

DESE Reporting Requirement for District/School Positive COVID-19 Cases and Mobile Response Overview

Revised 9.18.20

Schools and districts across the state are working to implement the health and safety guidelines developed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) for in-person or hybrid schooling models. To further support the promotion of health and safety for students, and staff, DESE is requiring Districts to report to DESE when they learn that a student or staff member has tested positive for COVID-19. As described below, this report will not include personally identifiable information. This reporting is in addition to the district/school use of [protocols for responding to COVID-19 scenarios in school, on the bus, or in community settings.](#) While DESE will not play a formal role in tracking or monitoring cases at a local or state-wide level, this information will allow DESE to provide support to local officials, in consultation with local public health authorities, and to monitor state-wide trends. The Superintendent or designee will provide the information to DESE.

Rapid Response Help Center 781.338.3500

This memo is intended to provide schools and districts with an overview of the process and reporting requirements for positive cases and provides considerations regarding staff & student privacy. We also restate the minimum conditions for utilizing the state's mobile response units in response to positive cases.

Process and Required DESE Reporting Protocol for Positive COVID-19 Cases

1. District/school is notified by staff member (or their designee) or student (or their guardian) that the individual has tested positive for COVID-19.
2. The proper school official, as predetermined by the superintendent, contacts the DESE COVID Call Center number and reports the positive case. No personally identifiable information will be shared.
 - a. Required reporting information
 - i. Identify known positive case as staff member or student
 - ii. Student:
 1. Grade level of known positive case
 2. Remote or Hybrid/In-person
 - iii. Staff:
 1. Educator or Support Staff
 2. Present in school building within the last week
 - iv. District & school name
 - v. Reporting person's name
 - vi. Contact information (email & phone number)
3. Intake specialist will
 - a. Log information into to DESE COVID-19 tracking system*
4. DESE reviews information several times per day

5. DESE contacts district/school within a minimum of 24 hours to and provides any identified next steps support to district/school

*Important to note, the data collected in this process is self-reported by provider
Mobile Rapid Response Program Overview

The purpose of the mobile rapid response unit is to provide testing of asymptomatic individuals who are not known to be a close contact, when there is evidence that COVID-19 transmission may have occurred within a classroom or school within the past 14 days.

The following describes minimum conditions when a mobile response team may be deployed.

- Within a 14-day period, if two or more individuals within a single classroom test positive for COVID-19 and transmission/exposure is likely to have occurred in the classroom, a mobile rapid response unit may be deployed for all asymptomatic individuals within that classroom.
- Within a 14-day period, if 3 or more individuals or 3 percent, whichever is greater, of a given grade or cohort test positive for COVID-19 and transmission/exposure likely occurred in the school, a mobile rapid response unit may be deployed for all asymptomatic individuals in that grade or cohort.
- Within a 14-day period, if more than 3 percent of a school tests positive for COVID-19 and transmission/exposure likely occurred in the school, a mobile testing unit may be deployed for the entire school population that is asymptomatic.
- Within a 14-day period, if two or more individuals within the same bus test positive COVID-19 and transmission/exposure likely occurred on the bus, a mobile rapid response unit may be deployed for all asymptomatic individuals on that bus.

For all scenarios described above, school administrators must contact their local board of health before reaching out to the Department of Public Health (DPH). The mobile response unit can be requested by a school administrator or the local board of health and may be deployed by the COVID-19 Response Center after consultation with a DPH epidemiologist.