

**Administrative Offices**

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[WeArePublicHealth.org](http://WeArePublicHealth.org)

[Twitter.com/Maricopahealth](https://twitter.com/Maricopahealth)  
[Facebook.com/MCDPH](https://facebook.com/MCDPH)

April 26, 2021

Dear Maricopa County Healthcare Providers,

School health personnel are required to exclude children with symptoms related to COVID-19 for a minimum of 10-days unless the symptomatic child tests negative for COVID-19. There are a few exceptions to this requirement noted below. We are writing to request your continued support for public health isolation and quarantine requirements, including testing symptomatic children for COVID-19.

COVID-19 continues to circulate in the community, and new, more infectious variant strains are present in Arizona. Schools are open for in-person instruction in Maricopa County, and our common goal is to enable students and staff to remain safe and healthy while at school.

***To maintain a healthy school environment, children, teachers and staff who exhibit COVID-19 related symptoms are required to [isolate according to our criteria](#) with a few specific exceptions.***

**COVID-19 symptoms in children**

There is a long list of [COVID-19 symptoms](#) reported by people who test positive, and the illness mimics many common infections in children. While symptomatic individuals are more likely to infect others, asymptomatic people also spread COVID-19. Numerous publications have also confirmed that even young children, with or without symptoms, do spread COVID-19 to others.

**Children with ANY COVID-19 related symptoms MUST be isolated at home**

Children with COVID-19 related symptoms should be sent home to isolate away from others. Any of the symptoms listed below that are not related to an already-diagnosed chronic condition are a reason for exclusion from school until Maricopa County Department of Public Health isolation criteria are met.

- Fever ( $\geq 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$  or  $38^{\circ}\text{C}$ )
- Subjective chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue (not as only symptom in school setting)
- Diarrhea
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting

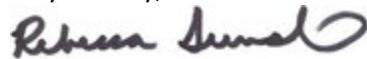
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There are **3 ways** for a child with symptoms to return to school prior to the end of the COVID-19 isolation protocol.

1. The child **tests negative** using a PCR or antigen test for COVID-19 OR
2. The child has a **laboratory-confirmed** alternative diagnosis from a healthcare provider (e.g. Strep throat or influenza) OR
3. The symptoms are related to a known chronic condition, such as seasonal allergies that have occurred in previous years, chronic abdominal pain, asthma, or chronic headaches.

Please remind parents to keep children home when they have ANY COVID-19 symptoms. We all need to exercise excess caution to keep our families safe. And please encourage parents to remind their kids to wash their hands, avoid touching their face and to cover their coughs and sneezes, and keep those masks in place, especially while at school!

Stay healthy,



CAPT, US Public Health Service  
CDC Career Epidemiology Field Officer  
Medical Director, Disease Control

**Please review guidance for Healthcare Providers on a regular basis. Guidance is updated frequently:**

- [Maricopa County Department of Public Health](#) | 602.506.6767
- [Arizona Department of Health Services](#) | 844.542.8201
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) | 800.CDC.INFO