

Frequently Asked Questions ~ FAQ

Note: These are my best answers from what I understand working close with the Health Department. Please feel free to verify any of this information with the CDC, the State, or the Local Health Department. This information is subject to change. It is presented to help better understand situations caused by this pandemic in a public school.

What does it mean to quarantine?

Quarantining is a preventative measure for those that may have had contact with a Covid-positive person. The Health Department and CDC guidelines recommend quarantining for this virus for 14 days after the date of exposure. If you are quarantined, it doesn't mean you will get the virus. It is a preventative measure just in case you come down with the virus. If you are quarantined and you get the virus, it prevents others from having to quarantine. Quarantining can break the cycle of infection.

Wait, if it is 14 days, why did the high school kids only have to quarantine for 5 days?

There are many illnesses common for this time of year, including the common cold, strep, seasonal allergies and the flu. The symptoms of these ailments are similar to Covid. Not everyone who gets a Covid test comes back with a positive Covid result. Ultimately by the time you feel symptoms (about 2 days after exposure), schedule a Covid test (1-2 more days) and get test results back (3-4 or more days after that), and (1 more day) to contract trace, you are looking at a 7-9-day process to find out you have it. You are considered exposed 2 days prior to the Covid positive person showing symptoms. So by the time a positive test result is received, it has usually been a week since first exposure. The quarantine process is supposed to "start" from the date of first exposure.

Why does someone that actually gets Covid have to only quarantine for 10 days?

This is the CDC guideline for the time it takes for someone with Covid to no longer be infectious.

I heard my kids should be quarantined for 24 days because I came down with the virus?

If someone is Covid positive in your family, they can be infectious up to 10 days. Unless this infected person can be totally isolated from the rest of the family, they can infect others in the family in those 10 days. Only after that 10 day period is over can the next 14-day quarantine period start.

I am still confused about the difference between 10 days and 14 days. The CDC recommends 10 days after someone is diagnosed but 14 if they are exposed?

Yes, that is correct. By the time the person who has been diagnosed with Covid has symptoms, they have already had the virus for a number of days prior. That is why we look back two days prior to symptoms to determine who might need to quarantine. Please refer directly to the CDC for more information.

If one of my kids is told to be home for a quarantine period, why can my other kids still go to school?

The child sent home to quarantine is a precaution because he/she had close contact with someone who was diagnosed with Covid 19. The standard for making this decision is within 6 feet for 15 minutes or more time. When students are sent home to be quarantined, they should be watched for symptoms of the virus. As long as they remain symptom free, the siblings of this student may continue to go to

school as they were not in direct contact with the individual that had Covid. If the child that is quarantined begins to have symptoms, the siblings should remain home until the quarantined student has a negative Covid test or is diagnosed by a physician as having something else like strep or the flu.

Why don't we just shut down school with all of this Covid Chaos going on?

Data as presented by our District 10 Health Department shows that State-wide only 10% of the transmission of this virus is happening in school environments. Most infections are happening through activity happening outside the school walls. Masking, disinfecting, and social distancing has an impact with keeping the spread down within the school walls.

We have a plan already in place to ensure proper masking of our students and cleaning of our buildings. That includes ionized disinfectant spray multiple times during the day, and many other measures. The full plan is available on the district's website www.hesp.net.

Second, in-person instruction, even with the inconvenience of masking, social distancing and disinfecting, has a substantial positive impact on learning. We saw the impact of remote learning on student's educational achievement and emotional issues last Spring. Our in-person students have had a great education these last couple of months and it is always with reservation that we discontinue that opportunity especially with only minimal risk of spread of the virus while at school.

It's interesting that there are many Michigan school districts that began with remote or a hybrid instructional model that transitioned to in-person learning after the first month of school even with the increased spread of the virus.

So does that mean we will not go to remote learning?

No, there are other factors that weigh into a decision regarding remote learning. One of those factors is our ability to provide appropriate staffing. If we have a number of staff on quarantine, we might not be able to have school. Another factor is the time and disruption contact tracing can have on a school. Last, is the emotional health of the staff during this crisis as they are impacted with a constant barrage of quarantining and contact tracing. So even though remote learning is not as good, it is a consideration that may have to be made at some point.