



# Okaloosa County School District COVID-19 Information for Parents



2021-2022 School Year

**Updated 10/08/2021**

**All Measures Effective Until Further Notice**

Student health and safety continues to be a top priority as we return to more normal school operations.

Student health and safety includes not only physical health and safety, but also academic health, mental health, and social-emotional well-being. In Okaloosa County Schools, our plan continues to emphasize keeping healthy students in school, maintaining enhanced cleaning and sanitizing practices, protecting medically fragile students, and providing continuity of academic services for students who miss school due to COVID-19 quarantine or isolation mandates from the Department of Health.

Being in school is critical for the overall well-being of our students. Our plan strikes a sensible balance that emphasizes your student's success at school while also being mindful of the steps we need to take to keep our school environments safe.

Teachers, administrators, and support staff are working diligently for a return to more normal school operations. We would like to thank our families for their patience, input, and understanding throughout the first nine weeks of this school year. The continued support of our parents and community is vital to the educational success and achievement of our students.

## UPDATED COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

*The State Surgeon General issued Emergency Rule 64DER21-15 on September 22, 2021 which repeals and replaces Emergency Rule 64DER21-12 and sets forth the following procedures for controlling COVID-19 in school settings:*

### **I. STUDENTS WITH COVID-19 SYMPTOMS AND NO TEST RESULTS.**

- A. Stay home from school.
- B. Do not attend community activities, school-sponsored activities or be on school property until one of the following conditions is met:
  - 1. Isolate at home until the student receives a negative diagnostic COVID-19 test (PCR or Antigen) AND has no symptoms. **OR**
  - 2. If no COVID-19 testing done, isolate ten days from symptom onset. Student has had no fever for a minimum of 24-hours and other symptoms are improving. **OR**
  - 3. Receives written permission to return to school from a medical doctor or physician, or advanced nurse practitioner licensed in Florida.

## **II. STUDENTS WITH A POSITIVE TEST FOR COVID-19 (with or without symptoms).**

- A. Stay home from school.
- B. Notify the school of positive result, provide a copy of result as requested to the school.
- C. Do not attend school-sponsored activities or be on school property until one of the following conditions is met:
  1. Isolate at home until the student receives a negative diagnostic COVID-19 test (PCR or Antigen) AND has no symptoms. **OR**
  2. Isolate ten days from symptom onset for those experiencing symptoms, or ten days from the date of a positive test if student had no symptoms. Student must not have had a fever for a minimum of 24-hours and other symptoms are improving. **OR**
  3. Receives written permission to return to school from a medical doctor or physician, or advanced nurse practitioner licensed in Florida.

## **III. PROTOCOLS FOR STUDENTS WITH EXPOSURE TO COVID-19.**

Schools shall allow parents or legal guardians the authority to choose how their child receives education after having direct contact with an individual that is positive for COVID- 19:

- A. Parents or legal guardians of students who are known to have been in direct contact with an individual who received a positive diagnostic test for COVID-19 may choose one of the following options:
  1. Allow the student to attend school, school-sponsored activities, or be on school property, without restrictions or disparate treatment, so long as the student remains asymptomatic. **OR**
  2. Quarantine the student for a period of time not to exceed seven days from the date of last direct contact with an individual that is positive for COVID-19.
- B. If a student becomes symptomatic following direct contact with an individual that has tested positive for COVID-19, or tests positive for COVID- 19, the procedures set forth in section (I) above shall apply.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

### **1. What COVID-19 protocols are currently in place?**

- Before school
  - Parents should conduct a health screener on their student each morning and **KEEP THEIR STUDENT HOME** if they exhibit COVID-19 symptoms. Symptoms include fever greater than 100.4°, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath or difficult breathing, headache, body or muscle aches, GI symptoms (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea), new loss of taste or smell, nasal congestion/runny nose.
  - Staff must conduct a health screening prior to coming to work each day and should stay home if they exhibit COVID-19 symptoms.
  - NOTE: A student or employee's baseline should be assessed when symptoms are observed. Are any of the above symptoms normal for the student or staff member, for example, a runny nose or congestion with history of allergies? If so, that would be considered the individual's baseline. If there are any symptoms that are not normal for you, (symptoms outside of your baseline), i.e, fever or shortness of breath, the individual should stay home and seek testing.

- School Buses
  - Masks are strongly recommended while riding a school bus. Buses will have a supply of masks available for students.
  - Students will use hand sanitizer when entering and exiting a school bus.
  - Buses will be cleaned and disinfected after each morning and afternoon run.
  - Students will be required to sit in an assigned seat.
  
- School Campuses
  - Strongly recommend the use of masks when social distancing cannot be maintained. Schools have a supply of masks available.
  - Suspend the use of drinking from water fountains. Water fountains and/or water bottle filling stations are available in schools. Each student will be offered a water bottle that can be used throughout the day. Students may bring their own water bottles.
  - Monitor and direct student movement in hallways between classes to minimize extended student contact.
  - Disinfect frequently touched surfaces throughout the day (door handles, light switches, tables, water fountains, and water bottle filling stations).
  - Replace all AC filters frequently - Maintenance.
  - Display signs reminding those in schools about social distancing and the use of hand sanitizer/washing of hands.
  - Field trips will be permitted at this time. Wellness checks will be performed for students, employees, and parent chaperones prior to departure.
  - Schools may resume normal indoor school activities and events.
  
- Cafeterias
  - Provide scheduled opportunities for students to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before and after eating.
  - Monitor breakfast and lunch lines to facilitate as much spacing as possible between students while in line.
  - Increase physical distance to the extent possible between students during breakfast and lunch by providing additional indoor/outdoor eating locations.
  
- Classrooms
  - Hand sanitizer is available at the entrance of every classroom for student and staff use.
  - Each classroom has a supply of disinfectant wipes to be used as needed throughout the day.
  - Classrooms will be cleaned and spray-disinfected at the end each day.
  - Desk barriers will be available upon request by parents and may be used at a teacher's discretion.
  - Proper handwashing will continue to be emphasized and will be scheduled in elementary classrooms.
  
- Visitors/Volunteers
  - Parents will be permitted to come to school for parent conferences; virtual meetings may be available upon parent request.
  - Parents, visitors, and essential volunteers are permitted as determined by the principal.
  - Mentors may meet with a student as approved by the parent and principal.

- Voluntary Vaccination Clinics
  - Voluntary vaccination clinics for students (age 12+) and staff at area middle and high schools were held September 20-22 (1<sup>st</sup> shot). For those who participated, follow-up shots are scheduled for October 12-14. Contact your child's school for more information. (NOTE: An individual is considered fully vaccinated two weeks after they receive their second shot.)

- Testing Site



TO MAKE AN APPT.

- COVID-19 testing has been a challenge for many of our families in Okaloosa County. As a result, the Okaloosa County School District has partnered with the Department of Health to provide a COVID-19 testing site for both **SYMPTOMATIC & ASYMPTOMATIC** students, employees, and their family members.
- SYMPTOMATIC individuals will receive a rapid antigen test with results within 15 minutes. If there is a negative result, a PCR test will be administered.
- ASYMPTOMATIC individuals will receive a PCR test.
- Results for the PCR test will be sent via email and/or text usually within 24 hours.
- Location: OCSO Central Administrative Complex, 202 Highway 85N, Niceville, FL
- Hours of Operation: Monday-Friday 7:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m. **BY APPOINTMENT ONLY.** To schedule an appointment, go to [https://hipaa.jotform.com/telopoint/okaloosa\\_1](https://hipaa.jotform.com/telopoint/okaloosa_1) or use the QR code provided on the left.

2. **Will masks be mandatory in schools this fall?**

No. Masks are strongly recommended in our school building but not mandated. Parents are welcome to provide a mask for their child if they choose. Schools will have a supply of masks available.

3. **Will masks be mandatory on school buses?**

No. Masks are recommended on school buses. Parents are welcome to provide a mask for their child if they choose. Buses will have a supply of masks available.

4. **What are the COVID-19 symptoms?**

Fever greater than 100.4°, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath or difficult breathing, headache, body or muscle aches, GI symptoms (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea), new loss of taste or smell, nasal congestion/runny nose.

5. **Will wellness/temperature checks be done daily upon arrival to school?**

Wellness checks will be required for students or staff members who have been identified as a close contact to a positive case and are asymptomatic.

6. **How are positive COVID-19 cases being reported?**

Positive COVID-19 cases are being reported for each school on our COVID-19 Dashboard, which is located on our district website, [www.okaloosaschools.com](http://www.okaloosaschools.com). The number of positive COVID-19 cases at each school is taken from the Department of Health database. At this time, information is being updated daily.

7. **If one student in a classroom becomes positive for COVID-19, is the whole class required to quarantine?**

No, not necessarily. Contact tracing is done in accordance with DOH guidance. Close contacts are identified as those who are within 6 ft of a confirmed positive COVID-19 case for 15 minutes

cumulatively during a 24-hour period. **NOTE: Per Emergency Rule 64DER21-15, if a student is identified as a close contact and is asymptomatic, parents/guardians may choose whether their student will remain in school or quarantine at home.**

**8. Will students who are isolated or quarantined be able to make up their schoolwork?**

Yes. Please contact your school for information on receiving make up work.

**9. What if my child is medically fragile and plans to remain in brick-and-mortar instruction?**

Parents of medically fragile students should contact their school to learn more about individualized safety measures for their student. Schools will have procedures to ensure individualized safety measures for medically fragile students.

**10. Will absences due to quarantine related to COVID-19 be excused?**

Quarantined students who are at home but actively engaged in work provided by their teachers will be in attendance (not marked absent) per State Board of Education Emergency Rule 6AER21-01.

Absences due to isolation or quarantine in which a student is not well enough to work will be excused with a parent or doctor note. The student will be able to make up work in these situations.

**11. COVID-19 cancelled or modified many different types of school events last year, such as field trips and athletic and performing arts events. Will these return to normal this year?**

**Yes. Athletic events and extracurricular activities such as band and choral concerts will occur as normal. Field trips will be permitted at this time. We will be mindful as we continue through the school year and make adjustments as appropriate.**

**12. Will parents be able to volunteer in classrooms this fall and chaperone trips?**

At this time, essential volunteers will be permitted on campus at the discretion of the principal.

**Parents will be permitted to chaperone field trips. Wellness checks will be performed for students, employees, and parent chaperones prior to departure.**

**13. Will mySchool Online be an option this year?**

No. The mySchool Online program, and others like it across the state, are not available options this year. Okaloosa Online is the district's primary K-12 virtual option. Information about this option is available at [www.okaloosaschools.com/schools/okaloosa-online](http://www.okaloosaschools.com/schools/okaloosa-online).

We will all continue to be mindful of our surroundings and be prepared to adjust our routines if needed.

Please contact your child's school for more information.

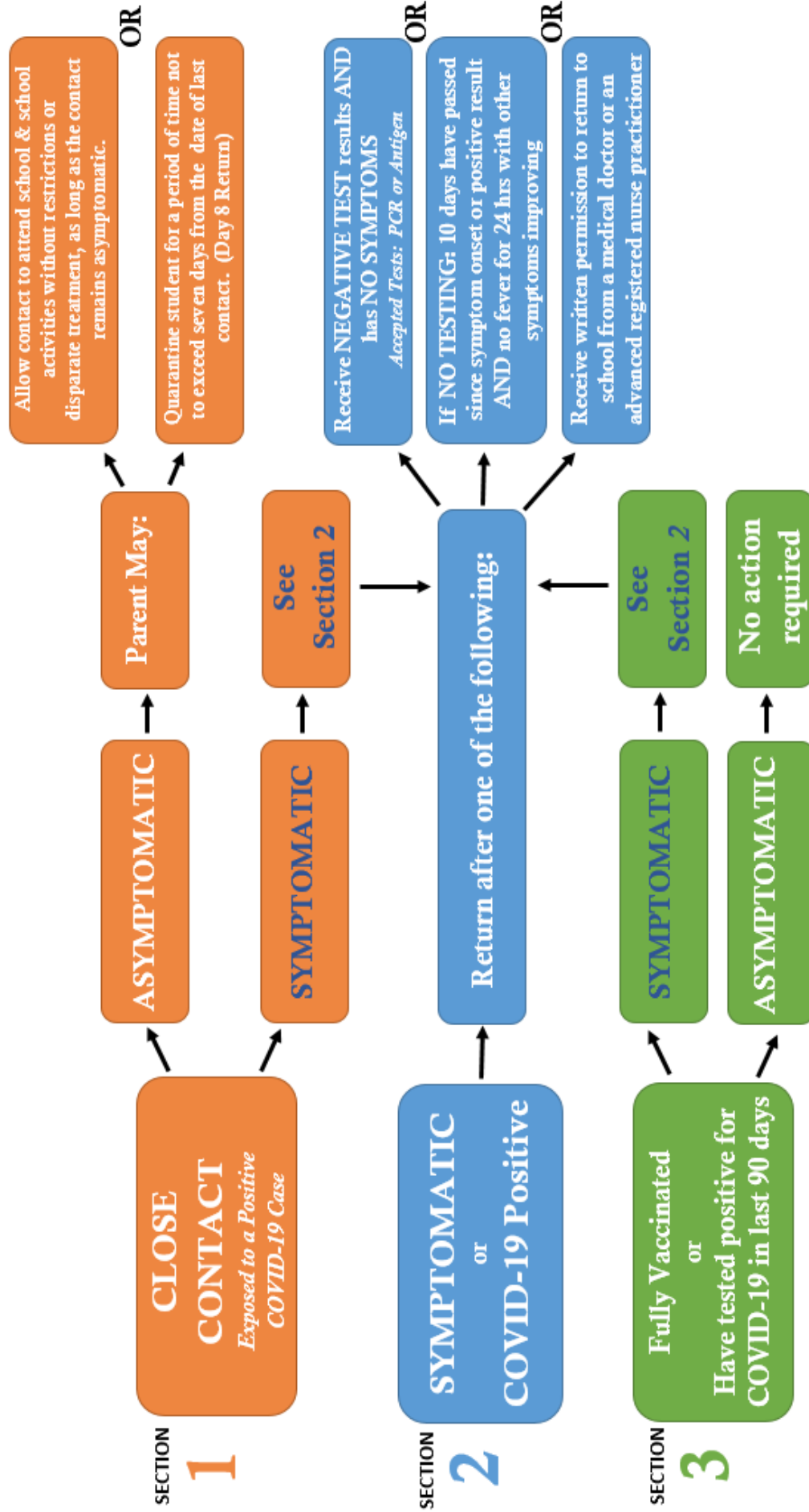
**Note: The protocols for Eglin Elementary School on Eglin Air Force Base will be in accordance with the ICD guidance for the installation.**

# OKALOOSA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

## COVID-19 Decision Tree

Updated  
09/22/2021

Per FL Department of Health Emergency Rule 64DER21-15



### HOME TESTS

In order for the Department of Health to accept home test results, the test must be administered as outlined in the package directions. Parents must download an app **BEFORE** administering the test. The verified test result will be provided via the app or an email. This documentation should be provided to the school. **NOTE: The ONLY home test approved by the FDA and FL DOH for a NEGATIVE RESULT is an ELLUME.**

