

# COVID-19 DECISION TOOL FOR SCHOOLS

This document will assist principals and school staff to determine when to send students home and understand when students can return to school.

**NOTE: INDICATE WHICH SCENARIO THE STUDENT IS IN AND FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES ACCORDINGLY.**

## SCENARIOS

**ONE** Student has any **new or worsening** symptoms of **fever/chills (>37.8C/100F), cough, difficulty breathing or loss of taste/smell OR has TWO** of the following symptoms of **sore throat, stuffy/runny nose, headache, nausea/vomiting/diarrhea, muscle ache/fatigue.**

**TWO** Student has **ONE** of the following symptoms of **sore throat, stuffy/runny nose, headache, nausea/vomiting/diarrhea, or muscle ache/fatigue.**

**THREE** Student is a **CLOSE CONTACT** of someone with COVID-19 (confirmed by Public Health).

**FOUR** Student has **travelled outside of Canada.**

## SCENARIO ONE

## COURSE OF ACTION

Student has any **new or worsening** symptoms of **fever/chills (>37.8C/100F), cough, difficulty breathing or loss of taste/smell OR has TWO** of the following symptoms of **sore throat, stuffy/runny nose, headache, nausea/vomiting/diarrhea, muscle ache/fatigue.**



**Student must be placed in isolation and sent home.**

## WHAT SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO PARENTS?

**Parents/Guardians have three options:**

1. Take the student for testing at an assessment center ([Middlesex-London](#), [Elgin-St. Thomas](#), [Oxford](#)) **OR**
2. Contact health care provider for assessment including the need for a COVID-19 test or other treatment **OR**
3. If the student will not be tested, the student must isolate for 10 days after symptoms first appear.

*Note: If the student is getting tested or receives an alternative diagnosis, household members without symptoms should self-monitor and can go to school or work.*

## WHEN CAN THE STUDENT RETURN TO SCHOOL?

**If the student has a POSITIVE COVID-19 Test:**

- Local public health unit will contact parent with further direction.
- **Student with symptoms** must stay home and self-isolate for 10 days from the day the symptoms first appear.
- They may return to school after 10 days or when cleared by local public health **AND** if they do not have a fever (without using medication), **AND** their symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours.
- **Student without symptoms** must stay home and self-isolate for 10 days from the day the test was done.
- Household members of the student should self-isolate and follow local public health advice.

**If the student has a NEGATIVE COVID-19 Test:**

- Student can go back to school if they do not have a fever (without using medication) **AND** symptoms have been improving for 24 hours.
- If student is a close contact\* of someone with COVID-19, the student must isolate for 14 days regardless of a negative test result.
- Household members without symptoms should self-monitor and can go to school or work.

**If the student is NOT tested but an alternative diagnosis is obtained:**

- Student with an alternative diagnosis from a health care provider that is not related to COVID-19 can go back to school once their symptoms have been improving for 24 hours.
- Household members without symptoms should self-monitor and can go to school or work.

**If the student is NOT tested for COVID-19 and NO alternative diagnosis is obtained:**

- Student needs to self-isolate for 10 days from the day symptoms started. Student can return to school after the 10 days, if they do not have a fever (without using medication) **AND** their symptoms have been improving for 24 hours.
- Household members are also excluded from school for 14 days\*\*\*.

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## SCENARIO TWO

## COURSE OF ACTION

Student has **ONE** of the following symptoms of **sore throat, stuffy/runny nose, headache, nausea/ vomiting/diarrhea, or muscle ache/fatigue.**



**The student should be sent home.**

### WHAT SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO PARENTS? WHEN CAN THEY RETURN TO SCHOOL?

- The student must stay home for at least 24 hours.
- If the symptom is improving, they can return to school 24 hours later. Testing is not needed.
- If the symptom is not improving after 24 hours or is getting worse, the student should stay home, self-isolate and get tested or contact their health care provider.
- Household members without symptoms should self-monitor and can go to school or work.

## SCENARIO THREE

## COURSE OF ACTION

Student is a **CLOSE CONTACT** of someone with COVID-19 (confirmed by Public Health).



**The student must not attend school and they are required to self-isolate for 14 days.**

### WHAT SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO PARENTS? WHEN CAN THEY RETURN TO SCHOOL?

- Parent can expect a call from their local public health unit to provide them with next steps and further information.
- If symptoms develop, student must be tested and self-isolate for 10 days from the day the symptoms first appear.
- Public Health clearance is required to end self-isolation.

## SCENARIO FOUR

## COURSE OF ACTION

Student has **travelled outside of Canada.**



**The student must not attend school and they are required to self-isolate for 14 days.**

### WHAT SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO PARENTS? WHEN CAN THEY RETURN TO SCHOOL?

- If a student develops symptoms of COVID-19 while self-isolating after travel, testing is recommended ([Middlesex-London](#), [Elgin-St. Thomas](#), [Oxford](#)) or consultation with a health care provider if they think symptoms are not due to COVID-19.
- Household members that did not travel do not need to isolate unless they or the child have symptoms.

\* A close contact is someone who has spent greater than 15 consecutive minutes within 6 feet of someone else who tested positive for COVID-19, regardless of whether either party was wearing a mask

\*\*\*The isolation period is 10 days for people who already have symptoms. The self-isolation period is 14 days for people who do not have symptoms but have been a close contact.