

RICHMOND HOMESCHOOL COLLECTIVE CONTAGIOUS ILLNESS GUIDELINES

If a member of your family is experiencing symptoms that could be contagious, please consult this decision tree:

Could it be COVID-19?

YES = Follow our COVID-19 policy below, specifically, the sections “STAY HOME IF YOU HAVE COVID-19 SYMPTOMS” and “EXPOSURE AND QUARANTINE GUIDELINES.”

NO = Great! Is it likely some other contagious illness?

YES = Please keep your sick person home.

NO = Cool, see you in class!

NOT SURE = In general, if you are unsure about how long to keep your sick person home, please use your best judgment to keep the most vulnerable members of our community safe! Some of our community members are too young to protect themselves by masking. Some are medically fragile. Some illnesses that cause mild symptoms in healthy people can be very serious for very young or immunocompromised people.

Please especially weigh whether the person can responsibly mask and generally keep their germs to themselves (e.g., age plays a big factor here!).

Similarly, in deciding whether FAMILY MEMBERS WITHOUT SYMPTOMS should stay home, please use your best judgment and when in doubt, please err on the side of caution to protect the most vulnerable members of our community. Please remember that our community includes people who are very young, medically fragile, or immunocompromised. Please consider whether your family member can responsibly mask and generally keep their germs to themselves.

In addition to those general principles, here are some guidelines for common conditions, based on American Academy of Pediatrics, Centers for Disease Control, and Virginia Department of Health recommendations. **For any condition requiring medical consultation, please seek your medical provider's advice on how long to stay home.**

COLDS: Colds can be contagious for as long as 3 weeks, but mostly before symptoms start, and during the first 2-3 days of symptoms. Please keep your sick person home for the first three days of symptoms, and if they feel sick or need frequent help with nose-wiping, keeping hands clean, etc. Take extra care with masking and hand washing.

CONJUNCTIVITIS (PINKEYE): Conjunctivitis can be viral or bacterial, and medical opinions vary on whether antibiotics are appropriate even for bacterial cases. Please keep your sick person home until symptoms are gone or until 24 hours of antibiotic treatment have begun

DIARRHEA/VOMITING/STOMACH BUG/POSSIBLE NOROVIRUS: Please keep your sick person home two more days after they feel well, and diarrhea/vomiting have stopped. Take extra care with hand washing.

FEVER (that could be contagious): Please keep your sick person home for at least 24 hours after fever is gone.

FLU: Flu is most contagious before and during peak symptoms, but the virus is in secretions for 7 days after symptoms start, or longer with young children. Please keep your sick person home if they feel sick and for at least 24 hours after fever is gone. Take extra care with masking and hand washing.

LICE: Please keep your affected person home until lice have been treated with nit comb and OTC or prescription medication.

RASH (that could be contagious, e.g., measles, chicken pox, monkey pox): Please consult your medical provider.

STREP THROAT: Please keep your sick person home until fever is gone and for 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has begun

RESOURCES FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The Centers for Disease Control have web pages for many specific illnesses.

This chart is from the American Academy of Pediatrics publication *Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools: A Quick Reference Guide*.

[AppendixA.pdf \(nrckids.org\)](#)

Virginia Department of Health Guidelines for Healthcare Procedures in Schools, Appendix C: Universal Precautions and Infectious Diseases.

[Microsoft Word - vshg_disk.doc \(virginia.gov\)](#)

This page lists contagious periods for some common viruses.

<https://www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/infections/how-long-is-someone-infectious-after-a-viral-infection/>

RICHMOND HOMESCHOOL COLLECTIVE COVID-19 POLICY

updated 8/16/22

The following policies, created and updated by a committee of Collective members, will ensure that RHC is a welcoming, inclusive, and safe community.

VACCINATION

Vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. RHC requires all eligible students, and anyone entering the building, to be up to date with COVID-19 vaccinations, according to CDC guidance. As of June 18, 2022, everyone aged six months and up is eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine. Please click here for VDH information on available vaccinations. A vaccine card reflecting up to date vaccinations must be uploaded to the RHC website for any eligible person who might enter the building.

'Up to date' is currently defined by the CDC as:

- two weeks past your second dose (Pfizer, Moderna, or Novavax); or
- two weeks past your single dose (Johnson & Johnson); and
- if eligible, your booster shot(s).

Proof of a first dose is required within 30 days of reaching the eligible age, and proof of a second dose is required within 60 days of reaching the eligible age.

Those with a documented medical reason to delay vaccination should contact an RHC Operations member.

This vaccination policy may change during the active school term as CDC recommendations evolve.

MASKS

Well-fitting, high-quality masks must be worn indoors by all individuals (age two and older) regardless of vaccination status. N95, KN95, or KF94 masks are preferred, if possible. Single-layer cloth masks, gaiters, bandannas, and masks with valves do not provide adequate protection.

Masks are strongly recommended outdoors, for those who can comfortably do so, when community transmission levels are high; please see COVID-19 by County to check your locality's current transmission level.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Community members should strive to maintain a physical distance of three feet while inside. We recommend six feet distancing when outdoors and unmasked.

Eat meals outside whenever possible; if eating indoors, social distancing is vital.

VENTILATION

Improving ventilation is a significant COVID-19 prevention strategy that can reduce the number of virus particles in the air. We will open doors and windows and use indoor air filtration when possible and as appropriate.

HYGIENE

Members should practice handwashing and respiratory etiquette (covering coughs and sneezes) to keep from getting and spreading infectious illnesses including COVID-19.

Hands should be washed with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Everyone should wash hands frequently, and young children should be assisted with proper handwashing. If handwashing is not possible, hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol should be used.

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CLEANING

All high-touch surfaces will be cleaned with an EPA-approved disinfectant at the end of each day.

STAY HOME IF YOU HAVE COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

If a community member has COVID-19 symptoms, they should test for COVID-19 immediately, per CDC recommendations. If they choose to take a rapid antigen test, they should wait at least 48 hours after symptoms appear to ensure meaningful results.

If a student, or another person who has been present inside our facility, tests positive for COVID-19, they must notify an RHC Operations member immediately.

EXPOSURE AND QUARANTINE GUIDELINES

Anyone who has had COVID-19 EXPOSURE must stay home. Exposure is defined as being within six feet of someone with COVID-19, for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.

If an individual has been EXPOSED to COVID-19, they should not attend RHC events until:

- Option 1: Two negative rapid antigen tests spaced 48 hours apart, with the first test taken no sooner than five days after exposure.
- Option 2: One negative PCR test, taken no sooner than five days after exposure.
- Option 3: Fourteen days after exposure, if no tests have been taken, and the individual has remained asymptomatic for COVID-19.
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The clock is reset for each new exposure. Siblings and parents should be mindful of their exposure to family members who have tested positive.

If an individual TESTS POSITIVE for COVID-19, they must not attend RHC events until their symptoms are abating and they have had two negative rapid antigen tests spaced 48 hours apart, with the first negative test taken at least five days after the first positive test.

WHEN RETURNING to RHC events following covid exposure or a positive test, individuals shall take extra care to wear high quality masks at all times for a duration of fourteen days.

PARTIAL LIST OF RESOURCES CONSULTED:

COVID -19 Testing: What You Need to Know, updated 8/11/22

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/testing.html>

Isolation and Precautions for People With Covid-19, updated 8/11/22

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/isolation.html>

A Quick Note on Masks and CDC Guidance, 1/6/22

<https://yourlocalepidemiologist.substack.com/p/a-quick-note-on-masks-and-cdc-guidance>

Antigen Tests: Real World Data, 1/19/22

<https://yourlocalepidemiologist.substack.com/p/antigen-tests-real-world-data>

Epidemiology of Reinfections, 7/8/22

<https://yourlocalepidemiologist.substack.com/p/epidemiology-of-reinfections>

A Reaction to the CDC Guidance, 8/12/22

<https://yourlocalepidemiologist.substack.com/p/a-reaction-to-the-cdc-guidance>

When covid enters the house, what should we do?

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/17/nyregion/covid-questions-families.html?smid=url-share>

How to Live With Covid When You Are Tired of Living With Covid

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/25/well/live/covid-ba5-precautions.html>

When you have covid, here's how you know you are no longer contagious

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2022/08/01/covid-contagious-period-isolation/>