

## Management of Sick Students and Staff

### What actions should be taken by students/staff sent home with COVID-like symptoms? (Updated 8/13/20)

- All students and staff sent home with COVID-like symptoms should be diagnostically tested. Student and staff should remain home from school until they receive the test results.
- Students and staff who are confirmed or probable cases of COVID-19 must complete 10 calendar days of isolation from the date of first symptom onset **and** be fever-free for 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medications **and** other symptoms have improved before returning to school.
- Students and staff returning to school after experiencing COVID-like symptoms but being diagnosed with a non-COVID illness must meet the criteria for returning to school for the illness with which they have been diagnosed. At a minimum, the individual must be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication **and** have had no diarrhea or vomiting in the previous 24 hours. Other diseases have specific criteria for when a student or staff member can [return to school](#)<sup>1</sup>. Follow school health policies and communicable disease guidance for those illnesses. A doctor's note documenting the alternative diagnosis **or** a negative COVID-19 test result should accompany a student or staff member returning to school with an alternative diagnosis after experiencing COVID-like symptoms. Schools and districts should assist families in locating free or reduced cost medical clinics for assistance where needed.
- Students and staff with COVID-like symptoms who do not get tested for COVID-19 and who do not provide a **healthcare provider's** note documenting an alternative diagnosis, must complete 10 calendar days of isolation from the date of first symptom onset **and** be fever-free for 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medications **and** other symptoms have improved before returning to school.
- Medical evaluation and COVID-19 diagnostic testing is strongly recommended for all persons with COVID-like symptoms.

### If a student is sent home sick with suspected COVID-19 symptoms (e.g., runny nose, fever, diarrhea, etc.), must all their siblings/household members be sent home as well and quarantined for 14 calendar days?

Yes, if one of the household members is being evaluated for COVID-19, the rest of the household must be quarantined until an alternative diagnosis is made or negative result received. If the sick student becomes a confirmed case (i.e., tests positive for COVID-19) or a probable case (i.e., has COVID-like symptoms and is epidemiologically linked to known case), the local health department (LHD) conducting contact tracing will place household contacts, including siblings, in quarantine for 14 calendar days. The health department also will provide guidance on how to safely quarantine and isolate within the household.

### How many symptoms does a person need to have to be considered suspect COVID-19?

Students and staff exhibiting one or more [COVID-like symptoms](#) should be immediately isolated, and evaluated. Schools should evaluate each student/staff to determine if this symptom is new or if it is part of an existing condition for this student/staff.

**Our current school policy recommends sending children home with a temperature of 100.0°F or greater. The ISBE and CDC guidance both say 100.4°F or greater. Which should we use?**

For consistency with CDC and Illinois Joint Guidance for Schools, it is recommended that schools use  $\geq 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$  as the threshold for fever.

**If the sick person has a known condition causing the symptoms, e.g., allergies, migraine, etc., can this be taken into consideration?**

Every symptomatic person should be evaluated by their healthcare provider on a case-by-case basis and decisions to test for COVID-19 should be based on their personal health history. Diagnostic testing is strongly encouraged whenever an individual experiences COVID-like symptoms as it is possible to have COVID-19 and other health conditions at the same time. Early diagnosis can prevent further transmission. Individuals who have undergone testing should remain home away from others while waiting for COVID-19 test results.