

Protecting Manitobans

RESTORING SAFE SCHOOLS



Toolkit for Notification of Cases in Schools

Manitoba Education/Manitoba Health and Seniors Care

Last Updated: May 4, 2021

What's New to the Toolkit?

The toolkit has been updated to reflect new public health directives related to close contacts and self-isolation.

These updated public health directives include:

- As variants of concern (VOC) are becoming the dominant strain of the virus in Manitoba, to reduce the risk of transmission, changes have been made to the management of all COVID-19 cases and contacts. There will no longer be separate notification or different recommendations if the case is a VOC. For more information about VOCs, please visit www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/fundamentals/variants.html.
- The definition of a close contact remains unchanged from the last version to identify more contacts. A close contact is anyone who has been in close physical proximity (less than two metres or six feet) for more than a cumulative total of ten minutes to a confirmed COVID-19 case over the course of a day. It also includes people who provided care for the case or had direct contact with infectious body fluids without the use of personal protective equipment.
- All household members of cases are considered close contacts. As well, a person would be considered a close contact if they had close face-to-face interactions with someone who has COVID-19 without the use of a mask, even if the interaction(s) was less than a cumulative total of ten minutes.
- Public health officials will advise on specific recommendations based on the school exposure. More aggressive measures for contacts will be implemented by public health officials overall based on the school exposure, and are not specific to whether a VOC is identified.
- Close contacts are recommended to go for testing at the time of notification and 10 days after their last exposure to the case. Regardless of whether the close contact tests negative, they must complete their 14 days of self-isolation (quarantine). However, household members of the close contact can end their self-isolation (quarantine) when the close contact tests negative, as long as the test has been done a minimum of 7 days after the exposure.

- Public health officials have confirmed that critical services workers, which include Kindergarten to Grade 12 education providers (all teachers, administrators, and support staff), who have been directed to self-isolate because a member of their household is either awaiting a COVID-19 test result OR a member of their household has been deemed to be a close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case, can continue to work as long as:
 - they wear a medical mask at all times. Any breaks where the mask is removed should be done in isolation of staff and students;
 - they have no symptoms themselves; AND
 - if the household member is a close contact, the close contact has no symptoms and is able to self-isolate within the home.

These household members should still self-isolate when not at work.

These exemptions do not apply in situations where the staff person themselves is awaiting a COVID-19 test result or has been deemed to be a close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case. In these situations, the staff must self-isolate — there are no exceptions.

- Updated information is reflected in notification template letters.

Introduction

This toolkit has been developed in partnership with Manitoba Education, educators, and public health officials. Its intent is to support schools to intervene as quickly as possible to mitigate risk of COVID-19 transmission and keep schools safe.

- When public health officials identify a school as a possible exposure location, they contact the school principal to collect the information gathered to identify close contacts.
- When students, parents, caregivers, or staff self-identify as a positive case to schools, principals or other school officials are in receipt of this information before notification by a public health official. Collecting relevant information as early as possible will help schools determine if interim school-level actions are required and will expedite processes once public health officials contact the school.

This toolkit includes:

- Steps for identifying close contacts in schools
- Sample worksheet: “Case and Close Contact Form” that schools can use to record information they have collected
- Definition and examples of close contacts
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Templates for schools to issue letters/emails

This toolkit is not intended to put schools in the position of making health decisions, but rather to assist school officials in collecting the information public health officials need as part of their investigation. Public health officials are responsible for contact tracing.

Schools can use the information collected to send individuals, classes or cohorts home to self-isolate while they wait to receive direction from public health officials. Schools know their community best and are well positioned to support public health officials in this way.

Public health officials and their designates will contact students and staff to confirm if they are close contacts and to ensure they have the necessary information on self-isolation requirements to reinforce the information provided to them by the school. Public health officials will also communicate further instructions to the school to:

- validate or modify any interim actions taken by the school when parents/caregivers or staff self-identify as a case so that the school may follow up with students and families.
- advise on actions to be taken at the school when public health officials advise of a confirmed case.

Manitoba Education has established a dedicated Notification Support Team to respond to official school inquiries, to support the process, and to assist with contacting families, if needed. The Notification Support Team will be available to school officials seven days per week, excluding statutory holidays.

NOTE: This document does not provide answers for all individual situations. Schools and school divisions need to consider how to best integrate this guidance within their local realities, specific situations and in consultation with their local regional health authority. For the purposes of this document, school officials refers to a principal and/or their delegate.

School-level Information Gathering

School officials will gather the necessary information when either:

- A. A parent/caregiver of a student or a staff member inform the school that they have received a positive COVID-19 test, OR
- B. Public health officials contact the school and inform them of a positive case in their school.

A checklist of the steps is included in Appendix 1.

Step 1 — Collect basic information

School officials collect basic information, including:

- the person's name and contact information
- the affected grade and cohort, if applicable
- if a positive case is disclosed to school directly: the date symptoms started (if the individual has no symptoms, school officials will collect the COVID-19 test date) and the date the individual was last at school.

Step 2 — Determine if exposure may have taken place at school

School officials will determine if the student/staff member was at school:

- within 48 hours of symptoms, OR
- 48 hours before their COVID-19 test date, if there are no symptoms.

If Yes: School officials continue to the interim notification process outlined below (see step 3).

If No: Nothing more needs to be done. School officials can advise the positive student/staff member to self-isolate and wait for direction from public health officials.

NOTE: If the individual was not at school during the communicable period, a public health nurse would not need to contact the school because a school contact investigation is not required. Notification by school officials to the school community is not required in this case.

Step 3 — Identify potential close contacts

School officials begin to identify potential close contacts within the school. The Case Contact and Close Contact Form (Appendix 2) can be used to capture this information, if schools have not already developed their own form. School officials will use the information recorded in this form, as well as seating plans, when contacted by their regional health authority as part of an investigation.

Using the definition below, school officials list the potential close contacts on the form.

Definition of a Close Contact

A close contact is defined as an individual who was within less than two metres (six feet) from the identified person, for a cumulative 10 minutes over 24 hours, during the communicable period. All household members are now considered close contacts. As well, a person would be considered a close contact if they had close face-to-face interactions with someone who has COVID-19 without the use of a mask, even if the interaction was for a cumulative total of less than ten minutes.

This includes people wearing a non-medical mask. It also includes people who provided care for the case or had direct contact with infectious body fluids without the use of personal protective equipment. This information will be verified by public health officials.

This includes individuals who had close contact such as hugging, sharing of food, personal items etc. even if the duration was less than 10 minutes over 24 hours, as this kind of near contact automatically makes them a close contact, whether they were wearing a non-medical mask or not.

School officials record all locations the potential close contact was in contact with the potential/confirmed positive individual (e.g., washrooms, classrooms, gymnasiums, lunchrooms, busses, before or after school program).

For each location, consider physical distancing and interactions. Use seating charts as needed if students do not sit more than two metres (six feet) apart. This does not include: individuals wearing a medical mask and eye protection (goggles or face shields) consistently and reliably.

- If no potential close contacts are identified, then school officials do not continue with any further information collection and advise the potential/confirmed positive case to self-isolate and wait for public health officials to contact them.
- If school officials identify potential close contacts, public health officials will require their name, phone number(s) and birthday. School officials will advise identified potential close contacts and their household members to self-isolate and wait for public health officials to contact them for further direction. School officials will complete a brief e-form to let Manitoba Education know about any interim school actions taken. The e-form link will be distributed directly to superintendents and principals from Manitoba Education.
- If school officials are unsure, it is reasonable to advise individuals, classes or cohorts to self-isolate until contacted by public health officials. Once contacted, public health officials will complete the investigation.

For examples of close contact identification, see Appendix 4. Frequently Asked Questions can be found in Appendix 5.

Step 4 — Notify potential close contacts (Optional)

School officials notify potential close contacts and advise them and their household members to self-isolate until contacted by public health officials. School officials may choose to send an optional letter or email notifying the potential close contacts and the general school community (including any substitute staff or volunteers who were present) at this stage, pending public health investigation. See Appendix 2 for templates.

New Self-Isolation Requirements

Close contacts are recommended to go for testing on notification and at 10 days after their last exposure to the case. Regardless of whether the close contact tests negative, they must complete their 14 days of self-isolation (quarantine). However, household members of the close contact can end their self-isolation (quarantine) when the close contact tests negative, as long as the test has been done a minimum of 7 days after the exposure.

If a close contact does not get tested for COVID-19, the household members of that person should isolate until the close contact completes the full 14 days of self-isolation (quarantine) and remains asymptomatic.

Self-Isolation Exemptions for Household Members of Close Contacts or Individuals Awaiting Test Results

Public health officials have confirmed that critical services workers, which include Kindergarten to Grade 12 education providers (all teachers, administrators, and support staff), who have been directed to self-isolate because a member of their household is either awaiting a COVID-19 test result OR a member of their household has been deemed to be a close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case, can continue to work as long as:

- they wear a medical mask at all times. Any breaks where the mask is removed should be done in isolation of staff and students;
- they have no symptoms themselves; AND
- if the household member is a close contact, the close contact has no symptoms and is able to self-isolate within the home.

These exemptions do not apply in situations where the staff person themselves is awaiting a COVID-19 test result or has been deemed to be a close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case. In these situations, the staff must self-isolate— there are no exceptions.

Public health officials will also advise individuals on additional exemptions if someone has been fully immunized or has had a recent COVID-19 infection in the past 3 months.

Step 5 — Confirm with public health (Required)

When the public health nurse contacts the school to do the contact investigation, school officials will discuss the information the school collected and recorded. Public health officials will work with the school to collect the completed information and will provide direction and guidance on formal notifications.

Public health officials will advise on specific recommendations based on the school exposure.

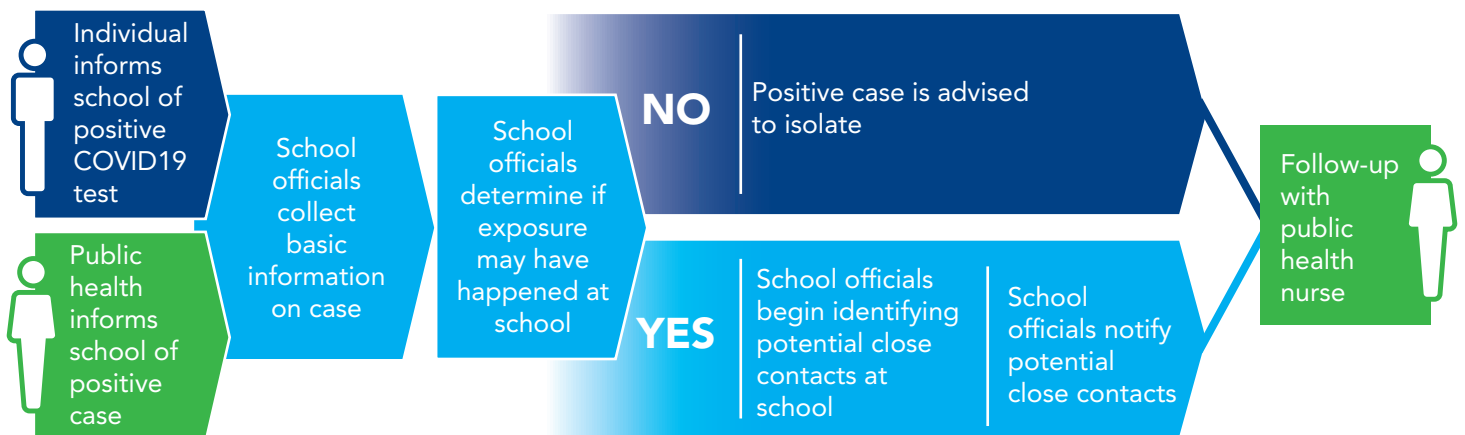
After public health officials validate the information schools have collected, school officials will send out the appropriate confirming letter to the identified recipients, copying Manitoba Education. School officials can use their discretion in disclosing class/cohort details in the School Community Letter, if the information could identify a specific student. Please see Appendix 2.

Step 6 — Public health officials continue case investigation

Public health officials continue their case and contact investigation, beyond the school investigation.

To close out their work with schools, the public health nurse completes a case summary e-form, with link information distributed internally by Manitoba Education.

Notification Process – Overview



Appendix 1: Positive COVID-19 Cases in Schools – Notification Process Checklist

1. Collect basic Information

- ✓ Gather preliminary information: contact information; affected grade and cohort, if applicable; date symptoms started (if the individual has no symptoms, school officials will collect the COVID-19 test date); and date the individual was last at school.

2. Determine if there was risk of exposure at the school

- ✓ Find out if the student or staff person was at school within the 48 hours before symptom onset or 48 hours before their COVID-19 test date, if there are no symptoms.
 - If no, nothing more needs to be done. School officials can reiterate current public health guidance to self-isolate and wait for direction from public health officials.
 - If yes, proceed to step 3.

3. Determine if there are potential close contacts

- If no potential close contacts, nothing more needs to be done.
- If yes, complete Case and Potential Close Contact Form to collect basic information, including the number and description of close contacts, and notify Manitoba Education by completing the e-form.

4. Notify close contacts

- ✓ If it is determined that there are potential close contacts, school officials can send individuals, classes or cohorts home to self-isolate while they wait to receive direction from public health officials.
 - School officials notify potential close contacts and their household members and advise them to self-isolate until contacted by public health officials.
 - School officials may choose to send an optional letter/ email notifying the potential close contacts and the general school community.

5. Confirm with public health official

When the public health nurse contacts the school to do the contact investigation, school officials will discuss the information the school collected.

- ✓ After public health officials validate the information schools have collected, school officials will send out the appropriate confirming letter to the identified recipients.

6. Public health officials continue investigation

School's role is complete. Public health nurse completes case summary e-form.

Appendix 2: Forms and Templates

Case Contact and Close Contact Form

COMPLETE ALL APPLICABLE FIELDS SHADED IN GREY

Date Initiated _____
 Date updated _____

Completed by _____
 Email _____
 Regional Health Authority _____

School Positive Section 1 - Basic Information

1. School Name (Ensure full name entered as shown in drop down list) type all or part of school name here, then click down arrow for options _____

2. Affected grade/cohort _____

3. Role _____

4. First name _____

5. Last name _____

6. Phone number _____

7. Email _____

8. Date symptoms started _____

9. Date Tested (if not symptomatic) _____

10. Was the student/staff member at school within 48 hours of symptoms OR 48 hours before their COVID-19 test date, if there are no symptoms? _____

A close contact is defined as an individual who was not consistently 6 feet (2 meters) away from a case for a cumulative 10 minutes over a day

Were student charts used to populate Section 2? _____

Name	Birthdate	Email	Phone Number	SETTING (check all that apply)				Bus (Route/#)	Other (specify)	Date of last contact
				Classroom	Washroom	Recess	Lunchroom			
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
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				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			

General Notification of Case in School Template A (Optional)

INSERT SCHOOL LETTERHEAD

<Date>

<Name of School/Institution/Facility>

<Address>

RE: COMMUNITY LETTER FOR POSITIVE COVID-19 CASE IN OUR SCHOOL

A member of our school community has informed us that they have tested positive for COVID-19. While we await a public health investigation, we have contacted individuals who we believe are close contacts and advised them and their household members to self-isolate.

If you have not received separate direction from the school or a public health official, we do not believe you/your child are a contact and nothing further is required at this time. Please note: We are not permitted to release the name or any identifying information about a self-identified or confirmed case of COVID-19 to any member of the school, community, or media.

We continue to work with public health officials and will provide more information as it becomes available.

For more public health information about COVID-19, please visit <https://manitoba.ca/covid19/updates/resources.html>.

Sincerely,

Principal/Manager/Supervisor
<Name of school/Institution/Facility>

General Notification of Case in School Template B (Optional)

Insert School Letterhead

<Date>

<Name of School, Institution or Facility>

<Address>

RE: POTENTIAL CLOSE CONTACT LETTER

A member of our school community has informed us that they have tested positive for COVID-19. Public health officials have not yet completed their case investigation. However, based on our assessment of the situation, we believe your child may have been a close contact of this case.

We believe the following groups may have been in close contact with this individual:

<Cohort, class, or other subgroup>

As a member of this group, public health officials require your child and other household members to self-isolate (quarantine) until you are contacted by public health or school officials. Self-isolating means staying home, avoiding others, and not leaving the house for school, work, or to go to other public places until further direction is provided by a public health official.

More information about self-isolation (quarantine) can be found at http://Manitoba.ca/asset_library/en/covid/factsheet-isolation-selfmonitoring-returningtravellers-contacts.pdf.

If you have questions before a public health official contacts you, you can call Health Links—Info Santé at 204-788-8200 or toll-free at 1-888-315-9257.

Please note: We are not permitted to release the name or any identifying information about a self-identified or confirmed case of COVID-19 to any member of the school, facility, community, or media.

However, public health officials advise that if anyone develops any one symptom listed in Column A or any two or more symptoms listed in Column B (see table below), even if they are mild, they should immediately self-isolate (quarantine). They also recommend testing for COVID-19 as soon as symptoms appear. Call Health Links—Info Santé at 204-788-8200 or toll-free at 1-888-315-9257 for information on testing and isolation.

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- 2 -

A	B
Fever/Chills	Runny nose
Cough	Muscle aches
Sore throat/hoarse voice	Fatigue
Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing	Pink eye (conjunctivitis)
Loss of taste or smell	Headache
Vomiting or diarrhea for more than 24 hours	Skin rash of unknown cause
	Nausea or loss of appetite
	Poor feeding (if an infant)

Please note: Individuals with symptoms outlined in Columns A and B, who choose not to be tested, must isolate for a minimum of 10 days following the start of symptoms. Isolation can be stopped at day 10 if the individual has been symptom-free for 24 hours. In the case of symptomatic individuals who choose not to be tested, all household members should isolate along with the symptomatic person for the 10 days.

For more public health information about COVID-19, please visit <https://manitoba.ca/covid19/updates/resources.html>.

Sincerely,

Principal/Manager/Supervisor
<Name of School, Institution or Facility>

Close Contact Letter for Parent/Guardian (Required)



Health and Seniors Care
Population and Public Health
300 Carlton Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3B 3M9
T 204-788-6701
www.manitoba.ca

Insert Date

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Re: Close Contact Notification Letter—Insert Name of School/Child Care Centre

Manitoba public health officials advised the school today of at least one confirmed case of COVID-19 in **Insert Classroom/Cohort/Bus or other location (as applicable)** on **Insert Date** when the individual(s) may have been infectious. **Your child has been identified as a close contact of this/these case(s).**

The school is working closely with public health officials and is following their recommendations. **Your child must self-isolate (quarantine) effective today up to and including Insert Date or as directed by public health officials.**

Testing is recommended for close contacts who remain asymptomatic 10 days after the last exposure to the case. The test at day 10 is important in identifying asymptomatic cases, and ensuring they self-isolate while they are infectious.

If test results are negative, they should continue to self-isolate (quarantine) until the end date above. All household members should self-isolate (quarantine) until the close contact has tested negative at day 10 or, if they are not tested, until they have finished their self-isolation (quarantine) period and they remain asymptomatic.

You can expect a phone call from a public health official before the end of your self-isolation period. Given the scale of Manitoba's response, public health officials include regional public health staff, the Public Health COVID-19 Contact Centre, Canadian Red Cross, 24-7 Intouch, and other partners.

They will confirm your identity, and ask about your child's temperature checks and whether they have any symptoms or about any issues related to their isolation. If you have questions the contact centre agent is not able to answer, they will transfer you to a health professional that can answer your question and give you further direction.

If you have questions in the meantime, you can call Health Links—Info Santé at 204-788-8200 or toll-free at 1-888-315-9257.

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If your child develops a new onset or worsening of any one symptom listed in Column A or any two or more symptoms listed in Column B (see table below), even if they are mild, immediately isolate them from others (if you have not already done so). It is recommended your child get tested for COVID-19 as soon as symptoms appear. You may go directly to the nearest COVID-19 testing location during their open hours. For the testing site nearest you, please visit <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/testing/locations.html> or call Health Links—Info Santé at 204-788-8200 or toll-free at 1-888-315-9257.

A	B
Fever/Chills	Runny nose
Cough	Muscle aches
Sore throat/hoarse voice	Fatigue
Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing	Pink eye (conjunctivitis)
Loss of taste or smell	Headache
Vomiting or diarrhea for more than 24 hours	Skin rash of unknown cause
	Nausea or loss of appetite
	Poor feeding (if an infant)

Please note the following:

- Public health officials strongly encourage testing so it can be determined whether COVID-19 transmission has occurred within the school.
- The school is not permitted to release the name or any identifying information about the confirmed case(s) of COVID-19 to any member of the school, community, or media.
- As variants of concern (VOC) are becoming the dominant strain of the virus in Manitoba, to reduce the risk of transmission, changes have been made to how we manage all COVID-19 cases and contacts. While public reporting of VOCs associated with schools will continue, there will no longer be separate notification or different recommendations if the case is a VOC. For more information about VOCs, please visit www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/fundamentals/variants.html.

More information about self-isolation (quarantine) can be found at http://www.manitoba.ca/asset_library/en/covid/factsheet-isolation-selfmonitoring-returningtravellers-contacts.pdf

For more public health information about COVID-19, please visit <https://manitoba.ca/covid19/updates/resources.html>.

Sincerely,

Office of the Chief Provincial Public Health Officer
Health and Seniors Care

Close Contact Letter for Staff Member (Required)



Health and Seniors Care
Population and Public Health
300 Carlton Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3B 3M9
T 204-788-6701
www.manitoba.ca

Insert Date

Dear Staff Member,

Re: Close Contact Notification Letter—Insert Name of School/Child Care Centre

Manitoba public health officials advised the school today of at least one confirmed case of COVID-19 in **Insert Classroom/Cohort/Bus or other location (as applicable)** on **Insert Date** when the individual(s) may have been infectious. **You have been identified as a close contact of this/these case(s).**

The school is working closely with public health officials and is following their recommendations. **You must self-isolate (quarantine) effective today up to and including Insert Date or as directed by public health officials.**

Testing is recommended for close contacts who remain asymptomatic 10 days after the last exposure to the case. The test at day 10 is important in identifying asymptomatic cases, and ensuring they self-isolate while they are infectious.

If test results are negative, you should continue to self-isolate (quarantine) until the end date above. All household members should self-isolate (quarantine) until you have tested negative at day 10 or, if you are not tested, until you have finished your self-isolation (quarantine) period and you remain asymptomatic.

You can expect a phone call from a public health official before the end of your self-isolation period. Given the scale of Manitoba's response, public health officials include regional public health staff, the Public Health COVID-19 Contact Centre, Canadian Red Cross, 24-7 Intouch, and other partners.

They will confirm your identity, and ask about your temperature checks and whether you have any symptoms or about any issues related to your isolation. If you have questions the contact centre agent is not able to answer, they will transfer you to a health professional that can answer your question and give you further direction.

If you have questions in the meantime, you can call Health Links—Info Santé at 204-788-8200 or toll-free at 1-888-315-9257.

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If you develop a new onset or worsening of any one symptom listed in Column A or any two or more symptoms listed in Column B (see table below), even if they are mild, immediately isolate from others (if you have not already done so). It is recommended you get tested for COVID-19 as soon as symptoms appear. You may go directly to the nearest COVID-19 testing location during their open hours. For the testing site nearest you, please visit <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/testing/locations.html> or call Health Links—Info Santé at 204-788-8200 or toll-free at 1-888-315-9257.

A	B
Fever/Chills	Runny nose
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Loss of taste or smell	Headache
Vomiting or diarrhea for more than 24 hours	Skin rash of unknown cause
	Nausea or loss of appetite
	Poor feeding (if an infant)

Please note the following:

- Public health officials strongly encourage testing so it can be determined whether COVID-19 transmission has occurred within the school.
- The school is not permitted to release the name or any identifying information about the confirmed case(s) of COVID-19 to any member of the school, community, or media.
- As variants of concern (VOC) are becoming the dominant strain of the virus in Manitoba, to reduce the risk of transmission, changes have been made to how we manage all COVID-19 cases and contacts. While public reporting of VOCs associated with schools will continue, there will no longer be separate notification or different recommendations if the case is a VOC. For more information about VOCs, please visit www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/fundamentals/variants.html.

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For more public health information about COVID-19, please visit <https://manitoba.ca/covid19/updates/resources.html>.

Sincerely,

Office of the Chief Provincial Public Health Officer
Health and Seniors Care

School Community Letter (Required)



Health and Seniors Care
Population and Public Health
300 Carlton Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3B 3M9
T 204-788-6701
www.manitoba.ca

Insert Date

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Re: School Community Notification Letter—Insert Name of School/Child Care Centre

Manitoba public health officials have advised of at least one confirmed case of COVID-19 in the school on **Insert Date** in **Insert Classroom/Cohort/Bus or other location (as applicable)** when the individual(s) may have been infectious. The school is working closely with public health officials and is following their recommendations. Close contacts have been identified and are advised to self-isolate along with their household members.

If you have not been contacted by the school stating your child is a potential close contact and a public health official has not contacted you, your child has **not** been identified as being exposed to COVID-19 from this/these case(s). If your child has not been identified as a close contact, public health officials still recommend that you closely monitor your child for symptoms of COVID-19.

If your child develops a new onset or worsening of any one symptom listed in Column A or any two or more symptoms listed in Column B (see table below), even if they are mild, immediately isolate them from others.

It is recommended your child get tested for COVID-19 as soon as symptoms appear. You may go directly to the nearest COVID-19 testing location during their open hours. For the testing site nearest you, please visit <https://manitoba.ca/covid19/testing/index.html>, or call Health Links-Info Santé at 204-788-8200 or toll-free at 1-888-315-9257.

Public health officials are also advising that for anyone who is symptomatic, or who has a household member who is symptomatic, the entire household should self-isolate pending COVID-19 test results.

... /2

A	B
Fever/Chills	Runny nose
Cough	Muscle aches
Sore throat/hoarse voice	Fatigue
Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing	Pink eye (conjunctivitis)
Loss of taste or smell	Headache
Vomiting or diarrhea for more than 24 hours	Skin rash of unknown cause
	Nausea or loss of appetite
	Poor feeding (if an infant)

Individuals with symptoms outlined in Columns A and B, who choose not to be tested, must isolate for a minimum of 10 days following the start of symptoms. Isolation can be stopped at day 10 if the individual has been symptom-free for 24 hours. In the case of symptomatic individuals who choose not to be tested, all household members should isolate along with the symptomatic person for the 10 days.

Please note the following:

- Public health officials strongly encourage testing so it can be determined whether COVID-19 transmission has occurred within the school.
- The school is not permitted to release the name or any identifying information about the confirmed case(s) of COVID-19 to any member of the school, community, or media.
- As variants of concern (VOC) are becoming the dominant strain of the virus in Manitoba, to reduce the risk of transmission, changes have been made to how we manage all COVID-19 cases and contacts. While public reporting of VOCs associated with schools will continue, there will no longer be separate notification or different recommendations if the case is a VOC. For more information about VOCs, please visit www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/fundamentals/variants.html.

For more public health information about COVID-19, please visit <https://manitoba.ca/covid19/updates/resources.html>.

Sincerely,

Office of the Chief Provincial Public Health Officer
Health and Seniors Care

Appendix 3: Sample of Information Recorded on the Case and Close Contact Form

Date November 12, 2020

Setting within Facility	Description of setting (attached seating plans if available)	Number and description of close contacts (use attendance records as needed)
Classroom	Seats one metre (1M) apart. Some interaction between students.	20 – students 1 – EA 1 teacher
Recess	Outdoors and in general physically distanced. 2 close friends identified.	2
Lunchroom	All two metres (2M) apart.	0
Bus	See attached seating plan. Case on bus for 10 minutes total in 24 hours. Eight students identified within three rows of case.	8 students
Before & After school		
Other		

Date November 13, 2020

Setting within Facility	Description of setting (attached seating plans if available)	Number and description of close contacts (use attendance records as needed)
Classroom	Seats 1M apart. Some interaction between students.	18 – students 1 – EA 1 teacher
Recess	Outdoors and in general physically distanced. 2 close friends identified.	2
Lunchroom	All 2M apart.	0
Bus	See attached seating plan. Case on bus for 10 minutes total in 24 hours. 6 students identified within 3 rows of case.	6 students
Other		

Appendix 4: Examples of Close Contacts

Scenario 1 — Positive case is a Grade 5 teacher who teaches from the front of the class and maintains a two metre distance from students consistently. Has lunch in the lunchroom with another teacher; they are less than two metres for at least 10 minutes. Did interact with three students at a distance of one metre each for 5 minutes as well.

Close contacts – Teacher in lunchroom.

Scenario 2 — Positive case is a Grade 1 teacher who primarily teaches from the front of the class but is within two metres distance for at least 10 minutes cumulative over the day with two students in the classroom, to provide additional support. Has lunch in the lunchroom, seated less than two metres away from the other teacher, and sits with them for 10 minutes.

Close contacts – The two students in the Grade 1 classroom, as well as the teacher in the lunchroom, are identified as contacts.

Note: Household members of close contacts must self-isolate until the close contact receives a negative test result for a specimen collected 10 days after their exposure. If the close contact is not tested, all household members will need to self-isolate for 14 days. For example, if sibling 1 is a close contact of a positive case, they need to isolate. Household members of people identified as close contacts should also isolate until the close contact tests negative towards the end of their self-isolation period. Sibling 2 can only attend school once sibling 1 receives the negative test result.

Scenario 3 — Positive case is a Grade 2 student. Desks are one metre apart, cloth masks are worn. During outdoor recess, which is 30 minutes long, the child interacts with the entire class, and from what is described, all the students were within 2 metres (six feet). The student is active, and frequently leaves her desk to visit other students which adds up to 10 cumulative minutes over the day. Teacher spends at least 10 cumulative minutes over a day within two metres of case.

Close contacts – The entire Grade 2 class including the teacher are likely to be close contacts as there is interaction among classmates, and less than two metres distancing.

Scenario 4 — The Grade 2 student from scenario 3 also takes the bus to school. She is in seat #5 for more than 10 minutes one-way. Sits with sibling.

Close contacts – Those in Seat #5 are considered close contacts. For the same side of the bus, consider two rows in front, and two rows behind on both sides of the bus as close contacts, or a two-metre radius around the case, whichever is less. Use the bus attendance sheet to see if all students in these seats were present at the same time as the positive case. Use the stop number to determine if the case was on the bus for a total 10 minutes during the course of the day.

Scenario 5 — Positive case is a Grade 8 student. Desks are one metre apart. Cloth masks are worn. Has lunch at desk. Interacts with two close friends, plays video games together, for at least 10 minutes a day, with less than two metres distancing.

Close contacts – Those students within two metres distance in the classroom (from seating chart, attendance record), as well as the two friends who play video games with the case.

Scenario 6 — An 18 year old student attends three classes at his high school per day. In each class, desks are 1 metre apart. He has lunch with his friends where they socialize less than two metres apart. He developed symptoms on a Thursday. As an adult, he has chosen not to provide consent for communication with his parents.

Close contacts - Those students in the school within two metres from the 18 year old student's desk in each of the three classes and the friends he had lunch with.

Note: Students who are 18 years of age and over must provide consent for parental communication. The school can pass on the student's information to public health officials who can follow up with their investigation.

Appendix 5: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

- 1) What if I learn of contacts that may not be from my school? For example, there were two kids on the bus who were not from my school.**
 - a. Ensure you provide the names of those people to public health when they reach out to you. You do not need to notify them.
- 2) What if we are not sure if the total time of contact was 8 minutes or 11 minutes?**
 - a. If there is uncertainty on the exposure time, err on the side of caution and include them as being a contact.
- 3) What if a positive student tells me about other contacts in the neighborhood that are not school related?**
 - a. Ask the student to provide that information to public health officials when they reach out to the student.
- 4) What if the case walks around the room a lot and occasionally interacts with all the students for only a couple of minutes each?**
 - a. Public health officials will also connect with you to ensure difficult scenarios are reviewed.
- 5) What if a student tells me on November 14 that they tested positive for COVID-19? If they had the test done on Nov. 12, when would the communicable period begin if they had no symptoms?**
 - a. The communicable period begins 48 hours prior to symptoms development. If they had no symptoms the communicable period begins 48 hours before the time the test was done. So, if the student in this example had no symptoms then the communicable period would include November 10 and 11.

6) What if they had symptoms beginning on November 11?

- a. If they did have symptoms beginning on November 11 then the communicable period includes November 9 and 10.

7) Why identify close contacts?

- a. COVID-19 is contagious. It can spread from a case to their close contacts. Our strategy to stop the spread of COVID-19 is to locate the close contacts and isolate them. That way, if those close contacts develop COVID-19, they will not spread it further because they will already be in isolation.

8) Why not wait for public health?

- a. You will likely hear about a case before public health officials reach out to you. This toolkit has actions you can take now. You can also wait for the public health nurse to contact you.

9) Shouldn't a public health investigator be doing this?

- a. You are not replacing the public health investigation; you are gathering the information required for public health officials to complete their investigation. A public health nurse will be contacting you. You know your facility, staff and students better than public health officials. This knowledge is essential for the investigation.

10) Can I ask my staff for help? I'm not sure exactly what happens in each room.

- a. Absolutely! You can talk to other people if you're not sure. You can ask the staff about what happens in each room and determine who they think is a close contact.

11) What information about the case can I share with others?

- a. Information should be shared only on a need-to-know basis, and only with the consent of the student/family/teacher who is the case.
- b. You may identify the cohort or class as needed in the close contact letter, but the name of the individual must not be identified in the letters.
- c. Particulars of the case, such as name or class may not be shared with anyone that is not involved in helping with the investigation, including other students or family members. Examples of those who may be involved in the investigation are student/staff member who is the case, principal, teachers directly involved with the case. Use discretion.

12) I identified a student in grade 4 as a close contact. Does their sibling in grade 2 also need to isolate?

- a. Yes, all household members of the close contact should also isolate until the close contact tests negative towards the end of their self-isolation period.

13) A student in grade 5 self-identified as a case. Does their sibling in Grade 3 need to isolate?

- a. Yes, all household members of a positive case of COVID-19 are considered close contacts and are required to self-isolate.

14) A teacher who teaches every class in the school has been identified as a positive case. Is my entire school a close contact?

- a. Not necessarily. Follow steps outlined in the toolkit and determine who meets the definition of a close contact.

15) I popped into the classroom the day that a positive case was identified as being in the classroom when they may have been infectious. Am I a close contact?

- a. Not necessarily. Follow steps outlined in the toolkit and determine who meets the definition of a close contact.

16) What if they were in carpool?

- a. If the car ride was 10 minutes or more, everyone in the car would be considered contacts, even if they wore masks.

17) Does sharing pens, crayons, paper, books, etc. with someone else make them a close contact?

- a. Not unless they are chewed or handled close to the mouth or nose.

18) Are there any exemptions from self-isolation for household members of contacts?

- a. Yes, household members who are asymptomatic and fully immunized (i.e. two weeks since their last dose) OR recently infected (i.e. within the previous 3 months) are exempt from self-isolation (quarantine)/ isolation requirements. However, they should continue to self-monitor for symptoms, and isolate immediately if any develop and go for testing. These individuals can continue to attend school if they are asymptomatic.

Asymptomatic household members of a close contact may also be exempt from self-isolation, provided they are an essential worker, such as a teacher, are required to wear PPE at work, and the contact in the household is asymptomatic. These household members should still self-isolate when not at work. This exemption also only applies to household members of a close contact, and does not apply to essential workers who are identified as close contacts themselves.

19) Can you clarify the bus example from the seating plan below (only half the bus shown)?

Seat	Stop	GR	Last Name	First Name	Cohort
#1					

Seat	Stop	GR	Last Name	First Name	Cohort
#3					

Seat	Stop	GR	Last Name	First Name	Cohort
#5					

Seat	Stop	GR	Last Name	First Name	Cohort
#7					

Seat	Stop	GR	Last Name	First Name	Cohort
#9					

Seat	Stop	GR	Last Name	First Name	Cohort
#11					

Seat	Stop	GR	Last Name	First Name	Cohort
#13					

Seat	Stop	GR	Last Name	First Name	Cohort
#15					

Seat	Stop	GR	Last Name	First Name	Cohort
#2					

Seat	Stop	GR	Last Name	First Name	Cohort
#4					

Seat	Stop	GR	Last Name	First Name	Cohort
#6					

Seat	Stop	GR	Last Name	First Name	Cohort
#8					

Seat	Stop	GR	Last Name	First Name	Cohort
#10					

Seat	Stop	GR	Last Name	First Name	Cohort
#12					

Seat	Stop	GR	Last Name	First Name	Cohort
#14					

Seat	Stop	GR	Last Name	First Name	Cohort
#16					

First, determine stop # to see if the duration of the bus ride is 10 minutes or greater in the day (round-trip). If no, then do not continue. If the duration is 10 minutes or greater in a day, then continue close contact identification as below -

- a. If the case was in seat 11, close contacts would be those in seats 7 to 16, or those within a 2m radius of the case.
- b. If the case was in seat 3, close contacts would be those in seats 1(empty) to 8, or those within a 2m radius of the case.
- c. If the case was in seat 13, close contacts would be those in seats 9 to 16, or those within a 2m radius of the case.