

Employee/Student Quarantine Options for Exposure to COVID-19

Guidance issued by the Louisiana Department of Education on September 29, 2021 gave school systems the discretion to implement a Parent Choice option for quarantine determination. Members of the Sabine Parish School Board approved new procedures beginning Monday, October 18, 2021 stating that mandatory quarantines for students/employees defined as “close contact” during the school day or during a school function are no longer required. Details are included below. These new guidelines only apply if the individual identified as a close contact is not symptomatic.

Close contacts in a school setting

Quarantines for close contacts at school or on the bus are no longer mandatory. Following contact tracing, as previously completed, the parent/guardian will be notified that their child was identified as a close contact in a school setting. The parent/guardian will be given the option to have their child quarantine according to our current guidelines or return to school. Parents/guardians will be asked to monitor the child for symptoms, and school personnel will check the temperature of such students upon their arrival at school each day during that period of time during which the students would have been subject to quarantine. If a parent decides that they prefer for their child to quarantine, the student will follow existing Louisiana Department of Health guidelines. This change also applies to employees. Both employees and parents/guardians of students will be able to opt out of the quarantine period when notified by executing the necessary documents.

Close contacts in a home setting

Quarantine guidelines for a student/employee being a close contact to a parent, spouse, or sibling in a household or social gathering will continue to follow existing Louisiana Department of Health guidelines. The new quarantine guideline changes only apply to close contacts in a school setting.

Close contacts during contact sports

The guidelines have changed for students who are identified as close contacts during the course of any contact sport. Student athletes shall be quarantined in accordance with the same guidelines as govern all other students.

Close contacts during extracurricular activities

These newly adopted guidelines apply to students who are identified as close contacts during extracurricular activities and non-contact sports. If the student is considered a close contact, the parent/guardian will be notified and given the choice to quarantine their child.

Symptomatic/positive cases

The parent choice option does not alter the process of a positive COVID-19 case. If a student/employee develops symptoms or tests positive, they must isolate until they recover and are no longer infectious.

Implementation of mitigation responses during spike/breakout

Notwithstanding any other provision to the contrary, the Superintendent is authorized to reinstate or to implement quarantine, masking, and other mitigation efforts in the event of a rise in cases in a particular school, grade, or classroom.

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Employee/Student Quarantine Options for Exposure to COVID-19

1. *As a parent or employee, do I have the ability to opt out of quarantining if identified as a close contact?*

Yes. According to guidance issued by LDOE on September 29, 2021, the Sabine Parish School System will offer this option. However, the student or employee must not be experiencing any symptoms and will be subject to a daily temperature check upon arrival at school during that period of time during which the student/employee would have been quarantined. Such temperature check will be required of all close contacts who return to school regardless of whether the contact occurred in a school setting, during contact sports, or during extracurricular activities. Parents must execute the necessary documents prior to the opt out option becoming effective.

2. *How will I be notified regarding my option on not quarantining?*

School personnel will contact the parents or employees of close contacts and make them aware of all options and requirements pertaining to quarantine available through Sabine Parish School System.

3. *Do I still have the option to quarantine if I choose, due to notification of being a close contact?*

Yes. Quarantine can end after 10 days, and the student may return on day 11, without testing if the student has not exhibited any symptoms. There are additional options to shorten quarantine if COVID-19 testing is done between the fifth through seventh day of exposure.

4. *If I choose to quarantine will those absences be excused?*

Students – We will continue to follow our established procedures regarding quarantining of close contacts.
Employees – If an employee chooses to quarantine, they may use their COVID leave, if available, or their accumulated sick days.

5. *If I choose not to quarantine, am I required to test to remain at school?*

No, but such students and employees will have their temperature checked as provided herein. Please note that if you begin to exhibit symptoms you must quarantine.

6. *May I stay home part of the quarantine period and if showing no symptoms, return to work or school?*

Yes