

To: Westchester County School Superintendents

From: Dr. Sherlita Amler, M.D., M.S. *SA*  
Commissioner of Health

Re: Test to Stay (TTS)

Date: December 9, 2021

This memo serves to provide guidance to Westchester County schools on Test to Stay (TTS)

The County is permitting schools to implement a TTS program. The school/district must have a written protocol that:

- a. Considers equity (i.e. families should not have to pay for testing, or if they do, then the inability to pay should not prevent a student from being eligible for TTS
  - b. Includes actions to follow-up on transmission (e.g. contact tracing) in the event that an individual tests positive, and
  - c. Other factors deemed essential or important by the school
2. The daily test must be conducted and the results received before the school day begins, and the positive individuals excluded/isolated per existing procedures
  3. If the exposed person who is allowed to remain in school through TTS develops symptoms, they must be excluded from school per current school guidance.
  4. The test to stay application is only for in-classroom setting. Test to stay does not apply to sports or extra-curricular activity such as band, chorus, theater and other activities.
  5. It is a requirement that the test to stay be administered by an approved state lab, licensed medical provider, or pharmacy. The test cannot be administered at home.
  6. The school district is responsible for all data entry as required by the New York State Department of Health.
  7. The TTS program is only for students to help support in-person instruction.
  8. A student in the TTS program remains under quarantine outside of school.

9. TTS is only for asymptomatic contacts. If a student becomes symptomatic during the TTS, even with a negative antigen test, they no longer are eligible for TTS and must be excluded from school. Schools will need to follow the school guidance from New York State prior to returning students to school.
10. Students in the TTS are not permitted to ride the morning bus, but can ride the bus home if testing negative that morning and remaining asymptomatic.
11. Testing is only required during times when school is in session.
12. If anyone in a TTS program is exposed to a new case, the “seven-day clock” restarts from the date of the new last exposure.
13. For students who test negative on day 7:
  - a. Testing is no longer required through the TTS.
  - b. Such students still remain under an official quarantine order through day 10 and cannot participate in any non-academic activities (e.g. sports or clubs).
  - c. Once the order is lifted, contacts should self- monitor (or done by parent) for COVID symptoms through day 14.
  - d. If the student develops symptoms on days 8 – 14, students should isolate and follow NYS school guidance for returning to school.
  - e. Contacts are strongly encouraged to wear masks while in public indoor settings through day 14 regardless of vaccination status.
  - f. Students may resume riding the bus to and from school.
14. In schools where a staff member is performing testing on an individual and/or interpreting the test results, a limited service laboratory (LSL) registration is required. Schools can obtain their own LSL or use the WCDOH LSL with a contract. Binax cards are currently extremely limited in availability; the county will be distributing to schools over-the-counter rapid antigen tests received as a one-time distribution from New York State.

Westchester County, in consultation with the New York State Department of Health, is evaluating testing out of quarantine. We expect to have guidance on that after the winter break.