

SUPSI

PROTOCOL TO BE FOLLOWED IN CASE OF NOTIFICATION OF COVID-19 CONTAGION OR CLOSE CONTACT WITH A COVID-19 POSITIVE PERSON FOR STAFF AND STUDENTS

(Protocol, Version 4 of 21 September 2021, Annex of the SUPSI Protection Plan)¹

1. Foreword

According to the provisions of the Swiss Confederation

(<https://www.bag.admin.ch/bag/en/home/krankheiten/ausbrueche-epidemien-pandemien/aktuelle-ausbrueche-epidemien/novel-cov/isolation-und-quarantaene.html>), pandemic management of COVID-19 provides for the isolation (mandatory quarantine) of people who are tested positive for the virus.

For those who have had close contact with people who have tested positive, even if asymptomatic, mandatory quarantine may also be required. In general, persons (students, staff, and teachers) who have been vaccinated with a valid COVID-19 certificate and persons fully recovered with a valid COVID-19 certificate (issued to persons who have had a coronavirus infection attested to by a positive PCR test within the past 6 months), if asymptomatic, are exempt from having any tests performed and are exempt from quarantine.

Mandatory quarantine is decided by the competent cantonal authority (Cantonal Medical Office, CMO) through its contact tracing service. SUPSI may adopt additional protective measures.

For employees and students who are required to quarantine on the basis of medical instructions or by decision of the CMO, absences will be treated in accordance with the provisions of the SUPSI Protection Plan (see 4.1 and 5.1.2).

This *Protocol* governs **the procedure to be followed in the event of a report of contagion or a direct contact with a COVID-19 positive-tested person.**

The objective of the *Protocol* is to ensure proper case management with due and timely communication.

The cases and situations related to possible infections are many: this *Protocol* contains a series of important indications that may not be completely exhaustive and applicable to all cases. The SUPSI General Director and the relevant SUPSI Direction members will evaluate and decide on the individual cases.

2. Definitions

“Close contact” - apart from those living in the same household - is defined as contact within 1.5 metres for more than 15 minutes without protection (e.g., without Plexiglas separation, without a face mask) in the presence of symptoms or during the 48 hours before the onset of symptoms. Specific instructions on isolation and quarantine can be found at www4.ti.ch/dss/dsp/covid19/population/isolation-and-quarantine-instructions/ .

“Quarantine” means the mandatory period of isolation of 10 days since the last contact with a person who has been tested positive (which can be reduced to seven days provided that the person concerned results negative to a rapid antigen test or a biomolecular analysis, or by means of PCR, in accordance with the COVID-19 Ordinance Special Situation, link: <https://www.fedlex.admin.ch/eli/oc/2021/379/it>) and cantonal provisions on isolation and quarantine <https://www4.ti.ch/dss/dsp/covid19/popolazione/isolamento-e-quarantena-istruzioni/> (Italian version). Exceptions to the quarantine requirement valid for contact quarantine (effective June 26, 2021), are provided for persons who have already been infected with COVID-19 and have recovered or are fully vaccinated (further details on Exceptions to the quarantine requirement: [link](#))

¹ In the case of conflicting meanings between language versions, the Italian version prevails.

Protocol V. 4 - Attachment Protection plan

The person placed in quarantine must avoid contact with other people. They must monitor their state of health, isolate themselves, take the test and contact their doctor or the **Ticino infoline** on 0800 144 144 in case of symptoms.

At the time of quarantine, those concerned will receive detailed instructions from the CMO on what to do.

By “**isolation**” we mean the mandatory period of isolation to which a COVID-19 positive person is subjected. Isolation ends 48 hours after the symptoms disappear, provided that at least 10 days have passed since their appearance.

3. In the event of positive cases of COVID-19 within SUPSI?

The Cantonal Medical Office, using the contact tracing service, traces and informs all close contacts for each positive person and implements the necessary measures.

All persons deemed to be in “close contact” are, as a rule contacted by the CMO contact tracing service; the CMO may contact SUPSI's Human Resources directly for further information such as:

- names and telephone numbers of students, teachers and staff,
- classes
- activities carried out by the persons concerned,
- Protection Plan and related departmental Activity Sheets,
- etc.

SUPSI has provided the CMO with the contact numbers of the members of Human Resources. Human Resources manages relations with the CMO in the event of a detected contagious situation.

Human Resources will inform you promptly:

- the SUPSI General Director, who takes responsibility for the flow of information within the Services and with regard to the mandate Directors
- the Department Director,
- the direct superior of the employee tested positive,
- the Head of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies, likewise Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning and the Department Director in which the positive student is active.

The Department Director manages the internal information of their Department with the support of the Human Resources manager and the members of the Direction.

It is up to the CMO to decide and communicate all the measures to be taken, for example whether to quarantine also a group of people or the whole class.

In case of individual quarantine, the person concerned shall receive a certificate from the competent authority. This certificate may be requested in case of verification by SUPSI from students and employees.

The General Director and the Directors of Department shall inform Human Resources of the name of their replacement in the event of an impediment or holiday.

4. Accessibility to SUPSI headquarters

In the event of notification of COVID-19 contagion or quarantine ordered by the CMO, recovery of any personal materials from SUPSI premises is strictly prohibited.

The employee or student will arrange with a colleague for any possible delivery of materials at home.

Protocol V. 4 - Attachment Protection plan

5. Procedure to be followed for COVID-19-positive employees or those who have had close contact with people found to be positive.

1. Any employee who tests positive for the virus or who becomes aware of having been in close contact with a person who is tested positive must immediately inform their direct supervisor and Human Resources.

The **result of a positive test carried out abroad** must be actively reported immediately to the Cantonal Medical Office of the Canton of Ticino so that it can assess, by means of an on-site investigation, whether quarantine measures are necessary for persons working in the institution attended by the person in question. The copy of the COVID-19 test with a positive result should be sent, together with a telephone number where the positive person can be reached, to dss-umc@ti.ch.

During office hours, Human Resources are to be contacted via the following numbers:

Head of Human Resources	Patricia Girolmetti	058 666 6007	covid.dir@supsi.ch
SUPSI Direction	Elsa Ducommun	058 666 6080	covid.dir@supsi.ch
DACD	Antonella Blago	058 666 6317	covid.dacd@supsi.ch
DEASS	Pamela Altwegg Valeria Abate	058 666 6444 058 666 6470	covid.deass@supsi.ch
DFA	Alessia Giudici	058 666 6804	covid.dfa@supsi.ch
DTI	Jessica Brenna-Boschetti Matteo Lunini	058 666 6518 058 666 6726	covid.dti@supsi.ch

2. To ensure timely management of cases and communication to colleagues and students with whom the person concerned has had recent direct contact, it is desirable that the positive person also allows his / her name to be communicated internally. The information must be treated confidentially and solely for the purpose of preventing the spread of the virus.
3. An employee who tests positive for the virus must immediately take increased precautions by leaving SUPSI's premises (in particular observing social distancing, wearing a mask and, if work requirements permit, working from home in agreement with his or her immediate superior).

An employee who has had close contact with a positive person must follow the same instructions and follow the instructions of the WTO (further details on Exceptions to the quarantine requirement: [link](#)).

In principle, compliance with the protection plans does not lead to quarantine for work colleagues because if the distance is maintained and the mask worn, the concept of close contact is no longer considered.

As far as possible, before leaving the premises, the employee is asked to disinfect his workstation and the surfaces touched.

In case of positivity to COVID-19, the employee must immediately implement increased precautionary measures and leave the premises immediately as indicated above. In such a case, the concerned groups of employees or whole classes could be put into quarantine (except for persons fully vaccinated or recovered within the last 180 days), based on the findings of the environmental survey carried out as directed by the CMO for the contact tracing service. In addition, SUPSI could outline additional protective measures.

4. Human Resources shall inform the General Director, the Directors of Department, of Services or Mandate so that any internal precautionary measures can be assessed and adopted. Precautionary measures may be taken independently of or in addition to communication by the CMO.

Protocol V. 4 - Attachment Protection plan

6. Procedure to be followed for COVID-19 positive students or those who have had close contact with people found to be positive:

1. Students who test positive or who are made aware that they have been in close contact with a person who has tested positive are kindly ask to immediately notify their Head of the degree course or Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning course and simultaneously send an email to:

- Department of Environment Constructions and Design covid.dacd@supsi.ch
- Department of Business Economics, Health and Social Care covid.deass@supsi.ch
- Department of Education and Learning covid.dfa@supsi.ch
- Department of Innovative Technologies covid.dti@supsi.ch
- SUPSI Direction covid.dir@supsi.ch

providing the following information:

- a. Name and surname
- b. Mobile phone number
- c. Name of degree course or Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning course
- d. Department of reference
- e. Last date of presence in SUPSI

The **result of a positive test carried out abroad** must be actively reported immediately to the Cantonal Medical Office of the Canton of Ticino so that it can assess, by means of an on-site investigation, whether quarantine measures are necessary for persons working in the institution attended by the person in question. The copy of the COVID-19 test with a positive result should be sent, together with a telephone number where the positive person can be reached, to dss-umc@ti.ch.

2. A student who tests positive for the virus must immediately take increased precautions by leaving SUPSI's premises (in particular, observe social distancing and wear a mask).

A student who has had close contact with a positive person must follow the same instructions and follow the instructions of the WTO (further details on Exceptions to the quarantine requirement: [link](#)).

3. To ensure timely management of cases and communication to colleagues and students with whom the person concerned has had recent direct contact, it is desirable that the positive person also allows his / her name to be communicated internally. The information must be treated confidentially and solely for the purpose of preventing the spread of the virus.
4. The person in charge of the Head of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies or Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning course, involving the Department Director, Human Resources and the person in charge of Head of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies or Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning course of his/her Department, shall assess and adopt any internal precautionary measures to be taken. Precautionary measures may also be taken prior to notification by the CMO or prescribed in addition to those indicated by the CMO itself.
Human Resources regularly informs the General Director of the cases reported and the measures taken.

Protocol V. 4 - Attachment Protection plan

7. The Criteria for return to premises following an absence are:

Situation of the absent person	Possibility to return to school
Demonstrating one of these symptoms: - fever - a severe, acute cough, also without fever - cold and/or sore throat and/or mild cough, also without fever	<u>With a negative test:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 hours after the end of symptoms • No other symptoms of COVID-19 appear (gastrointestinal symptoms, headache, joint pain, loss of taste or smell) <u>That is, unless there has been high-risk contact with a person who has tested positive</u> , in which case the person will be quarantined at home for the time specified
Person with a negative COVID-19 test or person with another diagnosis that justifies the symptoms as long as the diagnosis is made by a physician	24 hours after symptoms end.
Person absent due to quarantine	At the end of quarantine (10 days from the day the sick person was placed in isolation if they live together, otherwise 10 days from the last contact), provided they have not developed any symptoms in the meantime. The quarantine days may be reduced to seven days if the result of a rapid antigen test or PCR test is negative.
Person absent due to isolation, with symptoms and with positive COVID-19 test	48 hours after the disappearance of the last symptom if at least 10 days have passed since their appearance.

General behaviour applicable for all employees and students:

When returning from a period of isolation or quarantine, all protective measures (hand hygiene, social distancing, correct use of the mask, ventilation of rooms, etc.) must continue to be followed scrupulously.

Protocol V. 4 - Attachment Protection plan

8. Communications as part of the activation of this protocol

From a communication point of view, the *Protocol* provides for the following:

- The protection of privacy must be respected by all employees and students. Under no circumstances may information relating to the identity of the person involved be disclosed to third parties without their express consent.
- On the basis of this principle, the Departmental Directors, together with Human Resources, manage internal communication.
- Given that close contacts are traced and will already be informed through the CMO (Cantonal Medical Office), SUPSI can inform the class and colleagues involved, in a confidential manner (depending on the case, anonymously or nominally with the authorization of the person concerned).
- External communication at institutional level is always managed by the General Director, in agreement with the relevant SUPSI Direction members.

9. What happens if a COVID-19 positive case is detected in a class?

The cantonal authorities evaluate on a case-by-case basis and decide whether or not a quarantine is necessary for students in the class. In general, vaccinated students with a valid COVID-19 certificate and recovered students with a valid COVID-19 certificate (issued to persons who have had a coronavirus infection attested by a positive PCR test within the past 6 months), if asymptomatic, are exempt from any testing and are exempt from any quarantine.

For students who have not been fully vaccinated or who cannot prove that they have recovered from the disease within the last 6 months, the decision on quarantine is strictly a matter for the Cantonal Medical Office. In the event of a positive case, an environmental survey is carried out by contact tracing to reconstruct all close contacts (this generally means less than 1.5 meters for more than 15 minutes without adequate protection) that have taken place in the 48 hours preceding the onset of symptoms. The fact that everyone has a mask, if worn correctly, in classrooms and laboratories drastically reduces the risk of quarantine, but each case is evaluated by the Cantonal Medical Office. The introduction of the compulsory COVID certificate also reduces the risk of extensive quarantines.

In the presence of a single positive case in a class, students and teachers are informed of such, reminding everyone to scrupulously respect protective measures, with particular reference to breaks and lunch. Students and teachers are asked to test themselves immediately - even if they have been vaccinated or are recovered - if the slightest symptom appears. No further measures are taken for the class, which can continue to attend school.

Franco Gervasoni
SUPSI General Director