

Test to Stay Q&A responses from Office Hours

1. Are schools participating in Test to Stay required to conduct contact tracing on each positive case of COVID-19 in their school, or among the students participating in Test to Stay? (Last updated 1/31/2022)

No. Schools participating in Test to Stay do not have contact tracing recommendations beyond what is recommended for all K-12 schools as per the [Interim Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in Virginia PreK-12 schools](#) (1/21/22) and the accompanying [FAQ document](#) (1/26/22). Schools participating in Test to Stay are not required to conduct contact tracing on every individual case of COVID-19, including those among Test to Stay participants. However, contact tracing remains one component of the layered prevention strategies and should be continued in partnership with local health districts when there are outbreaks and sustained transmission in schools.

2. If schools are no longer conducting universal contact tracing on each individual case of COVID-19 in the school, how will they identify students to enroll in Test to Stay? (Last updated 1/31/2022)

Students may still be identified as needing to quarantine in the school setting (such as after an outbreak investigation or people who self report). In addition, schools may become aware of students who have been exposed to an individual with COVID-19 outside of school.

3. Do schools participating in Test to Stay need to use seating charts? (Last updated 1/31/2022)

Schools participating in Test to Stay do not have contact tracing requirements beyond what is recommended for all schools. Decisions on whether or not to use seating charts are up to the school or school division, in consultation with the local health district. Seating charts may be considered as a best practice that would be a helpful tool in responding to an outbreak investigation in schools.

4. Can staff/teachers be included in Test to Stay? (Last updated 1/31/2022)

VDH recommends that all eligible individuals get vaccinated against COVID-19 as the best safe and effective way to prevent against COVID-19 infection. Individuals who are up-to-date on COVID-19 vaccines are not required to quarantine after a COVID-19 exposure. For those not up-to-date on COVID-19 vaccines, VDH recommends either a 5 day quarantine at home, or use of the Test to Stay strategy if the individual otherwise meets all eligibility criteria. VDH currently suggests limiting participation in Test to Stay to students. However, depending on the resources a school/school district has to support Test to Stay, as well as the burden of teacher and staffing shortages due to quarantine, schools may consider including teachers and staff in the strategy. Schools should

consider whether or not their inventory of test kits can support testing all eligible students before expanding to teachers and staff.

5. Do students participating in Test to Stay still have to wear a mask? (Last updated 1/31/2022)

Yes, a participating student is recommended to wear a mask at all times except when eating or drinking. If the parent consents for their student to participate in the Test to Stay program, then the school can require the student to wear a mask for 10 days following exposure to stay in school. If the student does not wear a mask, then the alternative is to quarantine at home. Schools implementing Test to Stay should consider privacy and confidentiality concerns for students participating in Test to Stay in light of any other school masking policies.

6. We received a shipment of Test Kits for Test to Stay but some were used for diagnostic testing and accounted for in the ViSSTA REDCap survey. What do we do for Test to Stay reporting? (Last updated 1/31/2022)

Test to Stay and ViSSTA are using one joint REDCap Survey to track test kits. The survey provides options to track and account for tests supplied by both programs, for both the purposes of Test to Stay and diagnostic testing.

7. Do we need to submit the REDcap survey before we have started enrolling students in Test to Stay? (Last updated 1/31/2022)

Schools should start submitting the REDCap survey after they have begun enrolling students in Test to Stay and distributing test kits. The REDCap survey is due by 5 pm each Tuesday to reflect the prior week (Monday to Sunday) of data.

8. In the event that a student receives test kits that they do not use, what should the school do with the unused test kits? (Last updated 1/31/2022)

Parents do not have to return unused test kits to the school. Schools should only provide the number of test kits for each student that are needed to complete the Test to Stay testing period, accounting for weekends/holidays when testing is not required. Schools should report back through the REDCap survey on both how many test kits were distributed and how many were used.

9. What should schools do if families report test kits are destroyed or damaged and request additional test kits? (Last updated 1/31/2022)

Schools should emphasize the importance of proper care and handling of the test kits with families. Test kits may be replaced as resources allow.