COVID-19 in your school or early learning service

If there was a confirmed or probable case linked with your school or early learning service, you would be advised of it by the Medical Officer of Health or your local public health authority.

Our regional Ministry of Education staff will work with you and local health authorities to agree a plan. That will happen quickly, **and you will be provided with assistance to help you to communicate with and support your staff and parent community.**

If the person or persons who are confirmed or probable cases have worked in or attended your school/service when they could have been infectious (which could start up to 2 days prior to having symptoms) your school/service will be closed for at least 72 hours to allow time for contact tracing and a clean of the school/service to align with Ministry of Health guidelines.

Contacts of the confirmed case will be contacted by the local public health unit and should follow the advice given on isolation and testing. They will also provide instruction for household members of a close contact.

There is information about [self-isolation](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-health-advice-general-public/covid-19-self-isolation-close-contacts-and-travellers) and fact sheets for [close contacts](https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/resources/fact-sheets/close-contacts-fact-sheet.pdf), [casual plus contacts](https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/resources/fact-sheets/casual-plus-contacts-fact-sheet.pdf) and [casual contacts](https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/resources/fact-sheets/casual-contacts-fact-sheet.pdf) on the Ministry of Health website.

Further closure for up to 14 days

In addition to closure for 72 hours for contact tracing, health authorities could require closure for longer periods of time, up to 14 further days. This is likely to be because health authorities consider:

* there could be risk of community transmission.
* it could be a more contagious variant of the virus.
* there could be a large number of cases within a school or early learning service meaning a high proportion of children, students and staff could be considered close contacts.

Support is available for you

A reminder that Healthline continues to be available to support anyone who might be experiencing symptoms or who has been asked to self-isolate - call for free on 0800 358 5453.

If you become aware of a case associated with your school or early learning service and haven’t received notification from health authorities, please contact your local public health unit or your local Ministry of Education contact for information and support:

* [Public health unit contacts](https://www.health.govt.nz/new-zealand-health-system/key-health-sector-organisations-and-people/public-health-units/public-health-unit-contacts)
* [Local Ministry of Education contacts](https://www.health.govt.nz/new-zealand-health-system/key-health-sector-organisations-and-people/public-health-units/public-health-unit-contacts)

Who needs to self-isolate

Local health authorities will advise who needs to self-isolate, whether for a period of 14 days (eg, close contacts of a confirmed case) or while waiting for a test result. More information on who needs to self-isolate can be found on the [Ministry of Health website.](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-health-advice-public/assessment-and-testing-covid-19#isolate)

You should always stay home if you are unwell, whether you have had a negative test result or not.

Covid-19 in boarding hostels

If there is a confirmed or probable case in your boarding hostel you should follow the advice of the local public health unit – they will undertake a risk assessment and provide advice on how contacts of cases should be managed.