



**ÉCOLE  
AKIVA  
SCHOOL**  
בית ספר עקיבא

## **Akiva School COVID Protocols for Dealing with Symptoms and Cases v1.0**

The following document outlines the Akiva COVID protocols for dealing with COVID cases with respect to students, families and staff. Protocols are based on government directives, CNESST best practices as well as input from the Akiva Health and Safety Committee. This document is a living document that may evolve as directives are updated and the situation in our community and Quebec changes.

Any questions or concerns related to these protocols should be sent to [covidsafety@akivaschool.com](mailto:covidsafety@akivaschool.com) which will be directed to the attention of the Akiva administrative team. In case of symptoms or sickness at home, please call the school office directly at 514-939-2430.

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# Introduction

## The Akiva approach to COVID-19 policies and protocols

At Akiva, we take great pride in being a mission driven school. This means that all of our decisions regarding the operation of our school flow from a set of philosophical principles that have guided us since our founding over 50 years ago. This was the vision of our founder, Rabbi David Hartman z”l, himself a philosopher and believer that institutions should be guided by vision.

While the COVID-19 crisis has changed so much about our daily lives, it has not changed Akiva’s modus operandi of mission-based decision making. In developing our protocols for the 2020-2021 school year, we first set forth the principles upon which our decisions are founded. Whenever possible, we have tied these principles to the Akiva mission set down by Rabbi Hartman. We have also developed guiding principles that are unique to the current reality, and here too we have endeavored to make these principles consistent with the culture and values of Akiva, The Akiva Way.

### **Pluralism**

Pluralism is one of Rabbi Hartman’s central pillars of Akiva’s philosophy. Pluralism means that we embrace the fact that we are a diverse community of families who come to Akiva with different beliefs and values. In the COVID environment too, we must respect that there is a diversity of opinions of how to balance competing values relating to the pandemic, and everyone’s point of view must be treated with respect. While we must take a position when it comes to policy, we are sensitive to those who feel differently and make sure to make everyone feel heard.

### **Community**

One of the things that distinguishes Akiva is that we are more than a school—we are a community. This means that we care for all members of our community: students, parents, grandparents, teachers, and staff. In making our decisions, we look out for the welfare of all.

### **V’higita bo Yomam Valayla**

One of the paramount Jewish values is that study must take place at all times: v’higita bo yomam valayla -- you are enjoined to learn day and night. When Akiva went online in March it was with the determination that the learning process cannot be interrupted regardless of the surrounding circumstances. We will continue to ensure that all of our students receive a full education this year.

### **Dina D’malchuta Dina**

Our rabbis teach us: dina d’malchuta dina, the law of the state has the same force as the law of God. It is a religious obligation to abide by the law of the land. While we do not necessarily agree with every mandate put forth by the Government, and may petition the Ministry for redress, in the end our policies follow the directives of the Government of Quebec.

### **Caring for the Vulnerable**

The Torah admonishes us to always care for the most vulnerable in society. When making policy decisions we always look out for those in our community who are in the most danger.

### **Evidence-based Decision Making**

In all of our policy decisions, we endeavor to use the most up-to-date evidence that is produced by the public health, medical, and scientific communities. Since the evidence is evolving because of the novelty of the coronavirus, our policies are subject to change as new evidence points one way or the other. When determining policy, we rely on the Akiva Medical Committee to make decisions based on their learned evaluation of the current situation. For example, as of the writing of these protocols, it is the opinion of the committee that even young children can be effective transmitters of COVID-19, and precautionary measures must be taken to prevent even our youngest students from spreading the disease to others.

### **Prioritizing Stability**

Social-emotional wellbeing is at the core of Akvia's child-centric educational philosophy. One of the most important things children need is a sense of stability, and this need is amplified in times of great upheaval, such as the time in which we are now living. For this reason, our decision-making for the return to school has been designed in order to have maximal consistency in our students' schedules. For example, we have postponed many programs that would change the daily academic routine until there is a greater sense of stability in our students' lives.

A corollary to this is that we do not yet know what the "feel" of our building is when operating under COVID protocols. What does the movement of students through the building look like? Is there a different dynamic in the classroom? For this reason, we will prioritize stability at the beginning of the year, then slowly add and re-add co-curricular and extra-curricular programming to our day as we better understand how to do so logistically in our new reality.

### **Kol Yisrael Areivim Zeh Bazeh—We are All Responsible for Each Other**

With this guiding philosophy in mind, in the interest of community, taking care of each other, and continued learning, we would like to re-stress the importance of all of us following the government directives at home as well as at school.

We all play a key role in ensuring the health, safety and successful re-opening of our school and together we can make a difference in how this school year unfolds.



Rabbi Eric Grossman  
Head of School

## Commitment to a seamless year of academic excellence and learning

Akiva School is excited to offer a full, interactive online program for the 2020-2021 school year. The online school will run daily from 8:00am to 4:00pm and will offer the same education program as our in-person school. *Akiva Online!* will be taught by Akiva's own teachers, assistants, and specialists.

*Akiva Online!* will run as our C class in each grade, parallel to our A and B classes that will continue to be taught in our building. During these COVID times, when we expect absenteeism to be higher than usual. Students who are absent from school on any given day for any reason (quarantine, sickness, medical exemption) may join the C class to keep up with the curriculum and not fall behind in school.

No matter what the year may bring in terms of format for learning, Akiva will be able to provide a seamless, robust educational experience for all our students.

## Symptom list for COVID

Children **and** adults:

- Fever (38.0 C/ 100.4 F) or above
- Sudden loss of taste and/or smell
- New or worsened cough
- Sore throat
- Difficulty breathing
- Intense fatigue
- Muscle aches not related to physical exertion
- Decreased appetite, vomiting, diarrhea

Children:

- Runny nose
- New rash

## Managing COVID symptoms

Please note that students or staff may not attend school if they are isolated due to the following conditions:

- A diagnosis of COVID-19.
- They exhibit any of the symptoms listed above.
- They are moderate to high risk contacts of COVID-19 cases. (see section on Risk Levels).
- They are symptomatic and awaiting results of COVID-19 test (under investigation).
- They have household contacts who are awaiting results of COVID-19 test or are symptomatic.

## Protocol for students or staff with symptoms developed at home (prior to arriving at school):

- Parent/staff calls Public Health 1-877-644-4545 and follows Public Health guidelines.
- Parent/staff calls the school to advise of symptoms and of Public Health directions.
- Must remain isolated pending public health guidelines.
- Must isolate at home until either medical note attesting alternate cause for child's symptoms or 24 hours post resolution of symptoms (or longer if recommended by physician or Public Health).

## Protocol for students or staff with any of symptoms developed at school during the school day:

- Teacher calls the office and explains the situation before the child comes to the office.
- The student or staff member will be isolated from others in a private room, with a mask on, until they have left the building/been picked up.
- A parent will be contacted to arrange for immediate pick-up.
- If a child is symptomatic, a designated staff member will monitor the child while wearing a medical mask, eye protection, gloves and a gown, and maintaining a physical distance of two meters if possible.
- Once a parent or caregiver arrives, they do not enter the building, but should call the office and the child will be escorted outside by a designated staff member.
- The student's personal objects that were touched that day should be collected in a plastic bag and sent home with them.
- Siblings will also be sent home with the symptomatic child.
- The parent of the symptomatic child must contact Public Health (1-877-644-4545) as soon as possible and follow Public Health guidelines. The school will also contact Public Health to receive further instructions.
- Once the symptomatic individual leaves the building, the room in which they were isolated will be ventilated (opening windows) for three hours and then cleaned and disinfected. Tissues should be disposed of in a closed garbage bag, and eye protection should be disinfected with alcohol or hypochlorite-based disinfectant. Hands should be washed before and after cleaning the room.
- The staff member who was attending to the symptomatic individual should wash hands thoroughly and launder clothing in hot water.
- Parents of students who had moderate-high risk contact with the sick child will be informed of dismissal (please see the proceeding section for definitions of risk categories).

## Protocols for returning to school after symptoms or exposure

Please note that we follow all public health guidelines with respect to students or staff returning to school after symptoms or exposure.

### Symptomatic student or staff

The symptomatic individual (staff or student) was tested for COVID-19:

- If the result was negative, may come back to school 24 hours after symptom resolution and 48 hour fever free without antipyretic use.
- If the test result was positive, must remain isolated at home until allowed to return by Public Health.

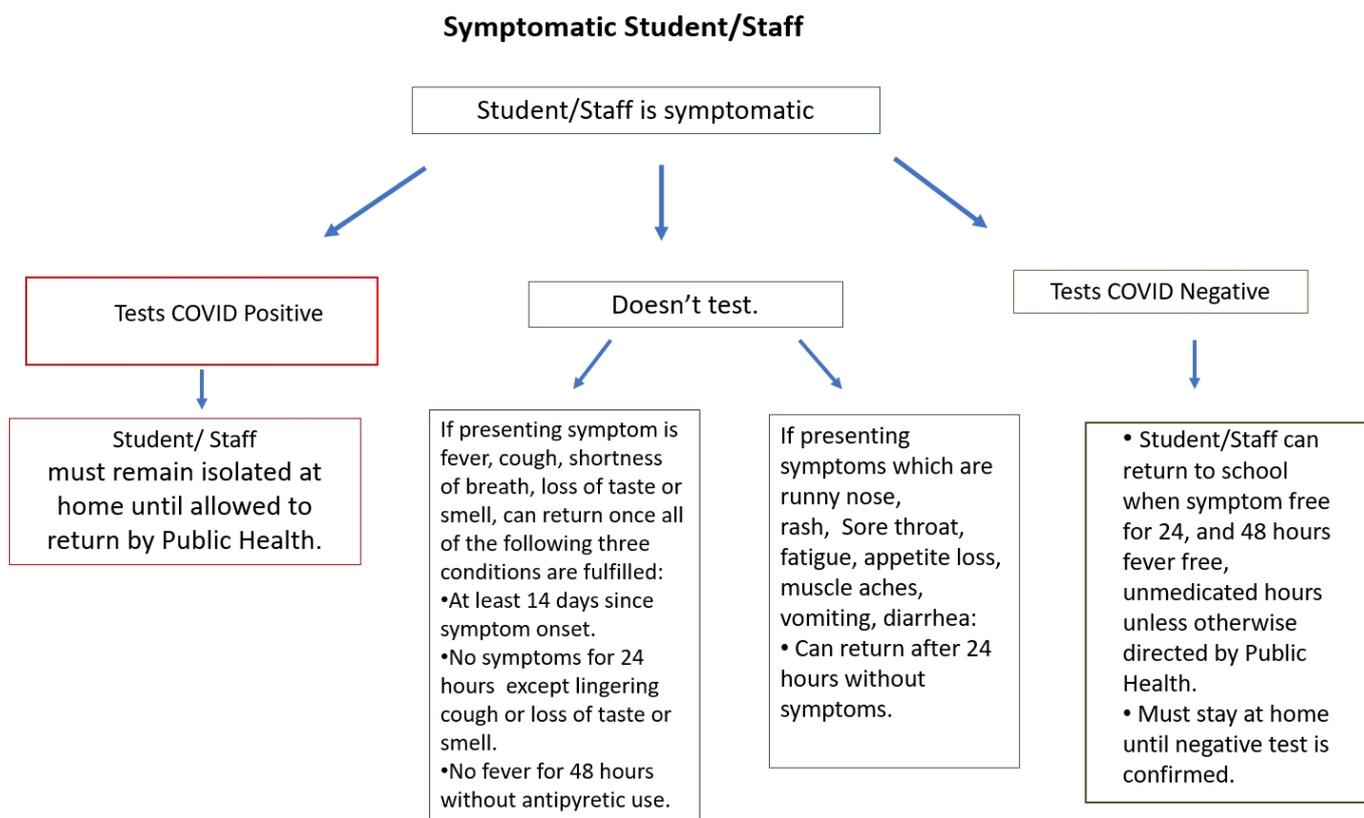
The symptomatic individual (staff or student) was **not** tested for COVID-19:

If presenting symptom is fever, cough, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell, can return once all of the following three conditions are fulfilled:

- At least 14 days since symptom onset.
- No symptoms for 24 hours except lingering cough or loss of taste or smell.
- No fever for 48 hours without antipyretic use.

If symptomatic individual has presenting symptoms which are runny nose, rash, Sore throat, fatigue, appetite loss, muscle aches, vomiting, diarrhea:

- Can return after 24 hours without symptoms.



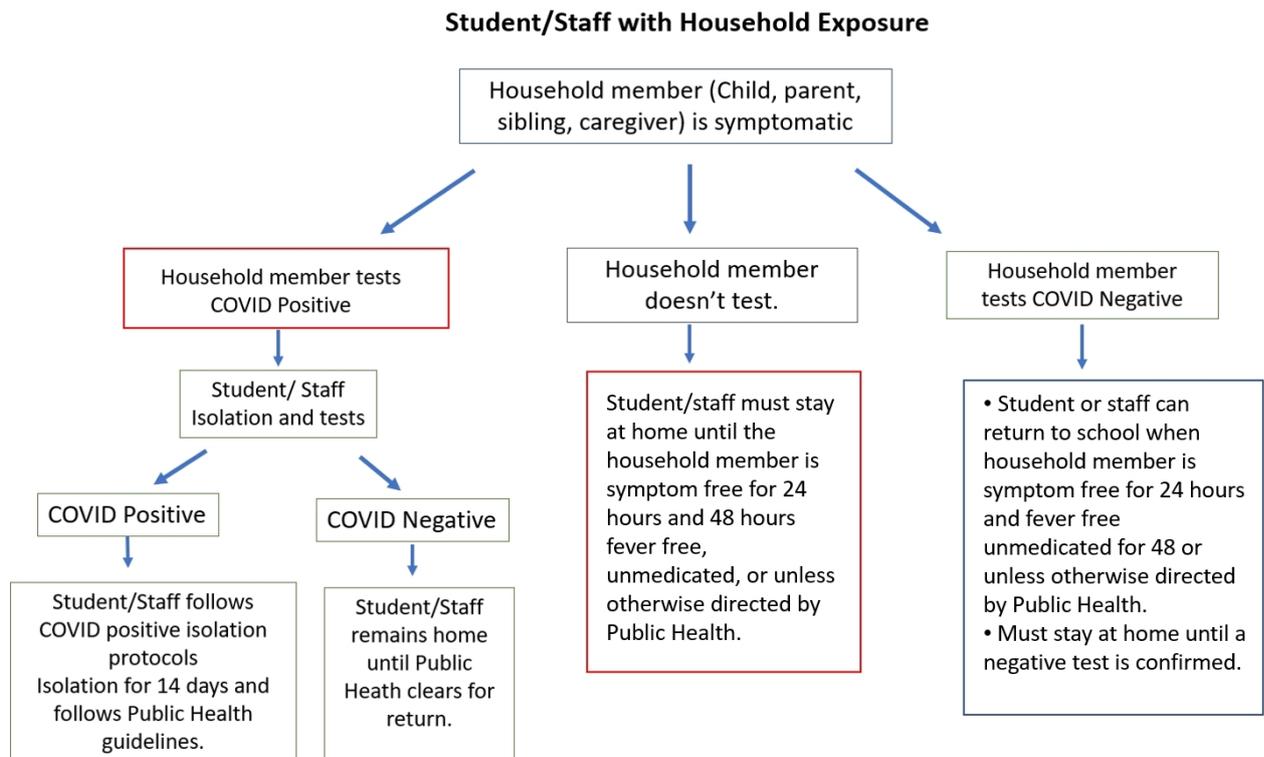
## Student or staff with symptomatic household member

Symptomatic household member was tested for COVID-19:

- If results negative and household member symptom free for 24 hours can return to school unless otherwise directed by Public Health.
- Must stay at home until a negative test is confirmed.
- If results are positive then follow guidelines from Public Health.

Symptomatic household member was not tested for COVID 19:

- must stay at home until the household member is symptom free for 24 hours and 48 hours fever free, unmedicated or otherwise directed by Public Health.



# Protocols for confirmed cases in school

## Communications

- As mandated by the government, if there is a confirmed case in the school, all parents and staff will be notified.
- While an investigation is being carried out, the class (students and teachers), who are assessed moderate/high risk, will be isolated from school and can continue learning via the Akiva Distance Learning Program.
- Isolated class must be tested.
- Public Health will guide the school on how to move forward.
- Class will be notified if a student goes home with fever, shortness of breath, cough or loss of taste or smell.

## Contact tracing protocols

In conjunction with Public Health, the school will trace all contacts from 48 hours prior to start of symptoms, or date of testing if asymptomatic case, including any individuals who are :

- In the same class.
- Together during recess.
- In the same carpool.
- In the after-school program together.
- Together before or after school.

## Protocols for students or staff exposed to a confirmed case in school

Risk levels will be determined and related actions will be taken based on these risk levels for the exposed students and staff members.

## Risk levels and actions

Risk levels are defined as below:

### Elevated risk

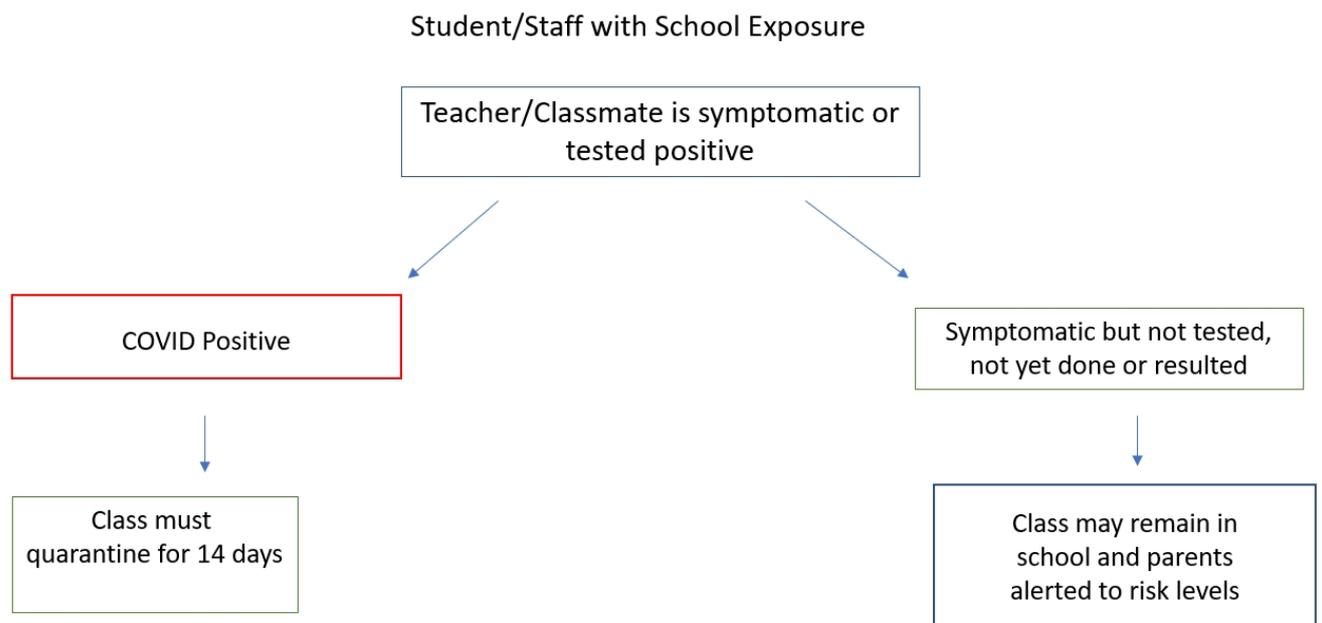
- Any staff or child who cared for, played with, or calmed confirmed Covid-19 positive individual during contagious period.
- Staff or child who received droplets or direct contact with bodily fluids of Covid-19 positive individual.
- These individuals will be asked to test for Covid-19, then follow Public Health guidelines.

## Moderate risk

- Staff or student with 15 minutes or longer cumulative exposure under 2 metres distance with a Covid-19 positive individual.
- Staff or students in the same class where 2 metre distancing cannot be confirmed.
- These individuals will be asked to test for Covid-19, then follow Public Health guidelines.

## Low risk

- Staff or students in the same class or areas in school where physical distancing greater than 2 metres was applied or appropriate PPE gear was worn at all times.



## Protocol for outbreak at the school

**Outbreak definition as per INSPQ:** Two cases within 14 days or fewer among students or teachers from one group or class without an epidemiological link outside of school (ie. two members of the same family)

- In the case of an outbreak at the school (see above definition), the school, together with Public Health, will evaluate exposure risk and immediately begin contact tracing and testing.
- Decisions on school closure will be made in conjunction with Public Health.
- Refer all moderate or high contact contacts for Covid-19 testing, whether symptomatic or not, and isolate for 14 days.
- Refer all low risk contacts for Covid-19 testing, whether symptomatic or not, and isolate until there is a negative test result, then monitor for symptoms.
- Review hygiene measures in the school.
- If any further cases develop despite contact isolation, Public Health may consider testing all students and staff who had exposure to common areas.

**Please note that all isolated students or staff  
should follow Quebec home isolation protocols**