



# COVID-19 School Health Policy

Developed collaboratively with unions, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), and NYC Test + Trace Corp (T2), this policy provides guidance for schools regarding:

- Thresholds for school opening and closure during the COVID-19 pandemic,
- Staying healthy while at school,
- Daily health screenings for students and school-based staff,
- Temperature screenings
- The establishment of an Isolation Room,
- What to do if a student or staff member shows signs of COVID-19 while at school,
- Outreach to the Situation Room.

## Thresholds for School Opening and Closure During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The health and safety of students and staff are of the utmost priority when considering reopening schools. The New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) has worked closely with DOHMH to determine thresholds for opening and, if necessary, closing schools as a result of an increase in positive cases within school communities.

In order for schools to reopen, and remain open, the percentage of positive tests in New York City must be less than 3% using a 7-day rolling average. Schools will close if the percentage of positive tests in New York City are equal to or more than 3% using a 7-day rolling average.

It is important to note that the above threshold is just one trigger for closing schools but may not be the only trigger. For example, a decision to close schools would be based on recurring, uncontrolled outbreaks of COVID-19 in schools, even if the overall case rates across New York City remained low.

## Staying Healthy While at School

In partnership with the DOHMH, the NYCDOE has established comprehensive health and safety protocols and is emphasizing four key safety measures for students and staff:

- Maintaining a distance of at least 6 feet from other adults, and from students when feasible;
- Washing and sanitizing hands regularly;
- Wearing a face covering; and
- Staying home when sick or after being in close contact with a person with COVID-19.

Physical distancing guidelines and mandatory use of face coverings must be enforced for all individuals while on school property. [A face covering](#) is any well-secured cloth or disposable mask that covers a person's nose and mouth. A face covering with an exhalation valve or vent cannot be used on school property as exhalation valves allow unfiltered exhaled air to escape to others. Face shields are not appropriate substitutes for face coverings. Additional guidance on face coverings is forthcoming.

## Daily Health Screenings

Students and school-based staff cannot report to school based on the results of the following questions in the NYCDOE's daily health screener:

1. Have you experienced any symptoms of COVID-19, including a fever of 100.0 degrees F or greater, a new cough, new loss of taste or smell or shortness of breath within the past 10 days?
  - No. Go to the next question.
  - Yes, and I have received a negative result from a COVID-19 test since the onset of symptoms AND have not had symptoms for at least 24 hours. Go to the next question.
  - Yes, and I am not in the category above. No further screening is needed. The employee/guest may not enter the building.
2. In the past 10 days, have you gotten a positive result from a COVID-19 test that tested saliva or used a nose or throat swab? (not a blood test)
  - No. Go to the next question.
  - Yes. No further screening is needed. The employee/guest may not enter the building.
3. To the best of your knowledge, in the past 14 days, have you been in close contact (**within 6 feet for at least 10 minutes**) with anyone who tested positive for COVID-19 or who has or had symptoms of COVID-19?
  - No. Go to the next question.
  - Yes. No further screening is needed. The employee/guest may not enter the building.
4. Have you traveled internationally or from a state with widespread community transmission of COVID-19 per the New York State Travel Advisory in the past 14 days?
  - No. The employee/guest may enter the building.
  - Yes. No further screening is needed. The employee/guest may not enter the building.

To ensure that staff and students do not report to school if they have or potentially may have COVID-19 or are feeling ill, a health screening, including a temperature check, must be completed by all students, staff, and visitors before entering NYCDOE school facilities. Oral thermometers will be provided to all students' families; see "Temperature Screenings" for details. This screening should be completed at home and must be completed each day.

School-based staff, students, and visitors can complete the health screening in the following ways:

### Online Health Screening Tool:

- NYCDOE families/students are encouraged to use [the online health screening tool](#) to pre-screen themselves before entering a NYCDOE building.
  - Upon entering the school facility, families/students will be asked to provide the results of their screening either by showing the email on their smartphone or a printout of the

- results. Families should support students as needed with this online screening questionnaire and should ensure students have proper documentation for morning entry.
- For students who travel via [school bus](#), families must complete the screening, including checking their child's temperature, prior to boarding a school bus to make certain that their child is well enough to ride on the bus and attend school. Bus personnel will not be conducting screenings of children prior to boarding the bus. School site designated staff will be checking for completion of student health screening at entry. Students who lack the screening clearance will need to be supported in completing this screening process at the school, particularly young children.
  - For morning student drop off, every effort should be made to ensure that student health screenings are completed prior to families dropping off their children to school, especially for our younger students.
  - NYCDOE employees are strongly encouraged to use the online tool to pre-screen themselves before entering a NYCDOE building. Upon entering the facility, staff will be asked to provide the results of the screening either by showing the email on their phones or a printout of the results.
    - The screening results for school-based staff are valid until midnight of the same day.
    - School-based staff must show clearance every time they reenter a NYCDOE building.
  - The online health screening application can be found at <https://healthscreening.schools.nyc>.

#### Paper Copy of Health Screening Questionnaire:

- If students are not able to pre-screen using the online tool, schools must provide families with several copies of the health screening questionnaire so families can complete the questionnaire at home.
- If staff are not able to pre-screen using the online tool, staff should print and complete the health screening questionnaire for completion on a daily basis at home.
- A printable version of the health screening questionnaire can be found at [https://healthscreening.schools.nyc/docs/DOE Health Screening Questionnaire\\_090420.pdf](https://healthscreening.schools.nyc/docs/DOE_Health_Screening_Questionnaire_090420.pdf)<sup>1</sup>.

#### In-Person Health Screening at School:

- **Any person who needs to complete the health screening in-person will undergo a temperature check.**
- If NYCDOE families are unable to pre-screen their child(ren) at home using either the online tool or paper questionnaire, families will need to complete their child's screening in-person at the school building prior to their child's entry.
  - Any student who needs to complete the health screening in-person will undergo a temperature check.
  - Schools should determine the best way to implement on-site screening for students using either the online health screening tool or paper copies of the screening questionnaire. Young children may require additional support from a staff member.
- If NYCDOE employees are not able to pre-screen themselves prior to coming to work, they will be required to complete an in-person screening assessment prior to entering the building.

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<sup>1</sup> Translated versions are available using the following links, with additional languages forthcoming: [Arabic](#), [Bengali](#), [Chinese](#), [French](#), [Haitian Creole](#), [Korean](#), [Russian](#), [Spanish](#), and [Urdu](#).

- Any staff member who needs to complete the health screening in person will undergo a temperature check.
- The screening results for school-based staff are valid until midnight of the same day.
- School-based staff must show clearance every time they reenter a NYCDOE building.
- The paper version of the health screening form can be found at [https://healthscreening.schools.nyc/docs/DOE\\_Health\\_Screening\\_Questionnaire\\_090420.pdf](https://healthscreening.schools.nyc/docs/DOE_Health_Screening_Questionnaire_090420.pdf).

### **Supporting Younger Students and District 75 Students with In-Person Health Screenings**

For younger students who arrive at school without a completed questionnaire and are unable to respond to the health screening questions, the school should make an effort to contact a family member for support with screening. However, if a parent/guardian is unable to be contacted, the school should check the student's temperature to ensure that it is below 100.0 degrees F and ask the student about their well-being (e.g., "How are you feeling today?").

For District 75 students who arrive at school without a completed questionnaire, the school should make an effort to contact a family member for support with screening. If it is not feasible to contact the student's family member prior to the student's entry, the school should check the student's temperature to ensure that it is below 100.0 degrees F and ask the student about their well-being (e.g., "How are you feeling today?"). In District 75 schools, temperature check alone prior to entry is acceptable if a student is not developmentally able to answer questions regarding their well-being. In the event that contact with the family was not possible prior to the student's entry, once the student is in class the school should conduct outreach to the family to complete the screener as well as remind the family that the screening must be conducted at home before student leaves for school.

### **Student Pick Up**

If a student fails a health screening or shows symptoms of COVID-19, the guardian of the student must be immediately contacted and advised to pick up the child. The student must be taken to the appropriate room, as listed in this policy, and to wait for the guardian to arrive. If the guardian cannot be reached, the school must contact the emergency contacts on the student's Blue Card. Failure of the guardian or emergency contact to pick up the student in a timely manner does not warrant a report to the New York State Central Registry (SCR), unless accompanied by additional concerns or suspicions regarding the student's safety which would require that a report be made in accordance with [Chancellor's Regulation A-750](#).

### **Failing a Health Screening: Students**

Any student who fails their health screening (i.e., answers yes to any of the questions below) should be escorted to a designated room per the guidance below and must be picked up by a family member, or, for students who are dropped off, sent home with a family member prior to entering the building, if possible.

<p>Have you experienced any symptoms of COVID-19, including a fever of 100.0 degrees F or greater, a new cough, new loss of taste or smell or shortness of breath within the past 10 days, without a negative COVID-19 test?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student should be escorted to the Isolation Room for family pick up.</li> <li>• Students in the Isolation Room must wear a face covering and sit six feet away from other students and staff members.</li> <li>• Family should seek medical attention.</li> <li>• Principal calls the Situation Room at 212-393-2780.</li> <li>• Student must immediately isolate for 10 days.</li> </ul>
<p>In the past 10 days, have you gotten a positive result from a COVID-19 test that tested saliva or used a nose or throat swab? (not a blood test)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student should be escorted to the Isolation Room for family pick up.</li> <li>• Students in the Isolation Room must wear a face covering and sit six feet away from other students and staff members.</li> <li>• Family should seek medical attention.</li> <li>• Principal calls the Situation Room at 212-393-2780.</li> <li>• Student must immediately isolate for 10 days.</li> </ul>
<p>To the best of your knowledge, in the past 14 days, have you been in close contact (within 6 feet for at least 10 minutes) with anyone who tested positive for COVID-19 or who has or had symptoms of COVID-19?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the student is exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms, the student should be escorted to the Isolation Room for family pick up.</li> <li>• If the student is not exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms, the student should be escorted to the non-instructional space or room <a href="#">used for students who attend in-person school on the incorrect day</a>. The student should be picked up by family.</li> <li>• Students in both rooms must wear a face covering and sit six feet away from other students and staff members.</li> <li>• Family should seek medical attention as needed.</li> <li>• Principal calls the Situation Room at 212-393-2780.</li> <li>• Students must quarantine for 14 days from last exposure if deemed a close contact with anyone who tested positive for COVID-19.</li> </ul>
<p>Have you traveled internationally or from a state with widespread community transmission of COVID-19 per <a href="#">the New York State Travel Advisory</a> in the past 14 days?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the student is exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms, the student should be escorted to the Isolation Room for family pick up.</li> <li>• If the student is not exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms, the student should be escorted to the non-instructional space or room <a href="#">used for students who attend in-person school on the incorrect day</a>. The student should be picked up by family.</li> <li>• Students in both rooms must wear a face covering and sit six feet away from other students and staff members.</li> <li>• Student must quarantine for 14 days from the date they left the state or country where they traveled.</li> </ul>

## Failing a Health Screening: School-Based Staff

Any employee who fails their health screening will be refused entry to the building by the School Safety Agent/NYCDOE Safety Officer. Please see [Personnel Memorandum No. 2](#) for further information about excused leaves for employees for COVID-related reasons.

## Operationalizing Health Screenings

Principals must have procedures in place to ensure that everyone who enters the building each day has passed the health screening at home or prior to entry to the school building. Any person who needs to complete the health screening in-person will undergo a temperature check. As per NYS Education Department (NYSED) [guidance](#), schools should have a designated staff person to review the incoming reports of screening by staff and parent/guardian and to attest that they are completed.

To operationalize this guidance please note the following:

- Per [NYSDOH](#), schools are prohibited from keeping records of student, faculty, staff, and visitor health data (e.g., the specific temperature data of an individual), but are permitted to maintain records that confirm individuals were screened and the result of such screening (e.g., pass/fail, cleared/not cleared).
- Any questionnaires that are collected for purposes of completing the daily screening attestation requirement must be immediately shredded to protect student, faculty, staff, and visitor health data.

## Temperature Screenings

### Temperature Checks for In-Person Health Screenings

Anyone needing to complete a health screening in-person at a school must undergo a temperature check.

### Random Temperature Checks

As an added precaution in addition to at-home daily health screenings, schools will be instituting random temperature checks upon entry using [hand-held non-touch thermometers](#) and [wall-mounted thermometers](#).

### Taking Temperatures At School

Designated school staff, with the assistance of School Safety Agents, will be checking the temperatures of any students, staff, and visitors entering in the building who need to complete an in-person health screening, as well as checking temperatures at random.

- Face coverings and gloves must be worn by designated staff taking temperatures.

- Any student presenting with a temperature of 100.0 degrees F or higher from a temperature check must be assessed by the nurse or health professional in the Isolation Room. The student must stay in the building's Isolation Room until picked up and the principal should call the Situation Room at 212-393-2780.
- School-based staff members with a temperature of 100.0 degrees F or higher will be directed to leave the building. The school should advise the staff member to visit a doctor and get tested for COVID-19. The principal should call the Situation Room 212-393-2780.
- NYCDOE-contracted Community Based Organizations providing early childhood services must continue to conduct daily health checks and align with NYCDOE and DOHMH issued guidance that pertains to their program and setting.

## Thermometers

In order to support with temperature screenings both at home and at school, the NYCDOE has provided all schools with the following:

- Oral thermometers for all students:
  - Oral thermometers should be backpacked home along with [this flyer](#) on the first day each student attends school in-person. These thermometers will support families in taking their students' temperature and completing the health screening form prior to arriving at school.
- [Hand-held non-touch thermometers](#) and batteries:
  - These thermometers should be used for individuals who need to complete an onsite health screening as well as for random temperature checks as students and staff enter the building.
  - Non-touch hand-held thermometers are most accurate when used within two inches of a person's forehead and can be acceptably used within three inches.
  - The iHealth PT3 manual can be found [here](#).
  - The Finicare IR200 instructions can be [viewed here](#).
- [Wall-mounted thermometers](#):
  - These thermometers should be used for random temperature checks as students and staff enter the building.
  - These thermometers should be installed using double-sided tape and should be installed by main entrance(s) of the building.

## Isolation Room

In order to accommodate a student who may exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, every building must designate space to be used as an Isolation Room. An Isolation Room is a place where a student with suspected COVID-19 symptoms can be safely isolated in the building until they are examined and can be picked up by a guardian. A building's Isolation Room must be large enough to house multiple students while maintaining physical distancing requirements of six feet. Each building must also designate a second space as a Back-Up Isolation Room, which can be used for other purposes until needed. Multiple students



are permitted in the Isolation Room as long as they maintain physical distancing requirements of six feet and are wearing face coverings. Principals can view [this deck regarding Isolation Rooms](#).

## Isolation Room Staffing

Each building will have an Isolation Room with at least one staff member assigned to supervise the Isolation Room when in it is in use. The principal will designate this staff member. The principal (or principals, if on a campus) must provide additional staff to support the supervision of the Isolation Room. For a campus, this can be a shared responsibility during the day. Members of the Building Response Team (BRT) will assist in escorting, monitoring, supervising, and reporting related to the use of the Isolation Room. Please see additional guidance regarding [the Building Response Team during COVID-19](#).

Members of the BRT will support the Isolation Room and the staff member(s) assigned to supervise the Isolation Room. A BRT member (e.g. Incident Assessor or Special Needs Coordinator) is responsible for escorting the student to the Isolation Room. After a staff member contacts the guardian of the student in the Isolation Room, a BRT member (e.g. the Emergency Officer) will be responsible for meeting the guardian at the visitors' entrance where the student will be escorted to be released to the guardian. At the time of pick up, the school will advise the guardian to have the student seen by a doctor and [get tested for COVID-19](#).

The principal, BRT Leader and/or Recorder will ensure that the incident involving the ill student is:

- Reported to the Situation Room by calling 212-393-2780,
- Reported to the Emergency Information Center (EIC) by calling 718-935-3210,
- Documented in OORS.

## When and How to Use the Isolation Room

When a student exhibits symptoms of COVID-19, including one or more the following symptoms:

- Fever of 100.0 degrees F or higher or chills,
- New cough,
- New loss of taste or smell,
- New shortness of breath,

BRT members will be activated as determined by the BRT Leader. The student must be escorted to the Isolation Room by a BRT member (e.g. Incident Assessor or Special Needs Coordinator) wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

When the ill student is placed in the Isolation Room, the building nurse will be contacted and will come to the Isolation Room and assess the student. For buildings with a School-Based Health Center, a Health Professional will be contacted to visit Isolation Room and conduct the student's health assessment in the Isolation Room.

The ill student must be assessed by the nurse/health professional in the Isolation Room. Should the nurse/health professional be unavailable at that moment to examine the student, the student must wait



in the building's Isolation Room until assessment is complete. The student cannot be released to the guardian until the health assessment is completed.

When an ill student has been picked up and the Isolation Room is empty, the Isolation Room must be closed momentarily for a rapid deep cleaning with disinfectant, so the room may be opened again quickly. A deep cleaning of the Isolation Room must be performed at the end of the day.

The principal/BRT Leader/Recorder will ensure that the incident involving the ill student is:

- Reported to the Situation Room by calling 212-393-2780,
- Reported to the Emergency Information Center (EIC) by calling 718-935-3210,
- Documented in OORS.

## Symptoms of COVID-19 While at School

### Student Shows Symptoms of COVID-19 While at School

- A classroom teacher or school aide notifies the Main Office/Principal/BRT leader that a student is not well and experiencing one or more COVID-like symptoms, including:
  - Fever of 100.0 degrees F or higher or chills,
  - New cough,
  - New loss of taste or smell, and/or
  - New shortness of breath.
- The Building Response Team is activated.
- The student showing symptoms of COVID-19 will be escorted to the Isolation Room by a designated BRT member (Special Needs Coordinator or Incident Assessor) wearing appropriate PPE.
- The area/classroom where the student was showing symptoms must be cleaned as soon possible. A deep cleaning of the area/classroom must be performed at the end of the day.
- BRT Emergency Officer calls the student's guardian for pick up.
  - When the ill student is placed in the Isolation Room, the building nurse will be contacted and will come to the Isolation Room and assess the student.
  - Should the nurse/health professional be unavailable at that moment to examine the student, the student must wait in the building's Isolation Room until assessment is complete.
- The student cannot be released to the guardian until the health assessment is completed.
- Upon arrival of the student's guardian, the BRT Emergency Officer escorts the student to the visitors' entrance for pick-up by the guardian, reviews the NYCDOE's "Sent Home With Symptoms" letter with the guardian, and advises the student to visit a doctor and get tested for COVID-19, and [provides the information of the closest testing site](#).
- The BRT Emergency Officer confirms with the Command Post staff that the student and guardian have exited the building and all guidance has been provided.

- When the ill student has been picked up and the Isolation Room is empty, the Isolation Room must be closed momentarily for a rapid deep cleaning, so the room may be opened again quickly. A deep cleaning of the Isolation Room must be performed at the end of the day.
- The principal, BRT Leader and/or Recorder will ensure that the incident involving the ill student is:
  - Reported to the Situation Room by calling 212-393-2780,
  - Reported to the Emergency Information Center (EIC) by calling 718-935-3210,
  - And documented in OORS.
- The Situation Room will provide the principal with a letter to be disseminated to the school community regarding a student exhibiting COVID-like symptoms during the school day.
  - The school may use any communication platform available to disseminate the letter.
- The principal asks school designee (Parent Coordinator or nurse) to follow up with family on the ill student's condition on regular intervals.
- The principal and/or designee shares any test results or updates with:
  - The Situation Room,
  - In EIC, and
  - In the OORS report.

### School-Based Staff Member Shows Symptoms of COVID-19 While at School

- The ill staff member immediately notifies principal that they are not feeling well and are experiencing COVID-like symptoms.
  - Symptoms of COVID-19 include:
    - Fever of 100.0 degrees F or higher or chills,
    - New cough,
    - New loss of taste or smell and/or,
    - New shortness of breath.
- The principal will alert the BRT for awareness and potential support, including temporary coverage of a class, and nurse, if necessary.
- The school will advise the staff member to get tested as soon as possible.
- The staff member goes home.
  - If the staff member does not immediately leave the building and needs to wait for transportation assistance, the staff member may report to the Isolation Room.
  - Any staff member with special health concerns are managed by the BRT Special Needs Coordinator.
- The area/classroom where the staff member was showing symptoms must be cleaned as soon possible. A deep cleaning of the area/classroom must be performed at the end of the day.
- The principal, BRT Leader and/or Recorder will ensure that the incident involving the ill staff member is:
  - Reported to the Situation Room by calling 212-393-2780,
  - Reported to the Emergency Information Center (EIC) by calling 718-935-3210,
  - And documented in OORS.
- The Situation Room will provide the principal with a letter to be disseminated to the school community regarding a staff member having exhibited COVID-like symptoms during the school day.

- The school may use any communication platform available to disseminate the letter.
- The principal and/or designee will follow up with the ill staff member and share any test results or updates with:
  - The Situation Room,
  - In EIC, and
  - In the OORS report.

## Student or School-Based Staff Member Calls Out Sick With COVID-Like Symptoms

Should a student or staff member call out sick because they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, the principal must call the Situation Room at 212-393-2780 and await next steps. The principal must also call the EIC at 718-935-3210.

## Criteria for Returning to School After Showing Symptoms

Any individual (student or staff member) showing signs of COVID-19 can only return to school when all the following conditions are met:

- Received a positive COVID-19 test AND
- Isolated for 10 days AND
- The individual has been fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication and overall symptoms are improving.

**OR**

- Received a negative COVID-19 test AND
- The individual has been fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication and overall symptoms are improving.

**OR**

- Never got a COVID-19 test AND
- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms started AND
- The individual has been fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication and overall symptoms are improving.

If DOHMH or T2 determine the individual is considered a close contact of a positive case, the individual can only return to school when the following is met:

- The individual has completed a 14-day quarantine regardless of COVID-19 test results since their last exposure to that case.

Students in quarantine should participate in remote learning as possible. Staff in quarantine should discuss with their principals whether they are able to work remotely and may be eligible for excused leave if they are unable to work remotely.

## Positive COVID-19 Case in School

### Definitions:

- **Case:** A person (student or staff member) with infection caused by the virus that causes COVID-19 as evidenced by a diagnostic test.
- **Confirmed Case:** A person (student or staff member) with infection caused by the virus that causes COVID-19 as evidenced by a diagnostic test AND is entered the DOHMH tracking system.
- **Contact:** A person (student or staff member) who has been within six feet for more than ten minutes of a case.
- **Infectious Period:** The period of contagiousness when COVID-19 can be transmitted to another person.
  - For people with symptoms, the infectious period is generally two days before symptom onset until ten days after illness onset.
  - For people with no symptoms (asymptomatic), the period is estimated at two days before through ten days after specimen collection.
- **Exposure:** Defined as close contact less than six feet for more than ten minutes with a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19 during the case's infectious period, regardless of the use of a face covering or barrier.
  - In a school setting, all class members of a case are considered exposed, while people who use a classroom at a different time from a case are not considered exposed.

### COVID Response Situation Room

The NYCDOE, T2, DOHMH, and Department of Buildings have collaborated to create the COVID Response Situation Room (the Situation Room). This multi-agency partnership has been developed to support a swift, organized response to COVID-19 cases among students and staff in schools during the 2020-21 school year. The Situation Room will facilitate a multi-agency response to any COVID-19 related incidents at all NYCDOE schools, ensuring that the appropriate interventions take place while effectively and quickly communicating updates to school communities. The Situation Room is a “one-stop shop” for handling COVID-19 cases in schools. It is designed to support principals by providing all essential assistance needed for a potential or confirmed COVID-19 case, including verifying cases, providing communications to be shared with school communities, initiating any investigation or contact tracing as needed, and advising schools on next steps.

### Contacting the Situation Room: 212-393-2780

The Situation Room serves as a principal's primary contact any time a COVID-19 related incident arises in a school involving students or staff, including but not limited to:

- A notice of a positive COVID-19 test result for a staff member or student,
- A student or staff member reporting COVID-19 symptoms or sent home with COVID-19 symptoms, including:
  - Fever of 100.0 degrees F or higher or chills,
  - New cough,
  - New loss of taste or smell,

- New shortness of breath.

A principal must always contact the Situation Room with alerts or questions related to COVID-19 incidents in a school. To report a COVID-19 incident, a principal must call 212-393-2780. The Situation Room's operating hours are:

- Monday thru Friday: 5:30am to 9:30pm
- Sunday: 11:00am to 9:30pm
- For overnight hours, a voicemail box will receive messages, which will be responded to once the Situation Room reopens the following day.

All cases called in will receive a response. Principals are the only staff who should call the Situation Room. Once a call is answered, principals will be asked [specific questions from this Intake Form](#) about the COVID-19 case or event in school, including information about the student or staff member, last known location in the school, and possible close contacts. The Situation Room will issue automatic notifications to alert other NYCDOE offices.

## Self-Reported Positive Case (Unconfirmed Case) In a School

Any student or staff member who self-reports a COVID-19 case while at school will be asked to leave the school, or in the case of a student, a guardian will be called to pick up the student. If a self-reported COVID-19 case occurs after school hours, the principal should call the Situation Room at 212-393-2780 and await next steps (see below for self-reported tests with and without documentation.)

### Self-Reported Positive Test With Documentation

- The principal calls the Situation Room at 212-393-2780 and reports the self-reported case.
- The principal submits the lab report, by email to the Situation Room at [rts@buildings.nyc.gov](mailto:rts@buildings.nyc.gov) and awaits next steps.
- The Situation Room staff will work to confirm the positive test; some case confirmations are able to happen immediately while others may take up to three hours to verify.
  - For self-reported positive tests from non-NYC residents, the turnaround time will be longer.

### Self-Reported Positive Test Without Documentation

- Principal calls the Situation Room at 212-393-2780 and the Situation Room will advise on next steps.
- Principal will notify the Situation Room upon receipt of any testing documentation.

## One Confirmed Case in a School

In the event of a confirmed case:

- The Situation Room will let the principal know of a confirmed case and to activate the COVID-19 protocols.
- The principal notifies BRT, Situation Room, superintendent, and any affected teacher(s).
  - Please see additional guidance regarding [the Building Response Team during COVID-19](#).
- Principal and Situation Room liaison will confirm classroom closures, communications, and timing.
- Principal/designee will call the confirmed case in to the EIC.
- The BRT Leader notifies Borough Safety Director.
- The principal will receive letters from the Situation Room and will communicate to all families and students at school about the confirmed case:
  - Families of students who are considered close contacts of the confirmed case must receive a letter stating that their child has been in close contact with a COVID-19 positive individual; this letter gives clear direction to quarantine for 14 days;
  - Families of students who are not considered close contacts must receive a letter stating that there was a confirmed case of COVID-19 at the school but that their child is not considered a close contact and therefore there is no need to quarantine.
- Only affected classrooms will close during investigation and remain closed for 14 days.
- The Situation Room liaison will follow up with the principal should additional action be needed.

## Two Confirmed Cases in a School

- Two confirmed cases within seven days in the same classroom triggers a classroom quarantine but the school remains open.
- Two confirmed cases within seven days in different classrooms triggers classroom quarantines and the entire building is closed for a minimum of 24 hours while T2 and DOHMH investigate.

### If Two Cases Are Confirmed During the School Day

If two cases within seven days are confirmed by DOHMH during the school day, the Situation Room will contact the principal. The principal must isolate the affected classroom(s) until dismissal; students cannot be sent home early. The Situation Room and principal will notify families and staff that the classroom or school will be closed the following day.

### If Two Cases Are Confirmed After School Hours

If two cases within seven days are confirmed by DOHMH during evening hours, the Situation Room and principal will notify families and staff that the classroom or school will be closed the following day.

If two cases within seven days are confirmed by DOHMH during early morning hours, the Situation Room and principal will notify families and staff that the classroom or school will be closed that day.

### Investigation of Two Confirmed Cases

- T2 and DOHMH must determine by 6:00 pm on any day that a building is closed whether the school(s) can reopen the next day; the Situation Room will inform the principal.
- Once T2 and DOHMH investigation is complete:
  - T2 and DOHMH will make a recommendation to NYC Department of Buildings and Central NYCDOE on the closure of classroom(s) or school, as well as the length of closure.
    - See “T2 and DOHMH Investigation Conclusions” table below.
  - Central NYCDOE/Situation Room informs the principal and superintendent, and communicates the closure decision to the school community.
  - The closed classroom(s) or schools transitions to remote learning for the duration of the closure.
  - Students on split schedules return for in-person learning on the next assigned day following reopening.

### T2 and DOHMH Investigation Conclusions

Conclusion of Investigation	During Investigation (for at least 24 hours)	After Investigation
One confirmed case	Close classroom, transition to remote learning	Classroom remains closed for 14 days; students and staff in close contact with positive case quarantine for 14 days
At least two cases linked together in school, same classroom	Close classroom, transition to remote learning	Classroom remains closed for 14 days; students and staff in close contact with positive case quarantine for 14 days
At least two cases linked together in school, different classrooms	Close school building, transition to remote learning	School opens after investigation; classrooms of each case remain closed and quarantined for 14 days  Additional school members are quarantined based on where the exposure was in the school (e.g., the locker room)
At least two cases linked together by circumstances outside of school (e.g., acquired infection by a setting and/or source outside of the school)	Close school building, transition to remote learning	School opens after investigation; classrooms remain closed for 14 days
At least two cases, not linked, exposure occurred for each outside of school setting	Close school building, transition to remote learning	School opens after investigation; classrooms remain closed for 14 days
Link unable to be determined	Close school building, transition to remote learning	Close school for 14 days