

June 8, 2021

Memorandum to: Directors of Education
School Authorities

From: Nancy Naylor
Deputy Minister of Education

Subject: Updates to the School Screening Tool and Ministry of Health
Guidance to Public Health Units

Thank you for your continued support for students, families and staff.

The purpose of this memo is to notify school boards of the updated COVID-19 screening guidance for school settings for the school staff and students with special education needs who are currently working and learning in-person in Ontario schools. The [COVID-19 school and child care screening tool](#) and the [COVID-19 screening tool for employees and essential visitors in schools and child care settings](#) have been updated to reflect public health guidance for individuals experiencing symptoms post COVID-19 immunization.

The updates to the school screening tool align with the Ministry of Health's new [guidance](#) for individuals who may be experiencing post-vaccine symptoms. In particular, individuals who are experiencing certain minor symptoms that are compatible with COVID-19, but have received a COVID-19 vaccine in the past 48 hours, may still be able to attend school if these symptoms began after vaccination.

Key changes to the [COVID-19 Screening Tool](#) related to COVID-19 post-vaccination symptoms include:

- **Screening Process:** If the school staff, student or visitor received a COVID-19 vaccination in the last 48 hours and is experiencing mild headache, fatigue, muscle aches, and/or joint pain that only began after vaccination, and no other symptoms, they should respond "no" in the screening tool and may continue to attend school if they are feeling well enough to do so.
 - If the staff or student lives in a household with an individual who received a COVID-19 vaccination in the last 48 hours and is experiencing mild headache, fatigue, muscle aches, and/or joint pain that only began after vaccination, and no other symptoms, they should respond "no" in the screening tool and are not required to self-isolate (stay home).
- **Isolation and Testing:** If the mild headache, fatigue, muscle aches, and/or joint pain symptoms worsen, continue past 48 hours, or if the individual develops other symptoms, they should leave the school setting immediately to self-isolate and seek COVID-19 testing.

- **Masking:** If the student, staff or visitor received a COVID-19 vaccination in the last 48 hours and has mild headache, fatigue, muscle aches and/or joint pain that only began after immunization, and no other symptoms, they are to wear a properly fitted mask for their entire time in the school setting. The mask may only be removed to consume food or drink and the individual must remain at least two metres away from others when their mask has been removed.

These changes reflect the latest advice from the Ministry of Health for schools, child care and other workplace settings. Copies of the new screener are attached to this memorandum.

In addition to updates to the School COVID-19 Screening Tool, the Ministry of Health has updated their [COVID-19 Guidance: School Case, Contact, and Outbreak Management](#). This guidance document provides information for local public health units investigating cases, outbreaks and suspected outbreaks associated with elementary or secondary (i.e., K-12) school settings. Updates to the guidance document were made to provide further clarity and to promote alignment with new provincial guidance related to variants of concern.

Thank you again for your continued support and collaboration as we work together to support staff, students and families across Ontario.

Sincerely,

Nancy Naylor
Deputy Minister

- c: Board COVID-19 Leads
 Executive Director, Ontario Association of Public School Boards (OPHCE)
 Executive Director, Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques (AFOCSC)
 Executive Director, Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA)
 Executive Director, Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)
 Executive Director, Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE)
 Executive Director and Secretary-Treasurer, Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO)
 General Secretary, Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA)
 General Secretary, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO)
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