



Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego BOCES  
NEWS RELEASE  
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## **Herkimer County adopting option for students, staff, community members to test out of precautionary quarantine early**

School students and staff in the Herkimer County region that are placed on precautionary quarantine for an exposure to COVID-19 will soon have the option to return to school three days earlier if they test negative for COVID-19 and remain symptom-free.

The Herkimer County Public Health Department has worked with Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego BOCES and schools in the region to begin allowing asymptomatic students, staff and members of the community to “test out of precautionary quarantine” due to a COVID-19 exposure beginning Wednesday, Dec. 1.

“This practice will get students and staff who aren’t infected with COVID-19 back to school sooner, so students can continue their education, while still taking the steps to keep students and staff safe,” Herkimer BOCES District Superintendent Sandra Sherwood said.

“This will allow an avenue for all staff and students to get back to school earlier,” Herkimer County Director of Public Health Christina Cain added.

The “test out of precautionary quarantine” option allows asymptomatic residents of Herkimer County who were quarantined in response to a COVID-19 exposure to get tested after the fifth day of quarantine. If the lab-confirmed test result comes back negative and they still haven’t developed symptoms, they can return to school and other activities after the seventh day of quarantine. This would mean they would be in school on the eighth, ninth and 10<sup>th</sup> days of what is normally a 10-day quarantine.

Students and staff can get this testing done independently at any testing site approved by New York state. Tests also can be given by many of the schools after the fifth day of a precautionary quarantine. Families should contact their individual school districts for scheduling testing in these instances and for more information.

This option is being put in place for all Herkimer County residents including those who attend the following districts: Central Valley, Dolgeville, Frankfort-Schuyler, Herkimer, Little Falls, Mount Markham, Owen D. Young, Poland, Richfield Springs, Town of Webb, West Canada Valley and Herkimer BOCES programs.

“The option to ‘test out of precautionary quarantine’ is much more manageable and less confusing than other options and a way to fully end quarantines early,” Sherwood said. “This gets students back to class three days earlier without increasing risks or putting unrealistic stresses on the ability to test students for COVID-19.”

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