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PUBLIC HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

December 31, 2021

Schelli Slaughter, MHA
Director

Dimyana Abdelmalek, MD, MPH
Health Officer

Dear Superintendents and Heads of Schools,

I am writing to inform you of interim changes to the Thurston County quarantine guidance for K-12 schools. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Washington State Department of Health (DOH) have recently provided updated guidance to the general public and we are anticipating updated K-12 guidance in the near future. During the interim our Thurston County guidance will include this update to the school guidance released on October 28, 2021:

Isolation guidance remains 10 days from symptom onset or positive COVID-19 test if asymptomatic.

Quarantine guidance has changed:

- Vaccinated students and staff who have received their COVID-19 booster dose or are within six months of the completion of an mRNA vaccine series or within two months of receiving the Johnson & Johnson vaccine do not need to quarantine, but should wear a mask for 10 days after exposure to a positive COVID-19 case. A COVID-19 test on day 5 is recommended.
- At this time students who are fully vaccinated, but more than six months have passed since completion of an mRNA vaccine series or more than two months have passed since a dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine may either quarantine at home for five days after exposure and engage in strict mask wearing for an additional five days or participate in the test to stay protocol where available.
- At this time staff who are more than six months from their original mRNA vaccine series or more than two months after the J&J vaccine and not yet boosted, are required to quarantine for five days and then follow strict mask use for another five days when around others.
- When there is a household exposure, individuals who are unvaccinated, not fully vaccinated, or not boosted and more than 6 months have passed since their mRNA vaccine series or more than 2 months have passed since receiving the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, are to quarantine for the isolation period of the positive COVID-19 case and an additional quarantine period, so long as they remain asymptomatic.

- At this time quarantine options for individuals who are not fully vaccinated or unvaccinated are 10 days from last exposure or 7 days from last exposure as long as they are asymptomatic and have proof of negative test on or after day 5. Test to stay remains an option for qualifying students who were exposed to COVID-19 at participating schools.
- If symptoms do occur after exposure, individuals should immediately quarantine until a negative test confirms symptoms are not due to COVID-19.

Our flowchart will be updated in the coming days to reflect these changes. This is a dynamic time in the COVID-19 pandemic in Thurston County. As our knowledge changes my guidance may also change to reflect the best available guidance.

Thank you for all you are doing to keep our communities of learning safe during this pandemic.

Sincerely,



Dimyana Abdelmalek, MD, MPH
Health Officer, Thurston County