



**COVID-19 MITIGATION PROTOCOL AND  
REPORTING THE ARCHDIOCESE OF MIAMI**  
*(Revision March 4, 2024)*

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## DEFINITIONS

- ✓ **CDC: Center for Disease Control** recommendations serve as the basis of the recommendations and requirements of this policy.
- ✓ **FULLY VACCINATED:** All are encouraged to get vaccinated unless a physician has documented a medical reason that prohibits vaccination. Boosters are now available for children and youth. Fully vaccinated as of March, 2024 implies that the student has received an updated vaccine booster.

Protocols for updated vaccination for children as young as 6 months are available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html#All>

- ✓ **CLOSE CONTACT: Close Contact through Proximity and Duration of Exposure:** Someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (for example, *three individual 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes*). An infected person can spread SARS-CoV-2 starting from 2 days before they have any symptoms (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days before the positive specimen collection date), until they meet criteria for discontinuing home isolation.
- ✓ **QUARANTINE** (now referred to as **EXPOSURE PROTOCOL**): period of time after an exposure (a close contact), of a minimum of 5 FULL days when the person exposed to COVID is recommended to wear a mask and get a PCR test **NOT BEFORE DAY FIVE (5)**. Once a negative PCR result is received, mask is no longer recommended.

Physical quarantine outside of school or work IS NOT REQUIRED as long as the individual does not have any symptoms.

- ✓ **ISOLATION:** (now referred to as **ISOLATION PROTOCOL**) period of time after testing positive for the resolution of symptoms and at least 24 hours after the resolution of fever (without the use of fever reducing medications), followed by at least 5 days recommended to wear a mask. **No follow up testing is needed.** NO TESTING for return to work/school.

Restoration of loss of taste and/or smell, if experienced as symptoms takes longer to recover and is not an obstacle for return to school/work after other symptoms have been resolved.

## MASKS

Use of a well-fitting Mask is OPTIONAL in the schools or parishes, regardless of vaccination status, with the exceptions recommended later in this protocol for persons returning from EXPOSURE or ISOLATION PROTOCOLS. Use of Mask is encouraged for those immunocompromised.

Parents may prefer to continue the use of a mask for their child. Well-fitting masks such as KN94 or KN95 masks have been shown to significantly reduce transmission of the virus. Students or employees should not be discouraged in any way for the choice to regularly or occasionally wear a mask. Some parents may recognize that it is beneficial for their child to use a mask indoors and the parental decision is to be supported by the staff of the school or parish.

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

All persons are encouraged to make wise decisions to minimize exposure to COVID-19 and its various variants and mutants or to transmit it to others if the virus is contracted. Vaccination for those eligible USING THE UPDATED BOOSTERS is the best protection against serious disease and hospitalization for most persons. An increase in the vaccination rate of the general population will decrease the opportunity for further mutation of the various COVID strains. The Archdiocese of Miami supports vaccination to protect individuals and the community.

All employees and students should remain at home if sick. *Do not come to school or work. Do notify the school or parish.*

If a student or employee is in known contact with someone who is sick or in contact with someone thought to be infected with COVID-19, follow the **EXPOSURE PROTOCOL** later in this policy. The EXPOSURE should be reported to the Chancery ([eworley@theadom.org](mailto:eworley@theadom.org)) on the ADOM EXPOSURE form.

Pastors and principals, or their designees, are asked to continue **REPORTING EXPOSURES OR INFECTIONS** OF ANY STUDENT, LAY EMPLOYEE, RELIGIOUS OR PRIEST TO THE **CHANCELLORS' OFFICE** ([eworley@theadom.org](mailto:eworley@theadom.org)) using the updated ADOM form (3/4/2024) provided.

Cooperation with wearing a mask and getting PCR testing (EXPOSURE PROTOCOL) or isolation when infected or testing positive (ISOLATION PROTOCOL) is recommended by the CDC in order to minimize the transmission of the virus. The CDC protocols regarding use of a mask is recommended, but not required, for students and laity, religious and clergy serving in the ADOM.

## **DETERMINING IF AN ENCOUNTER IS A CLOSE CONTACT**

It can sometimes be confusing to determine if an encounter that occurred with an infected person is actually a CLOSE CONTACT as per CDC – or if it is NOT a close contact. **A CLOSE CONTACT is believed to be one in which transmission of the virus can occur from the infected person to other person(s).** There are several specific thresholds and ALL must be met for an encounter to be a CLOSE CONTACT – and require person(s) to be quarantined.

Most persons who will contract the virus from a close contact exposure will do so within the first 5 days after an exposure -- which is exactly why the **EXPOSURE PROTOCOL** is based on a 5-day period with a recommendation to wear a well-fitting mask + PCR testing and if negative, return to normal life. Monitor for symptoms for an additional 5 days (throughout the full 10-day incubation period of the virus) as a caution.

The protocol for determining a close contact is based on *distance from*, and *time with a contagious person even if they are not symptomatic* – and therefore the mandatory **EXPOSURE PROTOCOL** for the person depends on **ALL** of the following criteria:

1. **PROXIMITY** - Was the person within 6' of the infected (COVID positive) person  
**AND**

2. **DURATION** - Was the person that close (within 6' of the infected (COVID positive) person) in excess of 15 minutes, either for short periods or for continuous contact during a 24 hr period? **AND**
3. **CONTAGIOUS PERIOD** - Did the encounter in #1 and #2 (above) occur within 2 days prior to the onset of symptoms of a symptomatic patient or 2 days before the date the infected person tested positive or even after the infected person tested positive?

If the answer to #1, #2, and #3 are **ALL YES**, then there is a reasonable probability that the encounter was a CLOSE CONTACT and transmission of the virus may have occurred from the infected person to another person(s) who met those criteria. Therefore, the **EXPOSURE PROTOCOL** in this policy is required for the person exposed.

If the answer to any one of the questions above, #1, #2, and #3, is NO, then the probability of transmission is less (risk of illness is lowered) – but not able to be eliminated or specifically quantified. However, if the answer to any of the 3 questions is NO, EXPOSURE PROTOCOL is not required.

### EXPOSURE PROTOCOL SUMMARY

<p><b>CDC/ADOM EXPOSURE PROTOCOL summary</b></p>	<p><b>WEAR MASK FOR 5 DAYS + PCR</b>          Recommend 5 full days of wearing well-fitting mask - then Testing no sooner than day 5 -- PCR test required          Recommend to continue MASK until NEGATIVE results received          Monitor symptoms for 5 more days' of virus' 10 day incubation</p>
<p><b>IF ELECTING NOT TO TEST WITH PCR:</b></p>	<p><b>WEAR MASK FOR 10 DAYS</b>          Recommend to wear well-fitting mask for 10 full days          No testing required</p>

Persons of any age who may have experienced a close contact as defined by CDC:

1. As per CDC, recommended to wear a well-fitting mask in school/work for a minimum of five (5) days from the date of the close contact;
2. exposure should be reported to Chancery using the ADOM form;
3. must get a **PCR** test no sooner than day five (5) after last day of exposure to rule out COVID
4. recommended to continue wearing mask until receiving a negative PCR test taken on or after the 5<sup>th</sup> day following the exposure; and
5. may cease wearing the mask after the negative PCR is received.
6. If the individual develops symptoms, then follow the **ISOLATION PROTOCOL**.

**Optional testing alternative using series of three (3) antigen tests, administered 48 hrs apart – when PCR testing is not reasonably available:**

The CDC protocol used by the ADOM calls for PCR testing on the 5<sup>th</sup> day after the last day of exposure. This is the most effective determination and allows for a shorter period for the testing and discontinuation of the recommended use of the mask. As an alternative, a several day series of three (3) home (antigen) tests, each 48 hrs apart may be substituted for PCR as follows.

On the 4<sup>th</sup> day following the last day of exposure, if negative, repeated again on the 6<sup>th</sup> day following the last day of exposure, and if testing is still negative, a 3<sup>rd</sup> test, on the 8<sup>th</sup> day following the last day of exposure, is sufficient to confirm that COVID was not contracted during the credible exposure. Please note, the mask is recommended when the child is in school until the 3<sup>rd</sup> negative, each test being 48 hrs apart, and the confirmation of the negative tests is sufficient to confirm with the school that the child is negative.

If any of the results are determined to be positive, the child should be placed on the ISOLATION PROTOCOL and no further testing is needed.

### **WHEN A STUDENT IN THE CLASSROOM IS DETERMINED TO BE POSITIVE**

While there is less concern about social distance schools are reminded to provide whatever space between students is reasonably possible in any setting. Distance between students and good ventilation in the classroom or other indoor setting can reduce the probability of transmission when a child positive with COVID has been present.

When a student in the school is determined to be positive and others may have experienced a close contact with the student, the exposed students **WITHIN 6' OF THE INFECTED STUDENT, FOR LONGER THAN 15 MINUTES** need to follow the **EXPOSURE PROTOCOL**.

### **CONTACT TRACING**

Contact tracing of others in the school beyond those immediately present with/close to the infected student for longer than 15 minutes is **NO LONGER NECESSARY**.

Siblings, or those sharing a household with the infected child should be advised to follow the EXPOSURE PROTOCOL at home and in school, and should be reported to the chancery as an exposure.

### **REPORTING A POSSIBLE EXPOSURE OR INFECTION/POSITIVE TEST**

All exposures and infections must be reported to the Chancellors' Office (Sr Elizabeth Worley, [eworley@theadom.org](mailto:eworley@theadom.org)) using the electronic exposure form (3/4/2024). This same form is used for employees, volunteers and students, for all exposures and infections.

At the present time no reporting is needed for the County Department of Health in any county unless directed by Sister Elizabeth Worley.

### **TESTING FOR SYMPTOMATIC PATIENT TO RULE OUT COVID INFECTION**

The ADOM protocol is based on the CDC determination based on symptoms.

1. A person may be tested when he/she is symptomatic and testing is sought to confirm or rule out COVID-19 infection,
2. A person who is awaiting COVID-19 test results (as in #1) is recommended by the CDC to wear a well-fitting mask until negative results are received.
3. A person who is symptomatic and who receives negative PCR test results (or negative antigen (rapid) tests) to rule out COVID-19 is able to return to school

or work 24 hrs **after** the symptoms, including fever, resolve without the recommendation to wear a mask.

### **WHEN EXPOSED PATIENT DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS (ISOLATION REQUIRED)**

A patient who has experienced a close contact and, while recommended to wear a mask and awaiting required PCR testing on Day 5 (as per the EXPOSURE PROTOCOL), develops symptoms, is then considered to be **POSITIVE**.

The **POSITIVE** patient should remain at home, isolated, until at least 24 hours **AFTER** the symptoms have gotten better overall **AND** the patient has **NO** fever (and is not using fever reducing medication).

NO ADDITIONAL COVID TESTING IS NEEDED OR RECOMMENDED for clearance to return to school/work.

**NOTE, return to school/work 24 hrs after the resolution of symptoms AND the absence of fever (without medication) is the determinant for the minimum length of required isolation and eventual clearance to return to school or work. NO Testing needed. Upon return to school or work, the CDC recommends a well-fitting mask be worn for at least five (5) days.**

### **ISOLATION PROTOCOL**

**TESTING POSITIVE: requires ISOLATION** for individuals infected with COVID-19, exposure form must be sent to [eworley@theadom.org](mailto:eworley@theadom.org). Isolation applies to those who have tested positive with COVID-19, until BOTH are true:

- The patient's symptoms have gotten better and
- There has been no fever for at least 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medication).

**NO REPEAT TESTING** is recommended or required for clearance to return to school/work. **Ending isolation is based on the resolution of symptoms, not on any testing.**

Note that restoration of loss of taste and smell may take longer and is not, by itself, an obstacle to return to school/work.

1. Anyone who tested **positive or one who is symptomatic**, MUST isolate at home.
2. Isolation means stay at home (no travel anywhere), in contact with no one, not sharing meals or sleeping or bathroom space or personal items (towels, eating utensils, for example). If serious symptoms (like trouble breathing, spiking fever) seek emergency medical care immediately.
3. Once all symptoms have resolved, including no fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication, the individual can return to school/work. The CDC recommends a mask be worn for at least 5 more days. **(NO repeat testing needed)**
4. **Students too young or otherwise unable to wear a mask** may not return to school for the full 10 days following positive testing or onset of symptoms.
5. Anyone who had **serious symptoms** of the disease (especially if treated in a hospital) will need to contact their physician and will require medical clearance

from a physician to return. The physician may prescribe additional testing. The individual must remain isolated until medical clearance is received to return to work. **Contact Sr Elizabeth Worley with questions (305.450.6420, [eworley@theadom.org](mailto:eworley@theadom.org))**

- If COVID SYMPTOMS** recur, begin ISOLATION PROTOCOL again, with day zero being the date on which symptoms began to recur.

### ISOLATION PROTOCOL SUMMARY

<b>CDC/ADOM ISOLATION PROTOCOL summary</b>	<p>TESTED POSITIVE AND/OR SYMPTOMATIC ISOLATION required.</p> <p>Clearance to leave isolation only when all symptoms resolve and No fever for at least 24 hrs without medication to reduce fever</p> <p>Restoration of loss of taste/smell not required to leave isolation</p> <p>NO TESTING to return to school/work</p> <p>Return to school/work; CDC recommends use of a well-fitting mask for 5 days</p> <p>Children under 2 unable to wear mask, 10 days' isolation</p>
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### Alternative to 5 days recommended use of a well-fitting mask following ISOLATION PROTOCOL:

- After the resolution of symptoms and after the resolution of symptoms including fever,
- Two (2) sequential NEGATIVE antigen tests (rapid, at-home) at least 48 hrs apart, then mask no longer recommended for return to work/school
- Test results (dated photo of test results is sufficient) need to be shared with the school/parish for the student/employee to return without the recommended wearing of a well-fitting mask following the ISOLATION PROTOCOL after a positive diagnosis.

Figure 1 Person with fever and symptoms

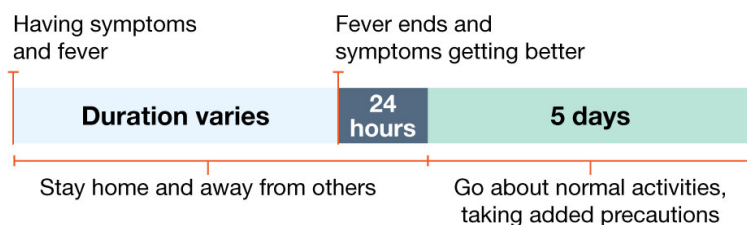


Figure 2 Person with fever but no other symptoms

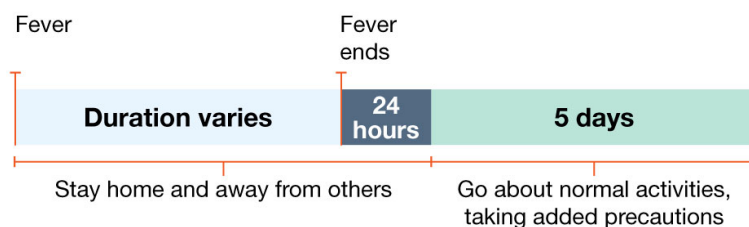


Figure 3 Person with fever and other symptoms; fever ends but other symptoms take longer to improve

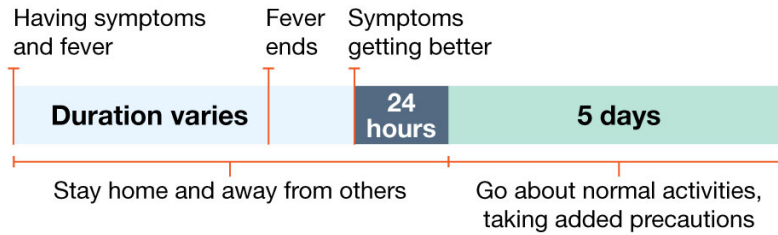
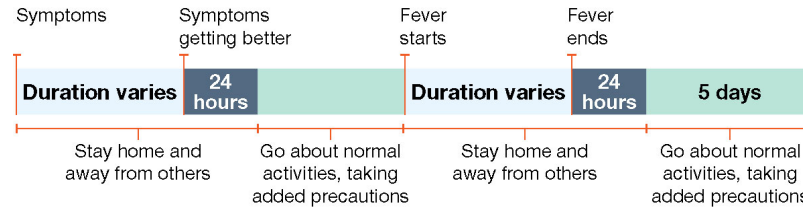


Figure 4 Person gets better and then begins a fever



**TRAVEL**

The requirements related to travel (domestic or international) are applicable to all clergy, religious, lay employees and students working or studying in the entities of the Archdiocese.

Avoid travel if you have tested positive (ISOLATION PROTOCOL) or had close contact with one who is positive (EXPOSURE PROTOCOL). If negative PCR received, OK to travel.

No testing is required to return to school/work following domestic travel. However, if one experiences a close contact during travel, the EXPOSURE PROTOCOL applies upon return to school/work. If one develops COVID symptoms while traveling, the conditions of this policy for ISOLATION PROTOCOL apply.

**FMLA**

For employees out of work because of a COVID related infection or employees who are sick, the usual process toward implementing FMLA is used; bookkeepers should contact ADOM HR with questions.

**COMMUNICATION REGARDING INFECTION OR EXPOSURE**

- Contact the Chancellors’ Office for guidance regarding any need for reporting outbreaks with the County DOH. 305.450.6420
- With the parents, faculty or school staff, in the event of a school exposure, contact the Chancellors’ Office for guidance (Sr Elizabeth Worley) with respect to possible exposures experienced by anyone in parishes, schools or other entities of the ADOM. 305.450.6420 or [eworley@theadom.org](mailto:eworley@theadom.org).

**MIAMI DADE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CONTACT**

**Stephanie Ramirez**

Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County



Biological Scientist IV  
[Stephanie.Ramirez@flhealth.gov](mailto:Stephanie.Ramirez@flhealth.gov)  
(305) 470-5660

### **BROWARD DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CONTACT**

***Ryan Oms***

Epidemiologist, Department of Epidemiology  
Florida Department of Health in Broward County  
780 SW 24<sup>th</sup> Street, Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33315  
Office: 954-847-8153  
Cell: 786-753-2015  
Fax: 954-467-4870 or 954-713-3169  
Email: [ryan.oms@flhealth.gov](mailto:ryan.oms@flhealth.gov)

### **MONROE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CONTACT**

***Dana Portillo, RNC, BA***

FDOH-Monroe School Health Coordinator  
Monroe County School District  
[Dana.Portillo@flhealth.gov](mailto:Dana.Portillo@flhealth.gov) | [Dana.Portillo@keysschools.com](mailto:Dana.Portillo@keysschools.com)  
Phone#: 305-587-7703

### **COMMUNICATION OF REQUIREMENTS OF ADOM POLICY**

This policy uses the EXPOSURE and ISOLATION protocols recommended by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and is effective as of March 4, 2024 and is subject to change as conditions or requirements are changed. When revised the policy will be published to schools, parishes and other facilities of the Archdiocese of Miami with a summary made available to parents and other interested parties. The summary is also made available on the ADOM web.

### **DOCUMENTATION OF VACCINATION OR NATURAL IMMUNITY**

Documentation of vaccination status or natural immunity is no longer needed in the light of quarantine after exposure or return from travel. Documentation already on file for students and employees should be maintained in a secure location (files) until further notice.

### **CLEANING AND SANITIZING FACILITIES**

Normal daily cleaning of all areas of the school or parish is the standard for cleaning. However, if a person diagnosed with COVID has been in a room within the last 24 hrs, then the space should be ventilated, then cleaned and disinfected. Otherwise, regular daily cleaning is sufficient. Areas used for young children or persons without masks may need more frequent cleaning. All are encouraged to use frequent hand washing and good hygiene practice.

## **IN-PERSON MEETINGS IN SCHOOLS AND PARISHES**

In all activities sponsored by the parishes and schools of the Archdiocese of Miami and within the property and facilities of the Archdiocese, the following basic principles must be observed by all persons at all times. These principles apply to everyone, including persons who have been fully vaccinated, boosted and/or developed natural immunity by previously contracting the COVID-19 virus with a subsequent full recovery.

1. Persons of any age who are diagnosed with COVID-19 or sick with COVID-19-like symptoms, ARE NOT PERMITTED to participate in-person in any meetings, activities or fund raiser events.
2. Persons of any age who may have experienced a close contact as defined by CDC are recommended to wear a mask in school/parish until receiving a negative PCR test taken on or after the 5<sup>th</sup> day following the exposure.
3. Masks are optional for all persons in parish or school meetings or classes.
4. ADOM License for Space Use and ADOM Carnival Contract should carry a revision date of March 15, 2021 or later in order to assure that the language requiring compliance with the ADOM COVID-19 policy is agreed to. The documents are in Facilities folder of e-library. The person(s) or vendor signing the License or Carnival Contract should be provided a full copy of this ADOM current COVID-19 policy.

## **LITURGICAL SETTING REQUIREMENTS**

This policy does not address (or change) requirements promulgated by the Archbishop's Office related to the use of mask/hand sanitizer by the celebrant or others or other COVID policy related to the celebration of Mass.