



# RETURN TO CHILD CARE CRITERIA

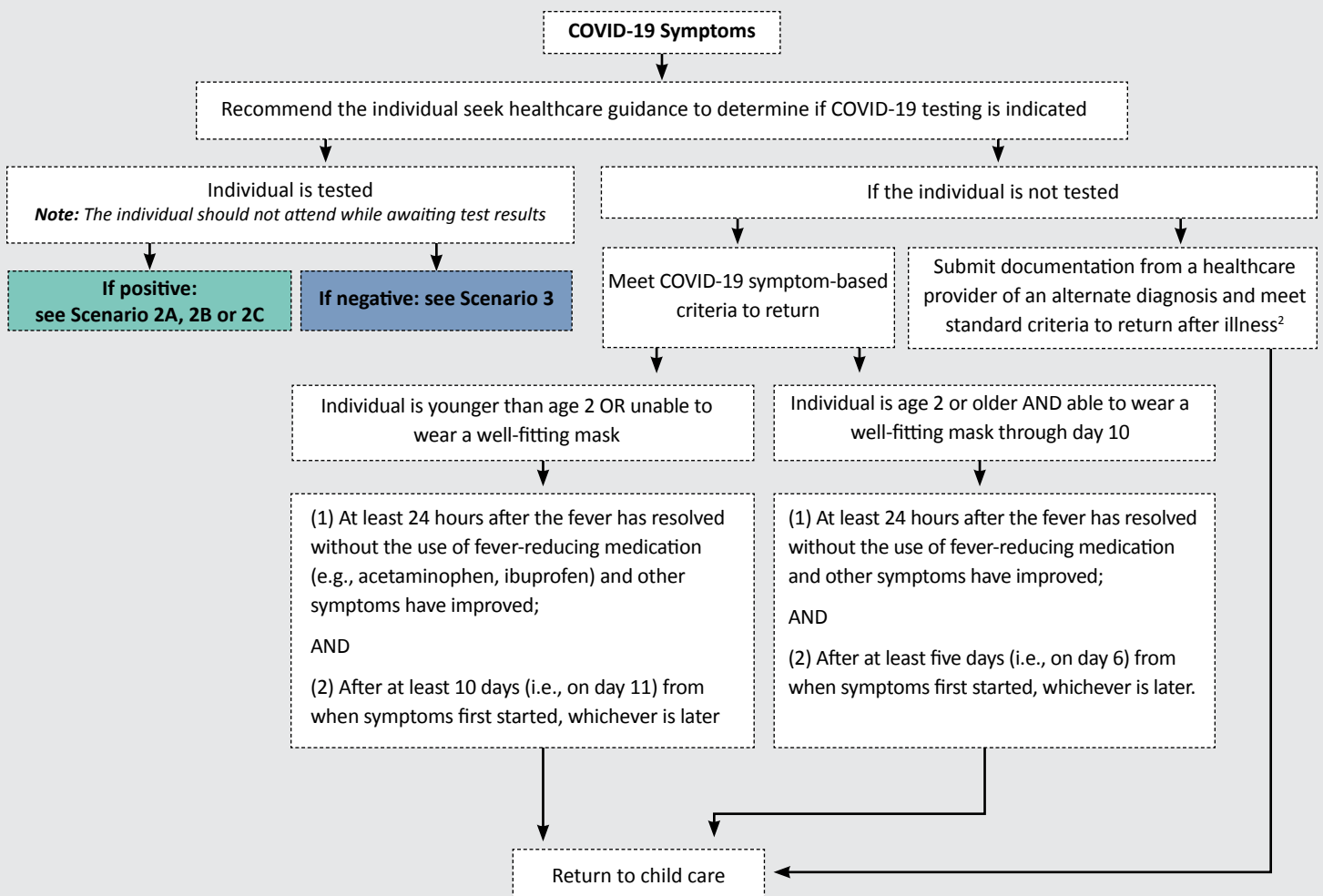
**Note:** These scenarios include the best practice recommendations for the return to child care. In scenarios involving returning after symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) or a positive COVID-19 test result, individual guidance from DC Health or a healthcare provider should supersede these criteria.

In accordance with the Office of the State Superintendent of Education’s (OSSE’s) child care licensing regulations, facilities shall continue to enforce all requirements related to health, safety and communicable disease, including the removal of adults and children who are displaying symptoms or who have tested positive for COVID-19 (5A DCMR §§ 151.1 – 151.8, 162.4 and 118.4) and reporting individual incidents of confirmed COVID-19 within the facility to OSSE via the [Unusual Incident Report](#) (5A DCMR § 128.3).

## Scenario 1: COVID-19 Symptoms<sup>1</sup>

Criteria apply to all children and staff regardless of vaccination status or recent recovery from COVID-19

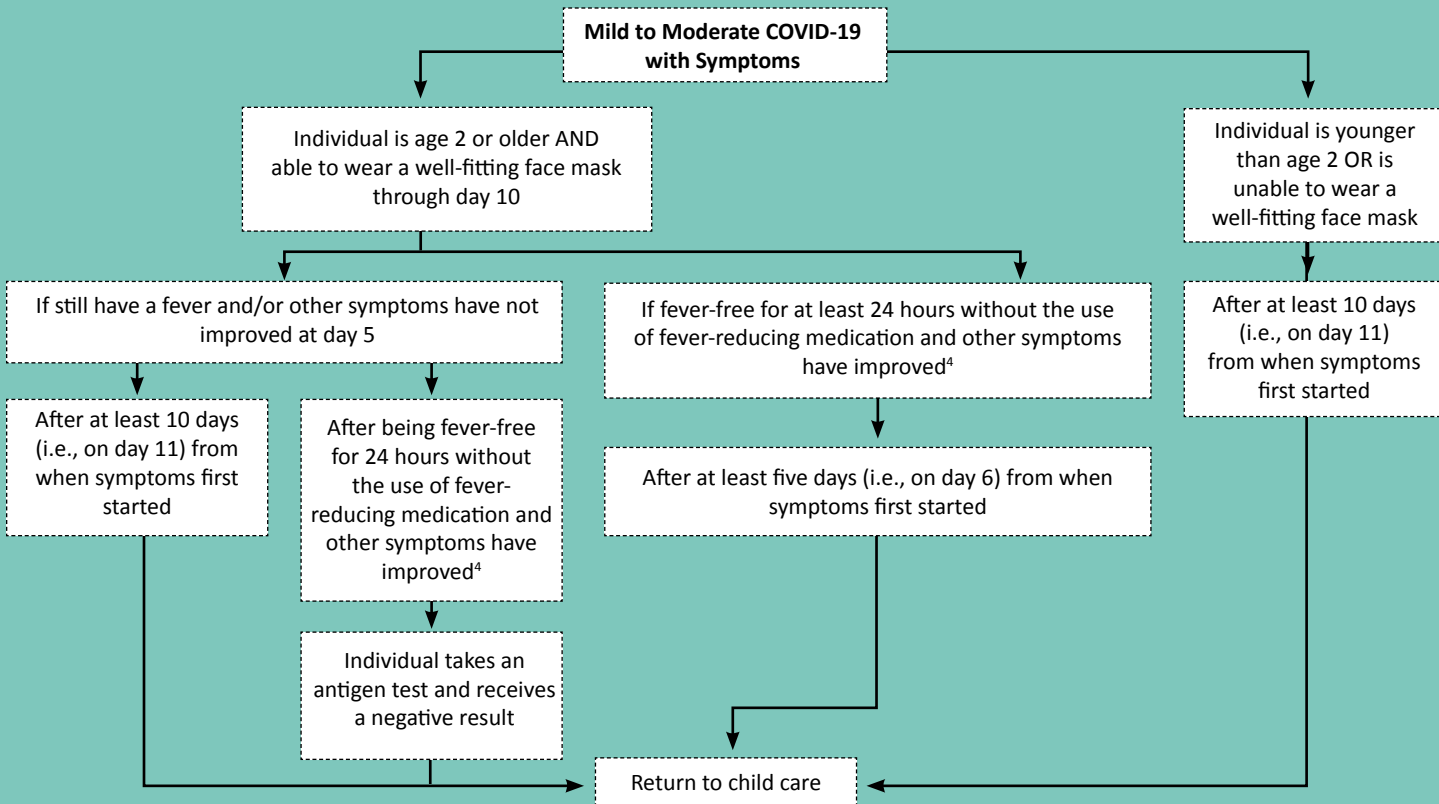
**Note:** Pursuant to the child care licensing regulations in the DC Municipal Regulations, this scenario requires exclusion.



## Scenario 2A: Positive COVID-19 Test Result (Antigen or NAAT)<sup>3</sup> with Symptoms

Criteria apply to all children and staff regardless of vaccination status or recent recovery from COVID-19

**Note:** Pursuant to the child care licensing regulations in the DC Municipal Regulations, this scenario requires exclusion.



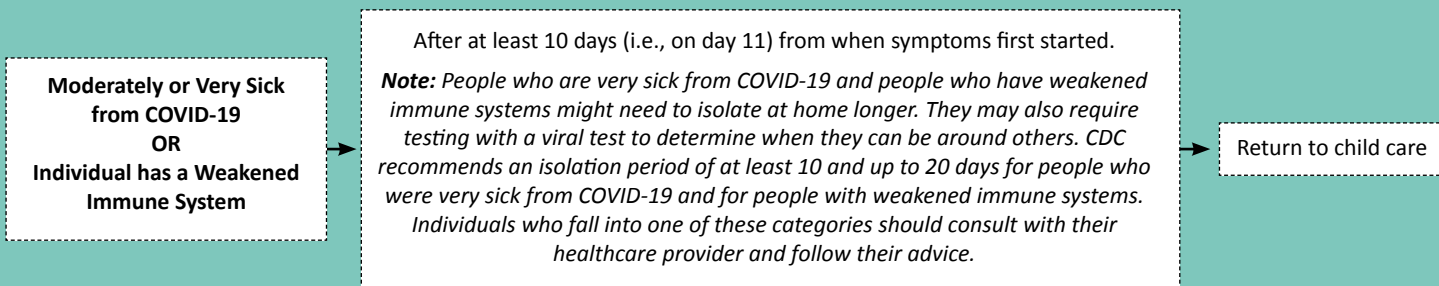
If an individual has access to a test and wants to test, the best approach is to use an antigen test towards the end of the five-day isolation period.

- The individual should test only if they are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and other symptoms have improved.<sup>3</sup>
- If the individual tests and the result is positive, they should continue to isolate through day 10 and return on day 11.
- If the individual tests and the result is negative, they can end isolation, but should continue to wear a well-fitting mask around others at home and in public through day 10.

## 2B. Positive COVID-19 Test Result (Antigen or NAAT) who were Moderately or Very Sick from COVID-19<sup>5</sup> OR Positive COVID-19 Test Result (Antigen or NAAT) and Individual has a Weakened Immune System

Criteria apply to all children and staff regardless of vaccination status or recent recovery from COVID-19

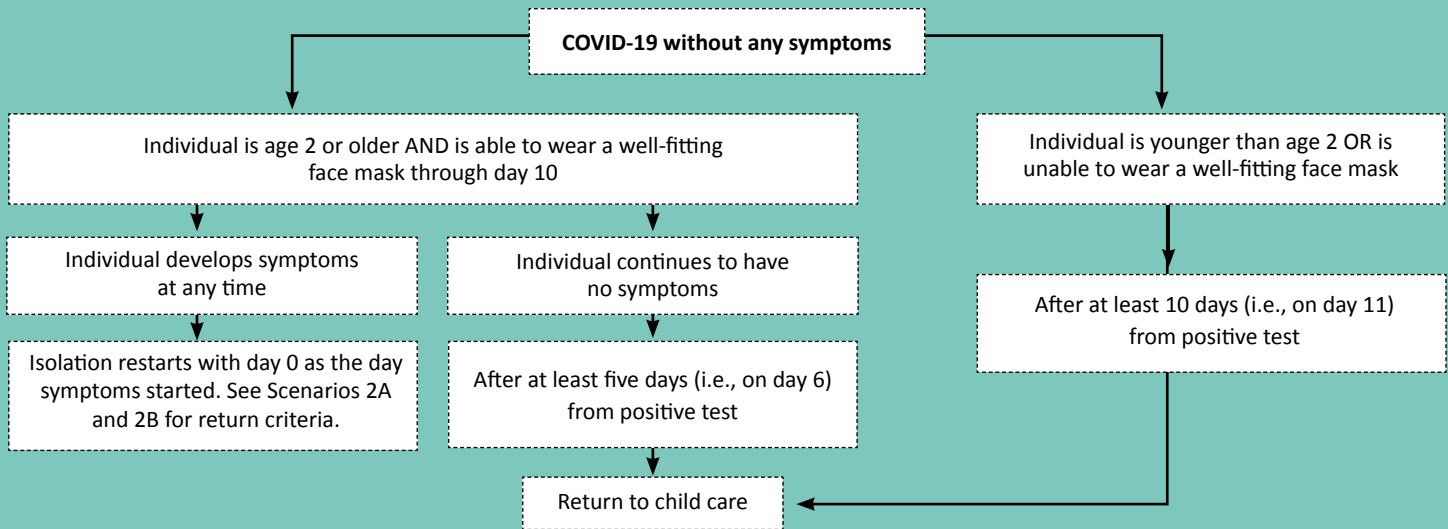
**Note:** Pursuant to the child care licensing regulations in the DC Municipal Regulations, this scenario requires exclusion.



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

Criteria apply to all children and staff regardless of vaccination status or recent recovery from COVID-19

*Note: Pursuant to the child care licensing regulations in the DC Municipal Regulations, this scenario requires exclusion.*

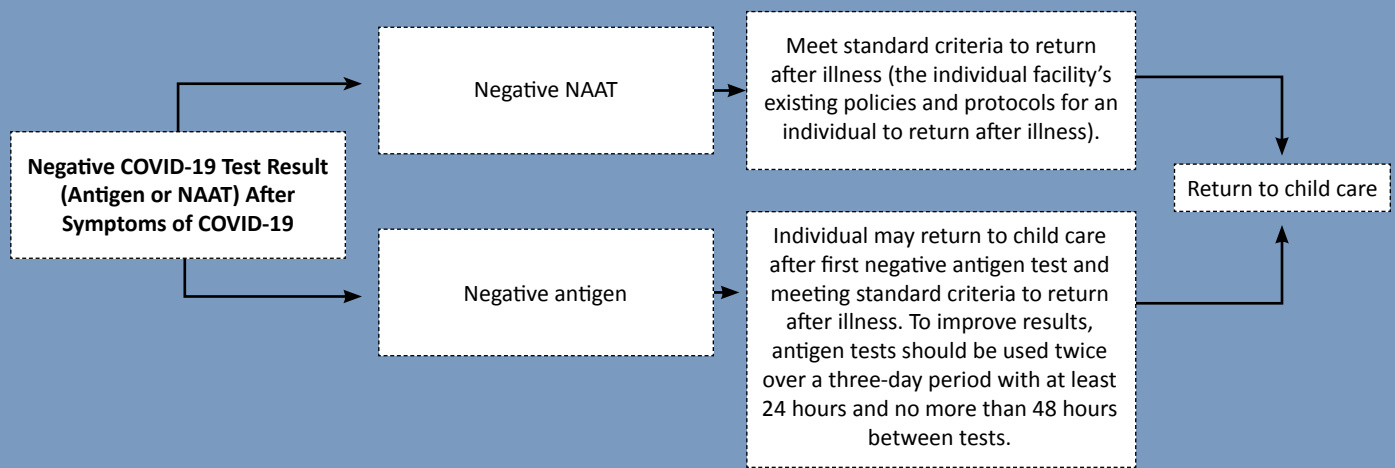


If an individual has access to a test and wants to test, the best approach is to use an antigen test towards the end of the five-day isolation period.

- If the individual tests and the result is positive, they should continue to isolate through day 10 and return on day 11.
- If the test result is positive, they can also choose to test daily and if the result is negative, they can end isolation, but continue to wear a mask around others at home and in public through day 10.

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

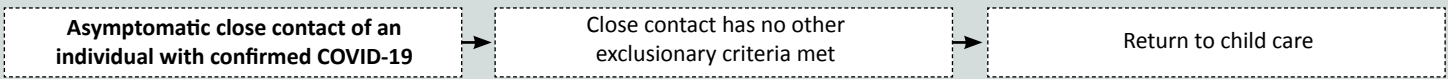
Criteria apply to all children and staff regardless of vaccination status or recent recovery from COVID-19



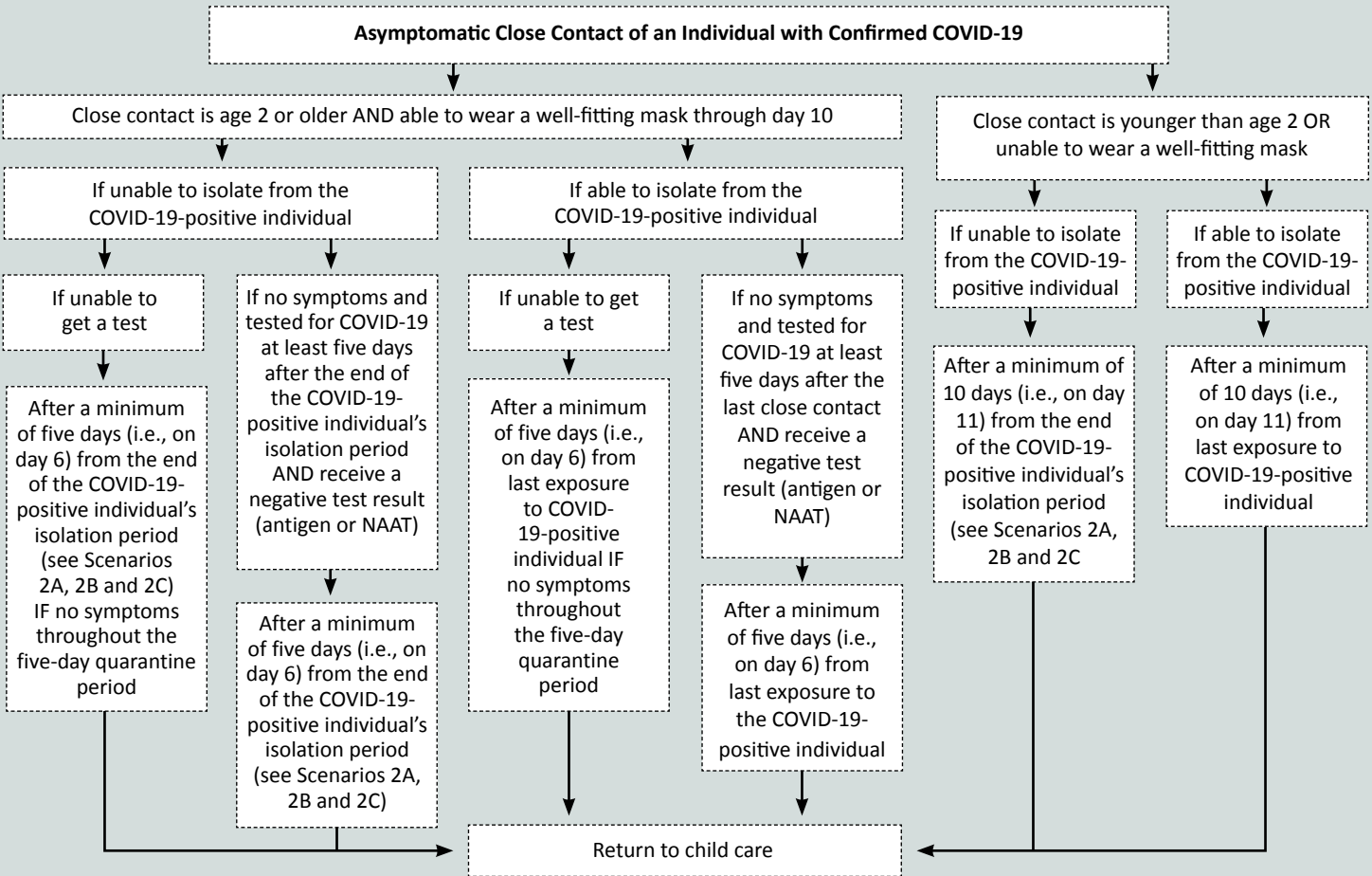
## Scenario 4: Asymptomatic Close Contact of an Individual with Confirmed COVID-19<sup>6</sup>

*Note: This scenario is recommended but not required.*

**Criteria apply to the following individuals: Up to Date on COVID-19 Vaccination or Had COVID-19 and Recovered in the Last 90 Days<sup>7</sup>**



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



SEE ALSO OSSE'S COVID-19 EXCLUSION AND DISMISSAL CRITERIA AND PROTOCOLS FOR CHILD CARE AVAILABLE ON THE [OSSE WEBSITE](#).

### Endnotes

- 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.
  - Standard criteria to return after illness refers to the individual child care facility's existing policies and protocols for an individual to return after illness.
  - A PCR test is a type of NAAT (Nucleic Acid Amplification Test).
  - Loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation.
  - "Moderately ill" means experiencing symptoms that affect the lungs like shortness of breath or difficulty breathing. "Very sick" means people who were hospitalized or required intensive care or ventilation support.
  - Children or staff identified as close contacts (who would otherwise be recommended to quarantine) may continue to attend if they are eligible for and participating in the facility's Test to Stay program.
  - 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) at least five 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 not attend child care and should test if symptoms develop.
    - Wear a well-fitting mask when around others at home and in public 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 not attend child care and should test if symptoms develop.
  - Wear a well-fitting mask when around others at home and in public for 10 days after their exposure