

Lorain County School Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) during COVID-19

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**Lorain County
Public Health**

For the Health of Us All

Q: What is exposure or a close contact?

A: You may get identified as a close contact of a COVID-19 case if you were within 6 feet of the COVID-19 case for more than 15 minutes. You must have been in close contact with the case in the 3 days before they started having symptoms, or once their symptoms had already started. Also, the case must have been confirmed with a positive PCR test (not an antigen test). Anyone living in the same household as a COVID-19 case counts as a close contact and must quarantine.

You do NOT count as a close contact if you spent time with someone who's an identified close contact, or if you walk by a COVID-19 case (spend less than 15 minutes with them). In addition to being more than 6 feet apart and spending less than 15 minutes together, using barriers such as masks, plexiglass, and being outside can also reduce your risk of getting COVID-19 and from getting identified as an official close contact.

Q: I was exposed to a COVID-19 case, now what?

A: If you meet the requirements to count as a close contact of a confirmed case, a health department will call you to discuss how to quarantine, which includes staying home. If the COVID-19 case you got exposed to lives in Lorain County, Lorain County Public Health will call you. If the COVID-19 case lives outside Lorain County, the case's local health department will contact you.

Q: My child is a close contact, why hasn't someone called me yet?

A: LCPH calls most close contacts within 24 hours of receiving a confirmed COVID-19 test. It's possible that there were enough barriers (masking, distance, etc.) between your child and the positive case so that your child does not count as an official close contact.

Q: If my child is quarantined as a close contact, can I still go to work? If I get quarantined, can my child still go to school?

A: Yes. Only the person officially quarantined must stay home. If someone in a household is quarantined, everyone else may do normal activities (as long as they're following standard COVID-19 precautions).

Q: If my child is in quarantine, does he/she need to get tested?

A: No. People in quarantine just need to stay home and monitor their symptoms. No testing is necessary.

Q: If my child is in quarantine and he/she gets a negative test, can he/she go back to school?

A: No. Anyone in quarantine must stay in quarantine for the full 14 days. You may have an undetectable amount of virus in your system at the time of your negative test. Symptoms may appear 2 to 14 days after exposure to the virus.

Q: Can quarantined people go outside?

A: Yes, quarantined people may leave the house to go outside or to go for a walk, as long as they can stay 6 feet from others. They may not have parties, invite friends over, go to a grocery store, or do anything else that might expose others.

Q: We got a positive test at an urgent care. What should I do?

A: Most urgent cares conduct antigen tests, which ODH does not consider reliable enough to determine positive cases. Ask your doctor for an order to get a PCR test, which will confirm whether you have COVID-19. Go to bit.ly/locotest for a list of nearby PCR testing locations.

Q: My child was quarantined, what do I do now?

A: Follow the directions LCPH gave you during the phone call. Report your child's symptom status to LCPH every day.

Q: I got a letter that says my child was in a classroom with someone that has COVID-19, what do I do now?

A: Be extra vigilant with symptom checks for your child. Otherwise, no action is needed.

Q: My child was around someone that is now being quarantined as a close contact. Does my child need to stay home and quarantine?

A: No. Only people that have been identified as having close contact with the positive Covid 19 case need to quarantine. Close contacts need to stay home and quarantine so that if they become sick they do not spread it to others.

Q: What is the data saying now that schools and extracurricular activities have restarted?

A: If Lorain County Public Health sees cases in schools, we investigate. Since COVID-19 is spreading in the community, it's hard to identify exactly where someone might have gotten infected. For Lorain County COVID-19 data, visit LorainCountyHealth.com/data. For data on schools, visit [ODH's dashboard to be released THURS 9/17].

Q: Where can I get tested? Can I get tested even if I don't have symptoms?

A: Go to bit.ly/locotest for a list of nearby PCR testing locations. Most test providers still require symptoms for testing.

Q: If my COVID-19 positive college student comes home, what happens?

A: First, call Lorain County Public Health at 440-322-6367 to notify us of the situation (college reporting has been delayed). Anyone living in the same household as a COVID-19 case must quarantine.

Q: My child carools to extracurricular activities -- what does public health recommend we do?

A: If a carpool is needed with people outside of your household, everyone should wear a face covering over their nose and mouth while in the vehicle. Open windows to circulate air. Wash hands before and after the carpool, or use hand sanitizer.

More resources:

General COVID-19 information: LorainCountyHealth.com/coronavirus

Local COVID-19 data: LorainCountyHealth.com/data

Downloadable signs and resources: LorainCountyHealth.com/covid19resources

Questions about COVID-19? Call Lorain County Public Health at 440-322-6367.