remain in the classroom as long as the test results are negative AND the person remains without symptoms.
  - If at any time the individual tests positive or symptoms develop, the individual should immediately self-isolate and follow instructions outlined in “For student or staff with symptoms suggestive of COVID-19” above. ([Test to Stay flowchart- revised 1.12.2022](#))
- Test to Stay participants may participate in extracurricular activities at the discretion of the program provided that masking and physical distancing can be maintained through day 10.
- Test to Stay participants may not participate in **sports competition or performances** during the testing period but can resume sports competition or performances after the testing period if they remain without symptoms and masked at all times for 10 days after their last exposure.

### Additional Details

- Test to Stay participants should avoid social gatherings and remain at home when not at school/program functions during the testing period.



- Testing may be conducted in school/program or at home and, preferably, should be performed before entering the classroom. If not possible, prior to lunch.
- Local health departments have the authority to assess high-risk exposures and order a traditional quarantine. Students who violate Test to Stay rules or are not tested as requested by their school/program and LHD will revert to traditional exclusion requirements.

“Close contact” means an individual who was within 6 feet of a confirmed or probable case for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more in a 24-hour period.

NOTE: In the K–12 indoor classroom setting, the close contact definition does not apply to **students** who were between 3 and 6 feet of an infected student if both the infected student and the exposed student(s) correctly and consistently wore well-fitting masks the entire time. This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting.

### Considerations for Implementing Test to Stay (adapted from [IDPH Guidance](#))

#### Mitigation Strategies

- Is the school/program able to ensure consistent and correct mask usage among students?
- Is the school able to ensure social distancing (3ft between students, 6ft between students and adults, and 6ft between adults) both in the classroom and outside the classroom?
- What does contact tracing look like at the school/program? How are close contacts notified? Are there areas of improvement or specific needs?
- Is the school/program able to promptly identify positive cases or symptomatic individuals, and exclude them so they remain at home while infectious? What is general timeframe that this occurs?

#### Option 1: Testing on Site

- Does a testing program already exist at the school/program?
  - If yes,
    - What testing vendor is being used?
    - How often and what days are they testing?
    - What type of test does the school/program offer?
    - Can Test to Stay be integrated into current testing efforts?
  - If no,
    - Who will administer tests on close contacts for the TTS program? Will the school contract with a testing program or test independently?
    - Have these individuals completed training to perform point of care (POC) tests on staff and students? Will additional support from CDPH be needed for training?
- Where will the school/program procure tests from (local health dept, state, vendor)?
- Does the school/program have a CLIA waiver to perform the testing? Does the CLIA include antigen testing?
- Do you have personal protective equipment (PPE) for persons who will perform testing?



- Is a process in place for disposal of medical waste created by testing process?
- How will testing staff be notified of who is eligible to be tested on a given day?
- Is there a designated room or space for testing to occur, where is it and when is it available?  
Keep in mind that the testing area set up needs to be large enough to store the sample specimens while they develop and space for student to be physically distanced while waiting.

#### Testing Consent

- Does the school/program already have consent for testing students on site?
  - If yes,
    - What is the consent status (opt-in or opt-out)?
    - What percentage of student and staff are consented to testing? If low percentage is consented, is opt out an option for test to stay consent?
    - What type of testing does the consent indicate? (PCR and/or antigen)
  - If no,
    - What is the plan for the school/program to obtain testing consent for students and staff?

#### Option 2: Test to Stay using at home testing

- Where will the school procure tests from (local health dept, state, vendor)? Additional at resources for individuals: [COVID.gov/tests](https://www.covid.gov/tests) - Free at-home COVID-19 tests
- What instructions will be given with at home test (days to test, reporting instructions, etc)?
- How will test results be reported to the school?

#### Data Collection and Reporting

- Who is currently responsible for addressing positive COVID-19 cases in school/program?
  - Do they have capacity to take on the managing and reporting of cases that arise through Test to Stay?
  - If not, who on the administrative staff can support TTS operations?
- What system does the school/program currently use to track positive cases and close contacts at the school/program?
- Can the reporting of TTS results (both positive and negative) be logged into this system and reported to IDPH? (Shield has this capability, school/program need a 2D scanner to scan BinaxNOW into their system).
  - If the system does not report out to IDPH, register to report to IDPH [here](#)
- How does the school/program currently report positive cases to CDPH? School/program should report positive COVID-19 cases in their usual manner.
  - In addition to the usual reporting of positive cases, CDPH will provide a reporting form to enter all the close contacts enrolled in TTS. Upload the file to <https://redcap.link/chicovidcontacts> as a 'contact list'



## Communications

- How will you communicate this test to stay option with parents and school/program staff prior to its start?
- Is there an upcoming parent or staff meeting that school/program or CDPH staff could provide overview of test to stay program and answer questions?

### **Test to Stay Protocol**

- A. Identify positive case (student/staff) in the school/program setting.
  - a. Reference protocol outlined by CDPH for the managing and reporting of positive cases.
- B. Contact trace to identify close contacts from the school/program setting and compile a list of those exposed to the case.
  - a. Gather information on classroom exposures, lunch/break exposures, extracurriculars including sports and music, bus exposures, and before/after school/program care if applicable.
  - b. Review seating charts and attendance logs to support the investigation of close contacts.
  - c. Reference CDPH guidelines for the identification of close contacts.
- C. Inform staff and families of potential exposure while maintaining confidentiality.
  - a. Notify families and staff that the close contact is eligible for the Test to Stay program and review guidelines.

Eligibility for TTS:

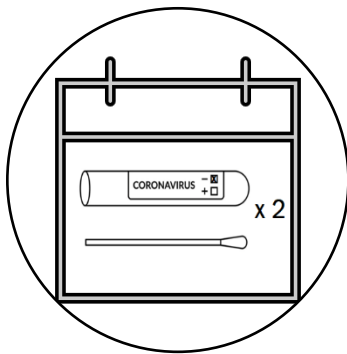
    - i. individual was identified as a close contact in the school/program setting (household exposures are not eligible)
    - ii. the individual is unvaccinated or not up to date with their COVID vaccinations,
    - iii. the individual would otherwise qualify for exclusion and quarantine as a close contact (based on vaccination status, details of exposure, etc.)
  - b. If the close contact is not already consented, provide information on the Test to Stay program and ask if the individual is interested in participating in TTS to remain in school/program following the exposure.
  - c. If the close contact does not or is not consented to participating in the TTS program, exclude the individual per the IDPH exclusion guidelines and CDPH guidance.
- D. Notify administration and relevant stakeholders (CDPH, etc.) of the positive case. Note which close contacts will be doing Test to Stay so they are permitted to remain in the school/program.
  - a. Follow internal protocols for the reporting of cases and close contacts, and protocols for reporting to the health department.
- E. School/program should determine when testing will be available on-site or send home test with instructions.
  - a. If screening testing already occurs at the school/program, close contacts can be tested through the surveillance program and use those results for the Test to Stay program.



# Test to Stay (TTS)

Test to Stay (TTS) is a strategy that allows school/program-based close contacts who are not up to date on COVID-19 vaccinations and without symptoms to remain in school/program during their quarantine period. It combines contact tracing and free testing to allow some students and staff who should quarantine to continue in-person learning. This is done by performing repeat testing. Eligible students and staff will test twice during a 7-day period following their last date of close contact with a COVID-19 positive person. Participants should remain at home when outside of school and may NOT participate in competitive play or performances until after the testing period is completed.

## What is Test to Stay (TTS)?



An alternative to exclusion from school. Those exposed to COVID-19 can remain in school if **test negative twice** in the 7-day period after exposure and **remain without symptoms**

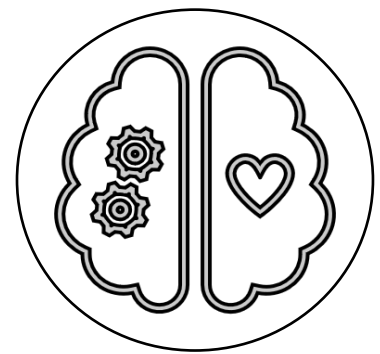
## Who is Eligible?



Those identified as **close contacts** that:

- are NOT up-to-date on vaccination
- can consistently and correctly mask
- were exposed during the school day (not at home or in community)
- do NOT have symptoms

## Why Participate?



Kids have the opportunity to continue with in person learning and extracurriculars.

Test to Stay (TTS) is safely keeping kids in school throughout the country.

If you have any questions or concerns about the Test to Stay (TTS) program, please contact: (contact info below & centered)

[Format: Unit/Team, Email; Phone #]

[SCHOOL LOGO HERE OR IN FOOTER SECTION]



Testing Options Based on Exposure Day

# Test to Stay: Testing Following Exposure

Test One (Day 1-4 after exposure)

Test Two (Day 5-7 after exposure)

Sunday	Monday	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Saturday
Test 2	<b>Exposure</b> <b>Test 2</b>	Test 1	Test 1	<b>Test 1</b>	Test 1	Test 2
Test 2	<b>Test 2</b>	<b>Exposure</b> Test 2	Test 1	<b>Test 1</b>	Test 1	Test 1
Test 1	<b>Test 2</b>	Test 2	<b>Exposure</b> Test 2	<b>Test 1</b>	Test 1	Test 1
Test 1	<b>Test 1</b>	Test 2	Test 2	<b>Exposure</b> <b>Test 2</b>	Test 1	Test 1
Test 1	<b>Test 1</b>	Test 1	Test 2	<b>Test 2</b>	<b>Exposure</b> Test 2	Test 1



## Notification Template for TTS Eligible Close Contact

Subject: Exposure to COVID-19 Case at (SCHOOL/PROGRAM)

Dear (INDIVIDUAL'S NAME),

We are writing to update you on a recent development regarding the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). We have learned that a (SCHOOL/PROGRAM) community member has been diagnosed with COVID-19. You were identified as a close contact of this individual.

You should monitor your health starting now through (DATE OF 10 DAYS AFTER LAST EXPOSURE TO POSITIVE CASE). Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever (temperature greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit), chills, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle/body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea.

Based on an evaluation of your exposure, we have determined that **you are eligible to participate in a program** that will minimize time out of school/program, **Test to Stay**. To remain eligible, you will be tested for COVID-19 twice within a 7-day period after your exposure, with the last test occurring 5-7 days after the last close contact. If you test negative, you will be able to stay in school/program, if you remain without symptoms, continue to properly wear a mask, and physically distance. You may participate in extracurricular activities, provided that masking can be maintained. You may not participate in sports competition until after the testing period (two negative tests). You will still need to quarantine from the public and the community during the next 5 days, even if you choose to participate in the Test to Stay option.

**If your child develops [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, please do not have your child come to school/program.** Contact their medical provider to discuss evaluation and testing. Any individuals who are sick with or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 must stay home for at least 5 days and fully masked for at least 10 days since their symptoms first appeared AND at least 24 hours with no fever (without using fever-reducing medications) AND symptom improvement. See the Chicago Department of Public Health's guidance on [what to do if you are sick](#). If your symptoms are severe, such as difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion or difficulty waking up, or bluish lips or face, please seek the closest emergency department or call 9-1-1 immediately. For any additional COVID-19 questions or support, please visit [www.chicago.gov/coronavirus](http://www.chicago.gov/coronavirus) for the most reliable information. If you do not find the information you need on the website, reach out to your administrator for further guidance.

The health and wellness of our staff and students are the highest priority of (SCHOOL/PROGRAM). We continue to follow the Chicago Department of Public Health and the CDC guidelines as we ensure proper protocols and preventative measures are in place for the health and safety of our staff and students.

Please contact us at (SCHOOL/PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION) if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

(SIGNATURE)

(SCHOOL/PROGRAM LEADERSHIP NAME)





### Testing Area Checklist

- Staff roles to consider: registration, actual testers, results documenter, and crowd overseer to help maintain physical distancing. Review plan of action for those that test positive. Check out staff
- Storage space for all TTS supplies
- Privacy screen(s)
- Tables and chairs (for participants and testers), adequate space for tests to develop
- Power outlets, WIFI, Laptop(s) (and a 2D scanner if using Shield)
- Clipboards, ink pens (for registration, consents, etc.)
- Handouts, Patient Fact Sheets (FAQs for Covid-19 infection, Covid testing, Covid vaccine education, test results)
- Fillable form (electronic or paper) with the following information: covid result, staff that performed test, date/time, patient name/date of birth
- Testing kits & supplies
- Hand sanitizer, sanitizing wipes, disinfectant spray, paper towels, Kleenex
- PPE: gloves, gowns, N95 masks, eye goggle/face shield
- Thermometer(s)
- Timer/clock
- Garbage can(s) with clear garbage bag(s)
- Garbage can with a red garbage bag (for disposal of testing materials, gloves, etc.)