



Guidance for PARENTS Revised August 23, 2023

PARENT INFORMATION ON THE ARCHDIOCESE OF MIAMI

MASK USAGE

In schools, parish offices and churches of the Archdiocese, regular use of MASKS IS OPTIONAL. Use of mask for those completing EXPOSURE or ISOLATION PROTOCOLS when a well-fitting mask is recommended is outlined below. Usage of mask in these two protocols minimizes the possible spread of the virus to others. Mask usage remains the choice of the individual student or adult.

REPORTING EXPOSURES OR INFECTIONS

Schools and parishes must continue to use the ADOM EXPOSURE/INFECTION FORM (same for for all 8/2023) to report exposure or diagnosed infections. Forms are to be sent to the Chancery.

RULES FOR DETERMINING 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). The protocol for determining a close contact is based on *distance from*, and *time with a contagious person* – 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 the CDC advises 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. If so, the **EXPOSURE PROTOCOL** is required for the person exposed.

EXPOSURE PROTOCOL

CDC/ADOM EXPOSURE PROTOCOL summary

WEAR MASK FOR 5 DAYS + PCR

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

IF ELECTING NOT TO TEST WITH PCR:

WEAR MASK FOR 10 DAYS

Recommend to wear well-fitting mask for 10 full days
No testing required

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 5th 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 4th day following the last day of exposure, if negative, repeated again on the 6th day following the last day of exposure, and if testing is still negative, a 3rd test, on the 8th 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 3rd negative, each test being 48 hrs apart, and the confirmation of the negative tests is sufficient to confirm with



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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 EXPOSED PATIENT DEVELOPS SYMPTOMS (ISOLATION REQUIRED)

A patient who has experienced a close contact and, while awaiting PCR testing on Day 5 (as per the EXPOSURE PROTOCOL), develops symptoms is then considered to be **POSITIVE**. The count for the minimum of five (5) days of isolation begins with the onset of symptoms counting as day zero (0) of the **ISOLATION PROTOCOL**.

ISOLATION PROTOCOL

CDC/ADOM ISOLATION PROTOCOL summary

TESTED POSITIVE, SYMPTOMATIC or ASYMPTOMATIC
MINIMUM five (5) full days of ISOLATION required
Clearance to leave isolation only when all symptoms resolve
More than 5 days of isolation, if needed
Restoration of loss of taste/smell not required to leave isolation
NO TESTING to return to school/work
Return to school/work; CDC recommends use of a
well-fitting mask for 5 days to minimize possible spread of virus
Children under 2 unable to wear mask, 10 days' isolation

Alternative to 5 days' recommended use of a well-fitting mask following **ISOLATION PROTOCOL**:

- After the resolution of symptoms and after the minimum 5-days of isolation,
- 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 should be shared with the school to confirm clearance to return.

VACCINATIONS AND VACCINATION STATUS

The CDC and health care professionals, local and national, continue to recommend vaccination for all eligible persons and for those eligible, a booster. The Archdiocese of Miami encourages vaccination as the best way to protect against serious illness from the COVID-19 virus and its variants. 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>. Vaccines available in the US include the updated Pfizer and Moderna vaccines as well as Novavax COVID-19. The original one-dose J&J vaccine is no longer available.

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: minimum 5 days for symptom resolution + minimum 5 days recommended wearing mask) or had close contact with one who is positive (EXPOSURE PROTOCOL: minimum 5 days recommended wearing mask + PCR. 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.