



January 9, 2022

Dear Vestal Families,

Over the past week, public health authorities at the State and county levels have reduced the quarantine and isolation periods for some individuals. I am writing to inform you of changes we are making to our district's protocols to align them with this new guidance.

Shortened Quarantine Periods for Close Contacts

The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) recently issued [guidance](#) reducing the quarantine time from ten to five days for asymptomatic* individuals who are designated as close contacts of a COVID positive individual AND are not fully vaccinated. If symptoms** appear, then such individuals should quarantine and seek testing. In this situation, quarantine would end upon either receiving a negative test result or after isolating for the full ten days. As was previously the case, asymptomatic vaccinated individuals still do not need to quarantine if they have been designated as a close contact.

Shortened Isolation Periods for COVID Positive Cases

The same NYSDOH [guidance](#) shortened the minimum isolation period for certain COVID-positive individuals from ten days to five days where day 0 is the date of symptom onset or the collection of the first positive specimen.

This now applies to students, as well as staff. A COVID positive individual may return to school after day five if they meet the following specifications:

1. If asymptomatic at the end of day 5, OR if symptoms are resolving (i.e., they no longer have a runny nose, a productive cough, or a fever).
2. They are not moderately or severely immunocompromised.

Any individual who does *not* meet the requirements above should continue to follow the standard (i.e., ten-day) isolation period. They should also wear a well-fitting mask (such as a KN95).

We recognize that the changing recommendations from various State and health authorities with COVID-19 variants can be overwhelming and often confusing. We are assimilating these directives as quickly as we can to help our families navigate this fluid situation. Supporting one another through these challenges is the key to a successful outcome for our students, our staff, our families, and the community. Thank you!

Sincerely,


Jeffrey J. Ahearn

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CHALLENGE

SUPPORT

FOSTER

INVEST

Notes

*Asymptomatic: An individual who does not have symptoms of COVID.

**List of COVID Symptoms

- Fever over 100° F
- Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing
- Muscle or body aches
- New loss of taste or smell
- Congestion or runny nose
- Diarrhea
- Chills
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Nausea or vomiting