

COVID-19 PROTOCOLS FOR STUDENTS, STAFF, and VISITORS
2021-2022
Updated March 1, 2022

The South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind will begin school in August following guidance provided by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC).

We will closely monitor recommendations from these agencies and make changes as necessary. All DHEC exclusion protocols will be followed.

Mask Wearing

Masks are no longer required on school buses. However, students and staff are required to wear masks in certain instances as detailed in the **Guidelines for Resuming Contact Tracing and Quarantine** and **Positive Test and Isolation** sections below.

Temperature Checks

Temperature Checks will be conducted by staff prior to the student exiting their car and/or boarding a school bus; residential students will be checked daily by dormitory staff, in the early morning. It is standard procedure for a Nurse to take a student's temperature as part of every assessment.

Visitors

In order to protect our students and staff, visitors on campus are limited and must be preapproved.

Social Distancing

SCSDB will continue to follow DHEC recommendation for social distancing. Students and Staff in classrooms, dormitories, and common areas will maintain a distance of **three** feet or more from others, to the greatest extent possible.

Guidelines for Suspending Contact Tracing and Quarantine

Contact tracing and quarantine will be suspended in the following instance:

- SCSDB has less than 10% of students and staff absent due to testing positive for COVID-19 or having symptoms of COVID-19, over two consecutive one-week period
- Contact tracing, testing, and masking of close contacts without symptoms will not be required

Guidelines for **Resuming** Contact Tracing and Quarantine

Contact tracing and quarantine will resume if:

- SCSDB has 10% or more students and staff absent due to testing positive for COVID-19 or having symptoms of COVID-19, over two consecutive one-week period, until the two consecutive reporting periods are below 10% once again.
- Contact tracing and quarantine will begin the first school day following the end of the second week that is 10% or more.
- *If the threshold of COVID-19 positive students or staff exceeds 10%, the following close contact quarantine protocols will resume:*
 - Individuals are considered close contacts if they are within six feet of an infected person for greater than 15 minutes cumulatively over a 24-hour period.
 - **Students** who are within three to six feet of a COVID-19 positive person will not have to quarantine if the exposed student wore a mask at the time of exposure.
 - **Students** closer than three feet to an infected person will have to quarantine regardless of mask usage.
 - For any student or staff member considered a close contact of someone with COVID-19:

IF UNVACCINATED:

- Must quarantine for 5 days after the last exposure, and may return on day 6 if a COVID-19 test is **NEGATIVE**– AND – no symptoms developed during the quarantine.
- The test must be taken no earlier than day 5 after the date of last exposure, and quarantine must continue through day 5 (return on day 6).
- **As required by DHEC, masks MUST be worn through day 10**
- If the close contact does not present a negative test, they must quarantine through day 10

IF VACCINATED (fully or maximally as defined below):

- No quarantine required (as long as symptom free)
- DHEC recommends test on day 5 (even if symptom free)
- **Must wear mask days 1-10 at school**

If a close contact has received all required vaccine doses as indicated below, or if the close contact is verified to have been infected with COVID-19 within the previous 90 days, they do not have to quarantine for any length of time.

Please note: students/families and staff are not required to be vaccinated nor to provide proof of vaccination. Providing proof of vaccination is optional should a student/family or staff member wish to bypass. Fully vaccinated people are recommended to get tested 5 days after exposure even if they do not have symptoms.

Students or Staff who are deemed close contacts and do not wish to provide proof of vaccination or a negative COVID test completed no earlier than day 4 of quarantine will be required to quarantine for 10 days after the last day of contact with the infected person. For those who live in the same household as someone recovering from COVID-19, the quarantine period begins when the infected person completes their 5-day isolation period.

Vaccination definitions

- Students ages 5-17 must be **fully vaccinated**: completed their primary vaccine series of two doses of an mRNA (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna) or a single dose of Janssen vaccine, including an additional dose for an individual who is immunocompromised, more than 14 days ago
- Students and staff ages 18 and above must be **maximally vaccinated**: completed their primary vaccine series of two doses of an mRNA (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna) or a single dose of Janssen vaccine, including an additional dose for an individual who is immunocompromised, and has had all booster shots for which they are eligible.

Positive Test and Isolation

If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19:

- Must isolate for at least 5 days since symptoms started (return to school on day 6 at earliest) – AND –
- 24 hours since the last fever without using fever-reducing medication – AND
- Symptoms have significantly improved (**students must have a parent note confirming all criteria met**)
- **As required by DHEC, students and staff who meet the criteria to return after day 5 MUST wear a mask for days 6-10**

Hygiene

Enhanced building cleaning and sanitizing protocols will continue. Classrooms and meeting room cleaning and sanitizing supplies will remain stocked.

Frequent hand washing and the use of hand-sanitizers will continue to be encouraged.

Adjustments

We will continue to monitor SCDE and DHEC guidance and may adjust our safety protocols in response to changing recommendations or regulations.