



UPDATE ON ARCHDIOCESE OF MIAMI COVID PROTOCOL *Effective Monday, Jan 24, 2022*

Effective January 24, 2022

ISOLATION AND QUARANTINE PROTOCOL *(effective Jan 24, 2022)*

The COVID-19 variant, Omicron, now the prevalent virus affecting our community and much of the US, has a shorter incubation period than the wild variant or the Delta variant. The CDC has adjusted its guidelines accordingly. The Archdiocese of Miami (ADOM) has adapted the guidance of the CDC for the shortened isolation period (from 10 days to 5 days) if symptoms are fully resolved. **Effective Monday, Jan 24, the Archdiocesan protocol requires isolation for all persons diagnosed positive, regardless of vaccination status, of a minimum of 5 days or longer if needed for the full resolution of symptoms, followed by a negative antigen test result.**

A Parent's Statement will be shared with parents whenever a child needs to be quarantined (because of a close contact) or isolated (because of a positive diagnosis). **It outlines not only the number of days of the protocols but the specific testing requirements at the beginning (for isolation) and at the end (for quarantine).**

MASKS

The CDC has encouraged the use of N95 equivalent masks such as KN95, which are readily available on-line. Surgical masks are the next best. And other "cloth masks" are less effective. However, some may wonder that because the cloth masks are less effective against the highly transmissible omicron, that cloth masks have no value. That confusion is a distortion of the guidance of the CDC. If a KN95 or surgical mask is available for the student she/he is encouraged to use it. A cloth mask continues to provide protection, for the student. The Archdiocese does not mandate the type of mask to be used; however, **the ADOM continues to strongly encourage the use of a mask when indoors and in the period following a 5-day quarantine or recovery from a COVID infection – when the KN95 mask is strongly recommended.**

While the surge of COVID infection has peaked in South FL it has not improved sufficiently to reduce all caution with respect to masks. The rate of transmission is projected to drop rapidly to return to levels experienced in mid-December. Community data is published by week and available late on Fridays.



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As of today, Jan 22, **we expect to announce by the middle of the coming week that we are restoring mask opt-outs in the Catholic schools of the Archdiocese (see sections below).** *Mask opt-outs would be in effect on Friday, January 28.*

This communication is with the expectation that the number of cases per 100,000 population would continue its decline and soon return to the levels as in late November when the consent to opt out was first implemented (61.7 cases/100,000 for the week ending Nov 25, 2021). While we hope it is not the case, depending on the COVID statistics for the most recent week, there remains the possibility that we may hesitate in our announcement or adjust this protocol in the future depending on the public health conditions in the community.

FULLY VACCINATED OPTION TO OMIT MASKS – effective when mask opt-outs are restored

Students in any grade who are fully vaccinated with vaccination information on file with the school may opt out of wearing a mask once the mask requirement is relaxed.

Faculty teaching grades 7-12 who are fully vaccinated and their vaccination information is on file with the school may opt out of wearing a mask once the mask requirement is relaxed.

The Archdiocese of Miami strongly encourages use of masks including the use of KN95 masks or equivalent regardless of vaccination status.

PARENT CONSENT OPTION TO OMIT MASKS – effective when mask opt-outs are restored

Parent consent for children to opt out of wearing masks will be followed when mask opt-outs are restored (anticipated to take effect on Friday, January 28). Any parent wishing to change their consent could do so by using the form still on the ADOM website or notifying the school that they withdraw their consent. Parents who had not previously submitted a consent form could do so with the effective date beginning no earlier than January 28, 2022.