

## Quarantine and Isolation

### ***If I test positive for COVID-19, what should I do?***

If you test positive for COVID-19, do not come to school. Immediately report these results to your school principal or supervisor and await further instructions. If you have symptoms consistent with COVID-19, you should also contact your personal health care provider and follow any advice he/she gives.

You will receive a call from your local health department to begin their contact tracing process, but you may also receive a call from Roane County Schools or Roane General Hospital so that we can begin contact tracing within the schools. During this call, you will be asked to provide a summary of your activities for the 48 hours prior to symptoms appearing or prior to your test, including who you were in contact with, how long you were in contact with them, and whether or not you and others were wearing a mask, following social distancing guidelines, etc.

### ***If I test positive for COVID-19, when can I return to school?***

If you test positive and display symptoms of COVID-19, then you can return to school once your symptoms have improved for 10 days and you have not shown a fever for at least 24 hours without the need for fever-reducing medicines. Additionally, if diarrhea presented as one of your symptoms, you should not return to school until that has passed.

If you test positive but are asymptomatic, you may return to school 14 days after the test was taken.

Once you have tested positive, you should not be tested again as you may continue to test positive - even if your symptoms have subsided and/or your potential to spread the virus - for up to 90 days.

### ***Some say “quarantine.” Some say “isolation.” What’s the difference?***

According to the CDC, “quarantine” is a preventative measure for those who may have been exposed to a contagious disease to see if they get sick. Those in quarantine should avoid contact with other people, especially those who may be at-risk for serious complications as a result of the disease. With COVID, that includes those with a history of breathing trouble, diabetes, the elderly, and those with compromised immune systems. Even if they are not at-risk, when in quarantine, you should avoid close contact with any other people. Healthy people may contract the disease as an asymptomatic carrier, and while they will not get sick, they may further the spread to other people.

“Isolation,” on the other hand, is separating people who are sick from those who are not. If you test positive for COVID, you should isolate for at least 10 days from the time your symptoms appeared or the test date, whichever is earlier. During isolation, you may be around others who have already tested positive.

### ***When I was contacted by the health department, they told me something different about quarantining than the school system did. Why is this?***

Depending on the contact you had with a positive case, you may or may not be told by the health department to quarantine, even if someone from the school has already told you to quarantine and not return to school for 14 days after your last contact.

In its mission to protect public health, the health department is focused on controlling the community spread of COVID and especially its serious effects on certain parts of the population. As a result, their focus is on verified close contacts who are most likely to have spread the disease.

As a school system, our main focus is on the health and safety of our students and staff and the continued operation of our schools, particularly the in-person learning option. Unfortunately, a lack of available substitute teachers and resources already focused on our distance learning program has made it difficult to continue to offer in-person learning if COVID spreads between groups in schools. So, our approach is to act as carefully and conservatively as possible and have any group quarantine that has even one confirmed positive in it. While a temporary burden on families in that group, this extra precaution will help us keep schools open as often as possible.