

**COVID-19 PROTOCOLS FOR STUDENTS, STAFF, and VISITORS**  
**2021-2022**  
*Updated January 11, 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**

Students and staff are required to wear masks on the bus and in the nurses' stations. Additionally, students and staff are required to wear in certain instances as detailed in the **Close Contact 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 six feet or more from others, to the greatest extent possible.

**Contact Tracing**

SCSDB will continue to follow DHEC recommendations for contact tracing and reporting when a student, staff member, or visitor tests positive for COVID-19.

**Close Contact Quarantine**

Individuals are considered close contacts if they are within six feet of an infected person for greater than 15 minutes cumulatively. **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, and may return on day 6 if a COVID-19 test is NEGATIVE (home tests cannot be accepted) – AND – no symptoms reported.
- The test must be taken no earlier than day 4, 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.

**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.

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.

### **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.