



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

ELIZABETH A. CHAR, MD
DIRECTOR

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Department of Health issues interim K-12 school guidance Recommended isolation & quarantine times reduced

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) has updated interim COVID-19 [isolation and quarantine guidance](#) for K-12 schools. The updated guidance is closely aligned with new CDC guidance for schools.

Isolation and quarantine times for students and staff who meet certain conditions have been reduced to 5 days.

ISOLATION

Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 or have COVID-19 symptoms should isolate for five days regardless of their vaccination status. They can return to school when all the following conditions are met:

- Five full days have passed since symptoms first appeared or since test was conducted.
- No fever for 24 hours.
- Symptoms have improved.

QUARANTINE

Students and staff who have been in close contact with a person who has COVID-19 should quarantine for five days after last contact if:

- They have not completed their primary vaccine series (2 shots Pfizer or Moderna, 1 shot J&J).
- They are 18 or older and have completed their primary vaccine series but have not received a recommended booster when eligible.

Students and staff should get tested on day five of quarantine, even if they do not have symptoms.

Students and staff are **not required to quarantine** if:

- They are ages 5-17 and have completed their primary series of COVID-19 vaccines (2 shots Pfizer or Moderna).
- They are 18 and older and have received all recommended vaccine doses including boosters.

"School have the tools they need to help keep students safe from COVID-19. Vaccines, boosters, masks, and cohorting all contribute to a safe environment," said State Epidemiologist Dr. Sarah Kemble.

"The reduced isolation and quarantine guidance supports our efforts to continue to prioritize in-person learning while upholding safety protocols in our schools," interim Superintendent Keith Hayashi said. "The revisions also recognize the protection that vaccinations provide for staff and students, and the added protection boosters provide for eligible staff. More than 90% of HIDOE employees are vaccinated and we continue to support efforts to make vaccinations accessible in our schools along with COVID testing opportunities."

Everyone, regardless of vaccination status, is required to wear well-fitting masks in all indoor settings and in outdoor settings where crowding may occur. Masks may be removed when actively eating and drinking and during nap time for young children.

Anyone who develops symptoms should self-isolate immediately and get tested.

DOH will continue to update guidance based on best practices and the latest scientific information.

Vaccination and testing options are available at hawaiiicovid19.com

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