



2022-2023

COVID-19 Quick Guide



Many schools serve children who may not be fully vaccinated. Therefore, this guidance emphasizes implementing layered prevention strategies to protect people who are both vaccinated and not fully vaccinated.

Vaccines

Vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. Promoting vaccination can help schools safely return to in person learning as well as extracurricular activities and sports.

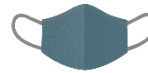


Hand Hygiene

Ensure students and staff wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. This is also recommended to be done after touching or removing masks.



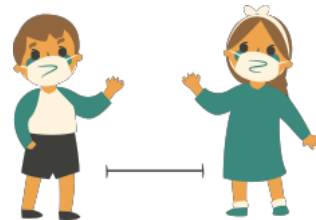
Masks



Masks are optional in RCSS. Per CDC guidelines, persons age 2 or older are advised to wear masks when in an area with a high COVID-19 Community Level. Masks are recommended if you are (1) sick and need to be around others, (2) are caring for someone who has COVID-19 and/or you are at increased risk for severe illness, (3) live with or spend time with someone at higher risk, or (4) have been exposed to a positive individual.

Physical Distancing

When possible, maintain at least 3-6 feet of physical distance between students and staff within classrooms, or any school setting to reduce transmission risks.



Layered Prevention

At-home screening, ventilation, handwashing and respiratory etiquette, staying home when sick and getting tested, contact tracing when needed in combination with quarantine and isolation, and cleaning and disinfection are also important layers of prevention to keep schools safe. COVID-19 prevention strategies remain critical to protect those who are not fully vaccinated, especially in areas of moderate-to-high community transmission levels. Localities will monitor community transmission, vaccination coverage, and occurrence of outbreaks to guide decisions on the level of layered prevention strategies.

As of January 4, 2022, the CDC added the following recommendation:

Fully vaccinated people are recommended to wear a mask in public indoor settings in areas of substantial or high transmission. To find your community transmission level, visit

<https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker>

Students, teachers, and staff are encouraged to stay home when they have signs of any infectious illness and be referred to their healthcare provider for testing and care. It is critical that school administration are notified for each student as well as employees once a possible infection occurs.

School Administration / Department Leaders and the RCSS COVID-19 Taskforce should be notified immediately for all student and employee confirmed positive cases.

SB 514-Unmask Georgia Students Act: The act prohibits any local board of education, local school superintendent, governing body of a charter school or state charter school or any personnel while acting within the scope of their employment in such schools from making or enforcing any rule that requires a student to wear a face mask or covering while at school or on school property, unless the rule lets the parent exempt his or her student from the mandate. The parent cannot be required to provide a reason or any certification about the child's health or education status.

Isolation for Positive Cases

All individuals who test positive for COVID-19 must isolate 5 days. Isolation keeps someone who is sick or has tested positive for COVID-19 (with or without symptoms) away from others, even in their own home.

This isolation period is mandatory regardless of vaccination status or use of masks. The start date for the isolation period is based on whether or not the positive individual is symptomatic or asymptomatic. Symptomatic individuals are highly recommended to stay at home until:

- (1) at least 5 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, AND
- (2) they are at least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication, AND
- (3) symptoms have improved.

Asymptomatic positive individuals must stay at home until 5 days have passed since the test date. If a case does not meet these criteria at the end of 5 days, then s/he needs to continue to isolate until all criteria are met.

Positive Case	Isolation Period & Infectious Period
<p><u>SYMPTOMATIC POSITIVE CASE</u> (Experiencing symptoms associated with COVID-19)</p>	<p><u>Isolation Period begins</u> the first date the individual experienced symptoms (the symptom onset.) The individual must isolate 5 days. When counting days, the first day of symptom onset is day “0.”</p> <p><u>Infectious Period:</u> 2 days before symptom onset</p>
<p><u>ASYMPTOMATIC POSITIVE CASE</u> (Not currently experiencing symptoms Associated with COVID-19)</p>	<p><u>Isolation Period begins</u> the date of the positive test. The individual must isolate for 5 days. When counting days, the date of the positive test is day “0.”</p> <p><u>Infectious Period:</u> 2 days before test specimen collected/ test date</p>



Documentation for Positive Cases

The Richmond County School System only requires schools and departments to complete DPH forms and report positive cases to the COVID-19 Taskforce.

Schools are no longer responsible to conduct contact tracing.

WHEN THE SCHOOL / DEPARTMENT IS NOTIFIED OF A POSITIVE CASE:

1. Complete the DPH Positive Case Report Form (see page below).

2. Submit the DPH Positive Case form to the COVID Task Force for processing via fax (706) 826-1299 or by email to Kari Brown (brownka@boe.Richmond.k12.ga.us)



3. (For Students ONLY)
Send home "Possible Exposure Letter" to all students who may have been exposed to a positive case.

- Include any students who may have been in close proximity with positive case for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.

4. **Maintain a log of positive cases.**

5. **Notify Bookkeeper (for adults) and Registrar (for students) of absences so that payroll and attendance records are correctly updated.**

- **Registrar attendance codes regarding COVID-19 issues:**

19RCS = Sent home or kept at home for having COVID-19 related symptom

19CC = Identified as a close contact (please review with school leadership)

19RCP = Students with a confirmed positive diagnosis who are isolating at home

***Additional Guidance for Employees who test Positive**

Presumed Positives / Home Tests/ Self-Tests:

If you test positive on an at-home test, you are recommended to follow guidance for a person who has tested positive for COVID-19. **A negative self-test result means that the test did not detect the virus and you may not have an infection, but it does not rule out the infection.** Repeating the test within a few days, with at least 24 hours between tests, will increase the confidence that you are not infected.

The Employee handbook states that if an employee is absent for three consecutive days of sick leave, a physician's statement must be provided. For COVID-19 related absences, a physician's note or a valid Antigen or PCR COVID-19 test are the only acceptable forms of leave documentation.

An Antigen or PCR COVID-19 test performed by a medical professional currently provides the most accurate results. Home Tests/ Self-Tests will not serve as documentation to excuse absences during isolation.

***Guidance for Potential Contacts**

The Georgia Department of Public Health recommends that potential contacts actively monitor for COVID-19 symptoms and consider quarantine at home.

The COVID-19 symptom checklist is as follows:

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fever or chills | <input type="checkbox"/> Sore throat | <input type="checkbox"/> New severe/bad headache | <input type="checkbox"/> New cough |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New loss of taste or smell | <input type="checkbox"/> Fatigue | <input type="checkbox"/> Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Congestion or runny nose | <input type="checkbox"/> Diarrhea | <input type="checkbox"/> Muscle or body aches | <input type="checkbox"/> Nausea or vomiting |

Potential contacts should notify the school or their supervisor immediately if they develop COVID-19 symptoms.

All students and staff should remember to stay home if they are sick.

****If you have any questions or need clarification, please contact the RCSS COVID-19 Taskforce for support at 706-826-1010, or ext. 5948**

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

- *Are masks required in RCSS buildings or on school buses?*
No

- *Can the school nurses use GRITS to verify COVID vaccination with parent consent?*
Yes, nurses are able to use the “Georgia Registry of Immunization Transactions and Services” (GRITS) to verify student vaccination status with or without parent consent (see FERPA).

- *Does vaccination status affect the need to physically or socially distance?*
NO. Whether vaccinated or unvaccinated, all individuals over the age of two are advised to wear masks and socially distance when appropriate.

- *How do I determine the correct return to school date for positive cases?*
All positive cases must isolate 5 days - either from symptom onset (symptomatic) or from positive test date (asymptomatic.)

Isolation dates for positive cases begin based on symptom onset or test dates. The first day of symptoms would be considered day “0”. If asymptomatic, test dates would be used to calculate 5-day isolation. The date of the test is day "0" with day one beginning the day after the test is taken.

- *Is there an illness policy to separate presumed positives from those with symptoms and no known exposure?*
Individuals with COVID-like symptoms are highly recommended to be tested as soon as possible. Those who are symptomatic, but not tested, are asked to communicate with their supervisor regarding their isolation period and may be released when they are no longer symptomatic for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medication.
(See above regarding presumed positives and home testing)

Available COVID-19 Testing Centers in Our Area

EAST CENTRAL HEALTH DISTRICT

- Link must be used to book appointments online: <https://covid19.dph.ga.gov/en-US/>
- Call (706)721-5800
- Residents of Richmond and Columbia counties, dial 311 - Hours - M-F 8AM-2PM

DOCTORS CARE- NORTH AUGUSTA

- 1520 Knox Ave, North Augusta, SC 29841 (803)279-4120 doctorscare.com
- Mon.-Fri.- 8AM-8PM & Sat-Sun 9AM-5PM

MEDNOW / MD URGENT CARE

- (\$50-\$100 co-pay depending on insurance)
- 2851 Washington Rd, Augusta, GA 30909. (706)922-6578 mednowurgentcare.net
- 2604 Peach Orchard Rd, Augusta, GA 30906. (706)798-4673 mednowurgentcare.net
- Lewiston Rd, Grovetown, GA 30813. (706)941-3333 mednowurgentcare.net
- 104 N Belair Rd, Evans, GA 30809. (706)922-3669 mednowurgentcare.net

WALMART SUPERCENTER

- **Appointment Required**
- 3338 Wrightsboro Rd, Augusta, GA 30903. (706)941-5317 walmart.com

CVS PHARMACY

- **Appointment Required**
- 2703 Washington Rd Augusta, GA 30909. (706)737-4939 cvs.com
- 2505 Windsor Spring Rd, Augusta, GA 30906. (706)796.8146 cvs.com
- 3231 Wrightsboro Rd, Augusta, GA 30909. (706)738-2591 cvs.com
- 1520 Walton Way, Augusta, GA 30909. (706)724-0598 cvs.com
- 101 Edgefield Rd, North Augusta, SC 29841. (803)279-7470 cvs.com
- 3527 Old Petersburg Rd, Martinez, GA 30907 (706)210-0091 cvs.com
- 1044 Furys Ferry Rd, Evans, GA 30809. (706)860-3945 cvs.com

WALGREENS

- **Appointment Required**
- 1505 Walton Way, Augusta, GA 30909. (706)828-3113 walgreens.com
- 36050 Wheeler Rd, Augusta, GA 30909. (706)210-7991 walgreens.com
- 3900 Washington Rd, Augusta, GA 30907. (706)868-8084 walgreens.com
- 2493 Tobacco Rd, Hephzibah, Augusta, GA 30815. (706)793-2106 walgreens.com

Resources

To access all of the forms and documents referred to in this guide:

[RCSS COVID-19 One Drive Folder 22 - 23 Link \(for digital use\)](#)

COVID-19 District Team

Dr. Cecil Clark, Chief Human Resources Officer
Mr. Marcus Allen, Area Superintendent of Support Services
Dr. Aronica Gloster, Director of Student Services
Mr. Franklin Hudson, Human Resources Benefits Coordinator
Mrs. Amelia Holmes, Coordinator of Health Services
Mrs. Kari Brown, (HR) Taskforce Leader
Mrs. Tina Wisniewski, School Nurse Supervisor

RCSS COVID Response Team

COVID-19 TASKFORCE Hotline

(706) 826-1010 / Ext. 5948

Fax: (706) 826-1299

Mrs. Kari Brown - Ext. 5524

brownka@boe.Richmond.k12.ga.us

