



**COUNTY OF DUTCHESS**  
DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL & COMMUNITY HEALTH

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Dutchess County Public School Superintendents & Private Schools  
**From:** Livia Santiago-Rosado, MD FACEP, Commissioner   
Dutchess County Department of Behavioral and Community Health  
**Date:** January 5, 2022  
**RE:** January 4<sup>th</sup> NYS and CDC Isolation and Quarantine Guidance

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As you may be aware, on January 4<sup>th</sup> 2022 the CDC issued updated COVID quarantine and isolation guidelines (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html>) in response to the omicron surge, which the New York State Department of Health followed with aligned interim guidance ([https://apps.health.ny.gov/pub/ctrldocs/alrtview/postings/NYS\\_Updated\\_Isolation\\_and\\_Quarantine\\_Guidance\\_01042022\\_1641333320555\\_0.pdf](https://apps.health.ny.gov/pub/ctrldocs/alrtview/postings/NYS_Updated_Isolation_and_Quarantine_Guidance_01042022_1641333320555_0.pdf)). Given that certain special populations including K-12 students were not specifically carved out, **Dutchess County will be following the guidance for the general population, to include schoolchildren.**

To summarize the guidance as it stands:

- **If you are exposed** (within 6 feet of someone with Covid for over 15 minutes in a 24hr period) and you are boosted or fully vaccinated and not yet eligible for a booster, you are not required to quarantine but must wear a mask and monitor for symptoms for 10 days. If you are unvaccinated, partially vaccinated, or fully vaccinated and eligible for booster but have not received a booster, you must quarantine for 5 days. A NAAT/PCR test is *recommended* at day 5, or sooner if symptoms develop. For those unable to wear a well-fitting mask, quarantine for a full 10 days. **Test-to-stay may be utilized to support quarantined individuals attending school.**
- **If you are Covid positive, isolate for 5 full days, followed by with strict mask wearing for the rest of the 10 days** (day 0 is day of symptom onset, or day of positive test if no symptoms). For those unable to wear a well-fitting mask, isolate for a full 10 days. In order to end isolation, symptoms, if present, must be improving or resolved.
- If you test **positive on a home test, please report your result to your county health department** ([www.DutchessNY.gov/COVIDpositive](http://www.DutchessNY.gov/COVIDpositive)) and follow their instructions.
- Individuals with **moderate to severe immune compromise are not eligible for the shortened (5-day) periods**, and should quarantine/isolate for 10 days.

Since the beginning of the COVID pandemic, public health guidance has relied on our current understanding of the infection, including the clinical features of individual variants and the identification of vulnerable populations. These conditions have been rapidly changing and have required evolving guidance and implementation. Over the last two years we have come to learn that during a pandemic, Pandemic Rules apply, and the first rule of Pandemic Rules is “There are no rules during a pandemic”. I urge that you communicate with your individual stakeholders that guidance is informed by current knowledge and the actual situation on the ground, and both conditions evolve continuously. We will continue to closely monitor the situation locally in Dutchess County and communicate with health officials at the State and national levels to ensure we are doing everything possible to uphold our dual goals of keeping children in school while protecting the public health of our communities.

We acknowledge that implementation of quarantine requirements for fully vaccinated (and not yet boosted) staff will be incredibly challenging and cumbersome. DBCH urges all residents, including school faculty to seek out boosters to increase protection against this virus and eliminate the risk of quarantine due to exposure. Full assessment of eligibility for boosters as well as the need to allow staff time to acquire their boosters necessitates a measured approach to implementation of stricter quarantine standards, at least until further guidance is released by NYS and/or CDC which has been alluded to by both parties.

As always, we appreciate your constant partnership and our joint mission of providing the highest level of opportunity for safe in-person instruction for students throughout our community. Please let us know if you have any concerns.