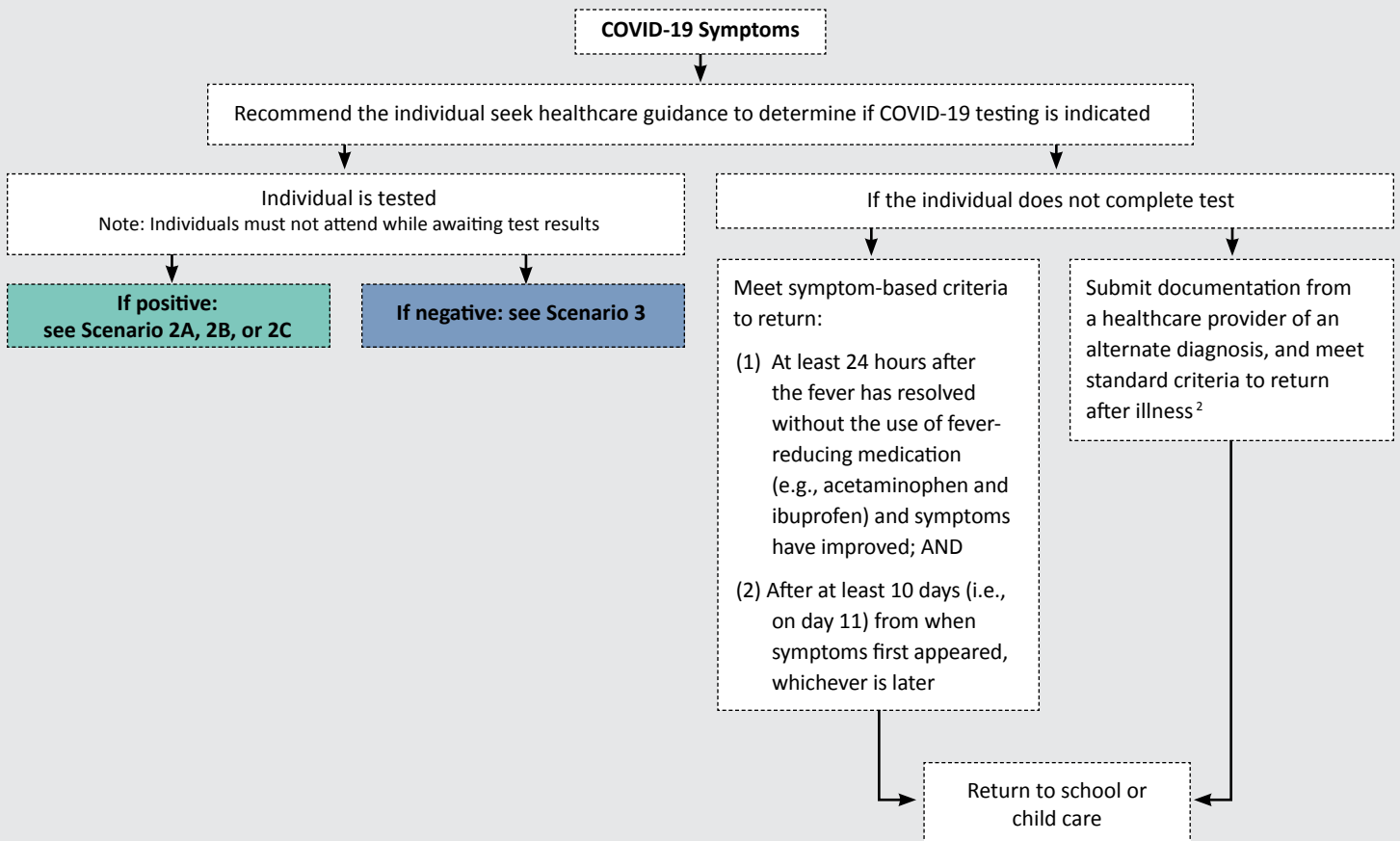# RETURN TO SCHOOL AND CHILD CARE CRITERIA

Note: These scenarios include the standard criteria to return. In scenarios involving returning after symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) or a positive COVID-19 test result, individual guidance from DC Health or a healthcare provider would supersede these criteria.

Scenario 1: COVID-19 Symptoms[1]

Criteria apply to the following individuals: Up to Date on COVID-19 Vaccination, Had COVID-19 and Recovered in the Last 90 Days, OR Unvaccinated or Not Up to Date on COVID-19 Vaccination

Note: This scenario requires exclusion until return criteria are met.

COVID-19 Symptoms

Recommend the individual seek healthcare guidance to determine if COVID-19 testing is indicated

Individual is tested
Note: Individuals must not attend while awaiting test results

If the individual does not complete test

**If positive:
see Scenario 2A, 2B, or 2C**

If negative: see Scenario 3

Meet symptom-based criteria to return:

(1) At least 24 hours after the fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medication (e.g., acetaminophen and ibuprofen) and symptoms have improved; AND

(2) After at least 10 days (i.e., on day 11) from when symptoms first appeared, whichever is later

Submit documentation from a healthcare provider of an alternate diagnosis, and meet standard criteria to return after illness [2]

Return to school or child care

Scenario 2A: Positive COVID-19 Test Result (Antigen or NAAT)[3] with Mild to Moderate COVID-19 with Symptoms

Criteria apply to the following individuals: Up to Date on COVID-19 Vaccination, Had COVID-19 and Recovered in the Last 90 Days, OR Unvaccinated or Not Up to Date on COVID-19 Vaccination
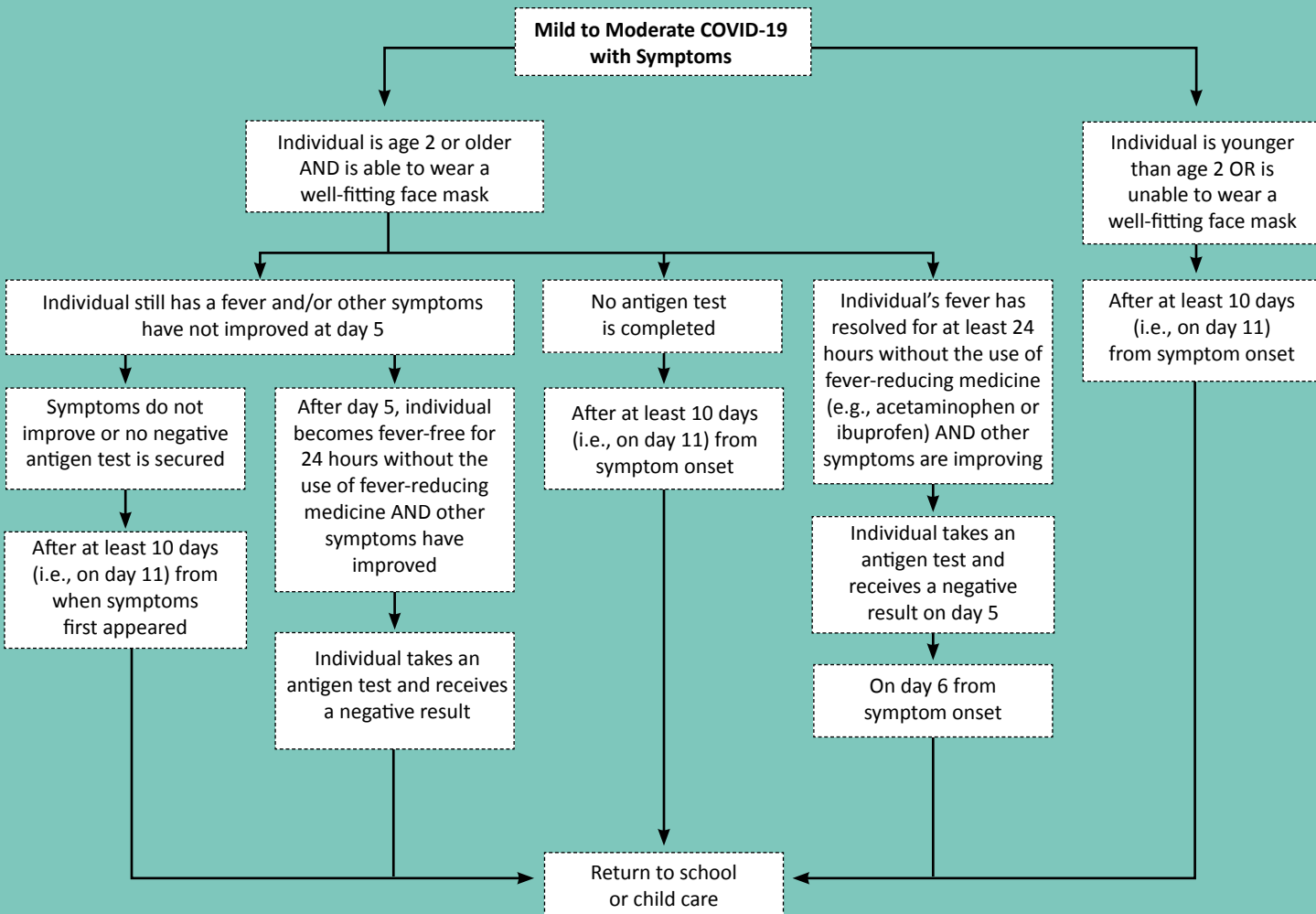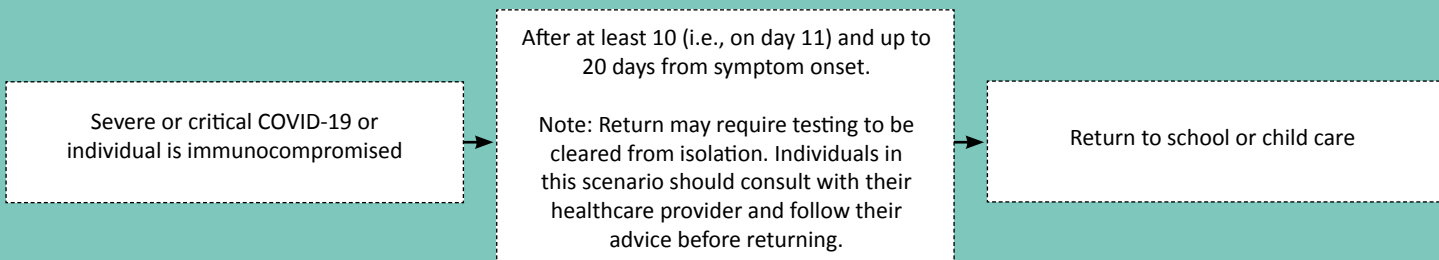
Note: This scenario requires exclusion until return criteria are met.

```
                          Mild to Moderate COVID-19
                               with Symptoms
```

Individual is age 2 or older AND is able to wear a well-fitting face mask

Individual is younger than age 2 OR is unable to wear a well-fitting face mask

Individual still has a fever and/or other symptoms have not improved at day 5

No antigen test is completed

Individual's fever has resolved for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine (e.g., acetaminophen or ibuprofen) AND other symptoms are improving

After at least 10 days (i.e., on day 11) from symptom onset

Symptoms do not improve or no negative antigen test is secured

After day 5, individual becomes fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine AND other symptoms have improved

After at least 10 days (i.e., on day 11) from symptom onset

After at least 10 days (i.e., on day 11) from when symptoms first appeared

Individual takes an antigen test and receives a negative result

Individual takes an antigen test and receives a negative result on day 5

On day 6 from symptom onset

Return to school or child care

Scenario 2B: Positive COVID-19 Test Result (Antigen or NAAT) with Severe or Critical COVID-19 Illness OR Positive COVID-19 Test Result (Antigen or NAAT) and Individual is Immunocompromised

Criteria apply to the following individuals: Up to Date on COVID-19 Vaccination, Had COVID-19 and Recovered in the Last 90 Days, OR Unvaccinated or Not Up to Date on COVID-19 Vaccination
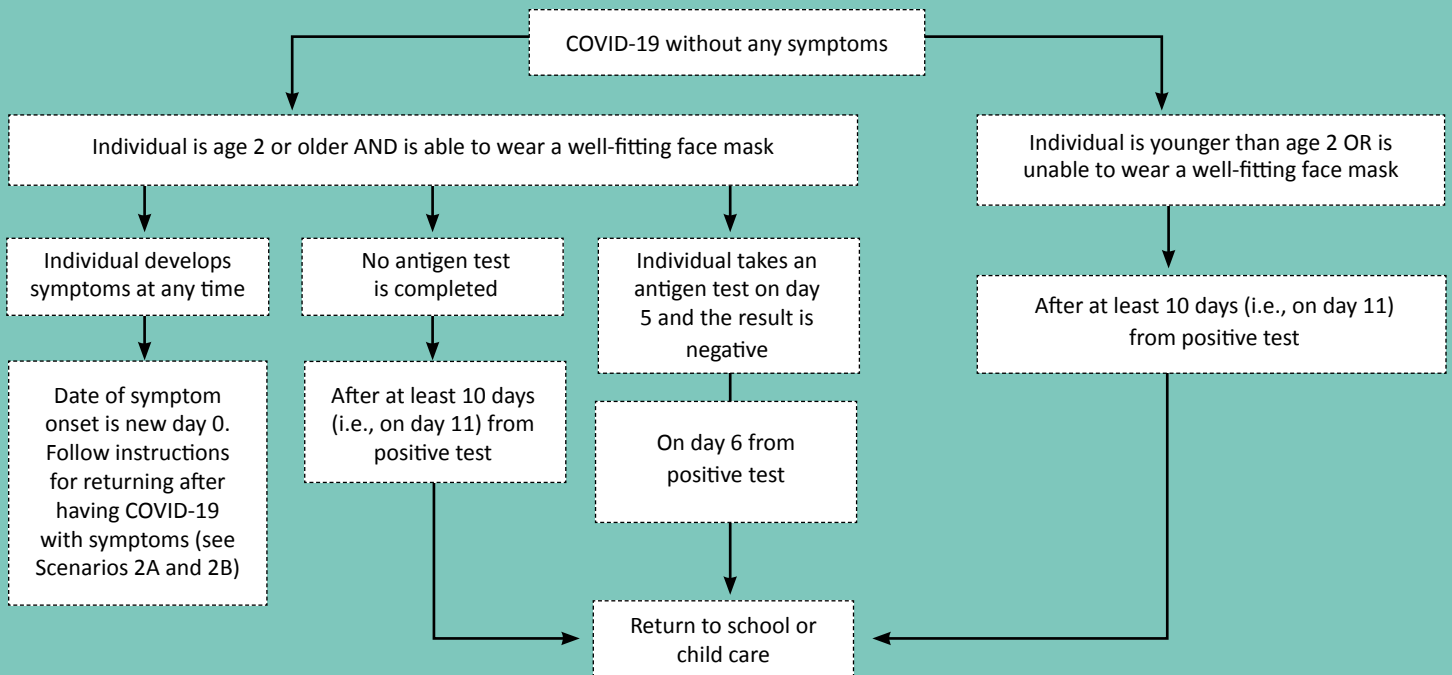
Note: This scenario requires exclusion until return criteria are met.

Severe or critical COVID-19 or individual is immunocompromised

After at least 10 (i.e., on day 11) and up to 20 days from symptom onset.

Note: Return may require testing to be cleared from isolation. Individuals in this scenario should consult with their healthcare provider and follow their advice before returning.

Return to school or child care

Scenario 2C: Positive COVID-19 Test Result (Antigen or NAAT) without Any Symptoms (Asymptomatic Infection)

Criteria apply to the following individuals: Up to Date on COVID-19 Vaccination, Had COVID-19 and Recovered in the Last 90 Days, OR Unvaccinated or Not Up to Date on COVID-19 Vaccination
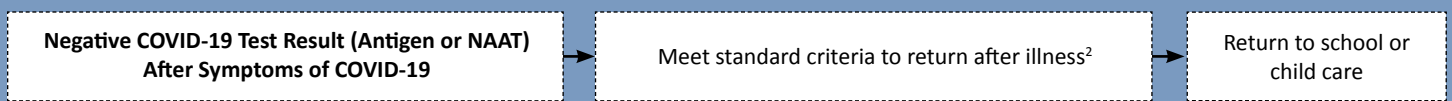
Note: This scenario requires exclusion until return criteria are met.

COVID-19 without any symptoms

Individual is age 2 or older AND is able to wear a well-fitting face mask

Individual is younger than age 2 OR is unable to wear a well-fitting face mask

Individual develops symptoms at any time

No antigen test is completed

Individual takes an antigen test on day 5 and the result is negative

After at least 10 days (i.e., on day 11) from positive test

Date of symptom onset is new day 0. Follow instructions for returning after having COVID-19 with symptoms (see Scenarios 2A and 2B)

After at least 10 days (i.e., on day 11) from positive test

On day 6 from positive test

Return to school or child care

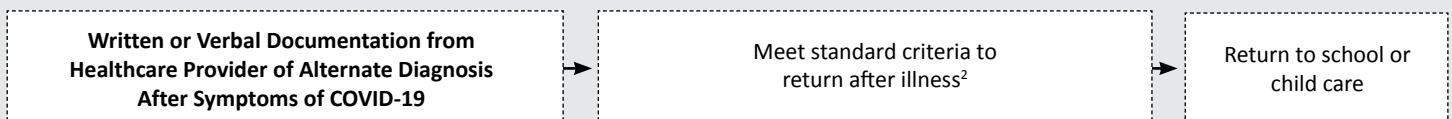## Scenario 3: Negative COVID-19 Test Result After Symptoms of COVID-19

Criteria apply to the following individuals: Up to Date on COVID-19 Vaccination, Had COVID-19 and Recovered in the Last 90 Days, OR Unvaccinated or Not Up to Date on COVID-19 Vaccination

Note: It is recommended to confirm a negative antigen test with an NAAT.

Negative COVID-19 Test Result (Antigen or NAAT) After Symptoms of COVID-19 → Meet standard criteria to return after illness[2] → Return to school or child care
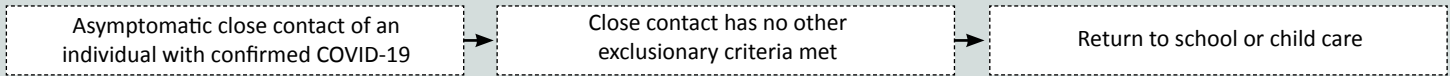
Scenario 4: Written or Verbal Documentation from Healthcare Provider of Alternate Diagnosis After Symptoms of COVID-19

Criteria apply to the following individuals: Up to Date on COVID-19 Vaccination, Had COVID-19 and Recovered in the Last 90 Days, OR Unvaccinated or Not Up to Date on COVID-19 Vaccination
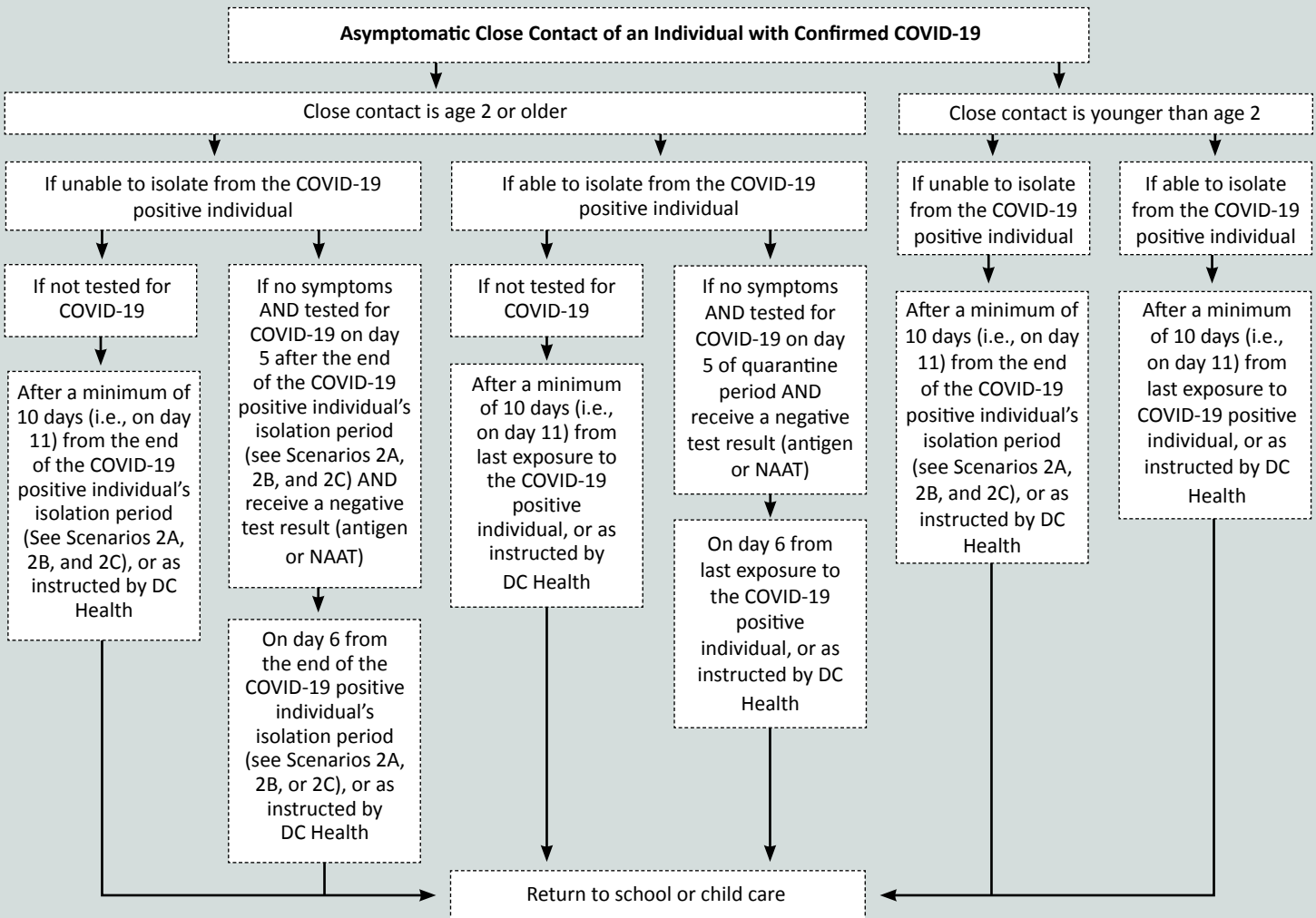
Written or Verbal Documentation from Healthcare Provider of Alternate Diagnosis After Symptoms of COVID-19 → Meet standard criteria to return after illness[2] → Return to school or child care

Scenario 5: Asymptomatic Close Contact of an Individual with Confirmed COVID-19[4]

Criteria apply to the following individuals: Up to Date on COVID-19 Vaccination or Had COVID-19 and Recovered in the Last 90 Days[5]

Asymptomatic close contact of an individual with confirmed COVID-19	→	Close contact has no other exclusionary criteria met	→	Return to school or child care

Criteria apply to the following individuals: Unvaccinated or Not Up to Date on COVID-19 Vaccination

Note: This scenario requires exclusion until return criteria are met.

Asymptomatic Close Contact of an Individual with Confirmed COVID-19

Close contact is age 2 or older

If unable to isolate from the COVID-19 positive individual

- If not tested for COVID-19
  - After a minimum of 10 days (i.e., on day 11) from the end of the COVID-19 positive individual's isolation period (See Scenarios 2A, 2B, and 2C), or as instructed by DC Health

- If no symptoms AND tested for COVID-19 on day 5 after the end of the COVID-19 positive individual's isolation period (see Scenarios 2A, 2B, and 2C) AND receive a negative test result (antigen or NAAT)
  - On day 6 from the end of the COVID-19 positive individual's isolation period (see Scenarios 2A, 2B, or 2C), or as instructed by DC Health

If able to isolate from the COVID-19 positive individual

- If not tested for COVID-19
  - After a minimum of 10 days (i.e., on day 11) from last exposure to the COVID-19 positive individual, or as instructed by DC Health

- If no symptoms AND tested for COVID-19 on day 5 of quarantine period AND receive a negative test result (antigen or NAAT)
  - On day 6 from last exposure to the COVID-19 positive individual, or as instructed by DC Health

Close contact is younger than age 2

If unable to isolate from the COVID-19 positive individual
- After a minimum of 10 days (i.e., on day 11) from the end of the COVID-19 positive individual's isolation period (see Scenarios 2A, 2B, and 2C), or as instructed by DC Health

If able to isolate from the COVID-19 positive individual
- After a minimum of 10 days (i.e., on day 11) from last exposure to COVID-19 positive individual, or as instructed by DC Health

Return to school or child care

SEE ALSO OSSE'S COVID-19 EXCLUSION AND DISMISSAL CRITERIA AND PROTOCOLS FOR SCHOOLS AND CHILD CARE AVAILABLE ON THE OSSE WEBSITE.

Endnotes

1. Individuals with pre-existing health conditions that present with specific COVID-19–like symptoms must not be excluded on the basis of those specific symptoms, if a healthcare provider has provided written or verbal documentation that those specific symptoms are not due to COVID-19.
2. Standard criteria to return after illness refers to the individual school or child care facility's existing policies and protocols for an individual to return after illness.
3. A PCR test is a type of NAAT (Nucleic Acid Amplification Test).
4. Students or staff identified as close contacts (who would otherwise be required to quarantine) may continue to attend school if they are eligible for and participating in the school's Test to Stay program.
5. Individuals who are up to date on their COVID-19 vaccination do not need to quarantine and may return immediately, but they should:
   - Get a COVID-19 test (antigen or NAAT) 5 days after the date they were exposed.
     - If the test is positive, see Scenarios 2A, 2B, or 2C.
   - Monitor themselves for COVID-19 symptoms for a full 10 days after exposure. They must isolate and test if symptoms develop.
   - Wear a well-fitting mask when around other people (including household members) for 10 days after their exposure.

   Individuals who have had COVID-19 and recovered in the last 90 days, do not need to quarantine, and may return immediately, but they should:
   - Monitor themselves for COVID-19 symptoms for a full 10 days after exposure. They must isolate and test if symptoms develop.
   - Wear a well-fitting mask when around other people (including household members) for 10 days after their exposure.