



# Chester County Health Department

## Coronavirus COVID-19

School Guidance Issued:

June 19, 2020

### Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide public health guidance to schools based upon the guidance issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) for the phased re-opening of pre-K to 12 schools to include:

- [Health and Safety Plan Considerations](#)
- [Symptom Monitoring](#)
- [Cleaning and Disinfecting](#)
- [Exclusion From and Return to School Requirements](#)
- [Notifications](#)

### Health and Safety Plan Considerations

The following health and safety plan considerations were taken directly from the [Preliminary Guidance for Phased Reopening of Pre-K to 12 Schools](#) published by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Guidance specific to public health is provided for each consideration.

PDE Considerations	Public Health Guidance
Identification of a “pandemic coordinator” and/or “pandemic team” with defined roles and responsibilities for health and safety preparedness and response planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chester County Health Department will serve as a resource/ consultant of schools – point of contact: Jeanne Casner, MPH, PMP – County Public Health Director</li> </ul>
Steps to protect students and staff at higher risk for severe illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit or cancel all non-essential travel.</li> <li>• In classrooms with high-risk students, it is recommended the students, and staff assigned these rooms, have a temperature check done at the school.</li> <li>• Limit movement in and out of classrooms with high-risk students.</li> <li>• Teachers at higher risks should avoid gathering in groups of any size and avoid common areas such as staff lounges.</li> </ul>
Processes for monitoring students and staff for symptoms and history of exposure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide ongoing communications to staff and parents/guardians about the importance of staying at home if they are sick</li> <li>• On-site screening of staff and students is preferred and highly recommended by the Chester County Health Department – see <a href="#">Symptom Monitoring</a></li> <li>• If on-site screening is not feasible, staff and students can be screened at home. Direct guidance (written, video,</li> </ul>



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	<p>electronic, etc.) must be provided to staff and parents/guardians to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ All current, relevant symptoms – see <a href="#">Symptom Monitoring</a></li> <li>○ Temperatures must be based upon type of thermometer – see <a href="#">Symptom Monitoring</a></li> <li>○ No students with symptoms or temperature are allowed on a bus, or at school.</li> <li>○ No staff with symptoms or temperature are allowed at school.</li> <li>○ Staff and students must notify the school if an absence is due to COVID-19</li> <li>○ Schools must proactively monitor classrooms, cafeterias, hallways, common areas, ect. for symptoms</li> <li>○ Teachers must be empowered to and supported in dismissing students to the school nurse/office if symptoms arise or are suspected</li> <li>○ Consider sending reminder messages to staff and parents/guardians about daily symptom monitoring.</li> <li>● On-site screening for symptoms and temperature is required for all non-essential visitors and volunteers – see <a href="#">Symptom Monitoring</a>.</li> <li>● Bus drivers play a role in assessing symptoms when students board the bus; bus drivers must be trained on the symptoms and procedure for not allowing students on the bus; parents/guardians must be made aware of the bus protocol.</li> <li>● Establish a process for staff, parents/guardians and volunteers to self-report COVID-19 symptoms or exposure.</li> </ul>
<p>Steps to take in relation to isolation or quarantine when a staff member, student or visitor becomes sick or demonstrates a history of exposure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Designate an isolation room or area to separate anyone who exhibits COVID-19like symptoms – ideally this is not the existing nurses office – until the individual is able to go home, or to a healthcare provider.</li> <li>● School must maintain adequate personal protective equipment for use when individuals become ill:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Gowns, N95 masks, eye protection, gloves.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● All schools must monitor symptoms of students, staff and visitors throughout the day to include:</li> </ul>



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<p>Guidelines for when an isolated or quarantined staff member, student, or visitor may return to school;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Immediately separate individuals with COVID-19 symptoms into the designated isolation area.</li> <li>○ Immediately close off the area(s) used by a sick person and do not use before cleaning and disinfection – see <a href="#">Cleaning and Disinfecting</a></li> <li>● Staff must be trained on the symptoms and procedure for sending individuals with symptoms to the school nurse/office; parents/guardians must be made aware of the classroom protocol.</li> <li>● Individuals who are sick or have a temperature must go home or to a healthcare facility depending on how severe their symptoms are; prior to leaving the school, guidance for self-isolation at home and guidelines for returning to school must be provided – see <a href="#">Home Guidance</a> and <a href="#">Exclusion From and Return to School Requirements</a>.</li> <li>● Schools must inform parents to be prepared in the event their student has to stay home per the exclusion requirements.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Schools should consider remote learning for students excluded from school for COVID who are well enough to continue learning.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● If an individual requires transportation by an ambulance, alert the ambulance and hospital that the person may have COVID-19.</li> </ul>
<p>Guidelines for hygiene practices for students and staff which include the manner and frequency of hand-washing and other best practices</p> <p>Guidelines on the use of face coverings (masks or face shields) by all staff</p> <p>Guidelines on the use of face coverings (masks for face shields) for older students as appropriate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All individuals in school will sanitize or wash their hands on a frequent basis.</li> <li>● Hand sanitizer will be made available in all common areas, hallways, and/or in classrooms where sinks for handwashing are not available.</li> <li>● Teach and reinforce washing hands and covering coughs and sneezes among students, staff, volunteers and visitors.</li> <li>● All adults must wear face coverings (mask or shield) while on school property, or when using school vehicles.</li> <li>● All bus drivers must wear face coverings (mask or shield)</li> <li>● Students are encouraged to wear face coverages, however it is understandable that younger students may have difficulty with this.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ For older students, require (or encourage) face covering when in hallways, restrooms and areas</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



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	<p>where social distancing is not possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share mask covering guidance with staff, volunteers, and visitors – see <a href="#">MaskGuidance</a>.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fabric masks should be washed regularly</li> <li>○ Non fabric masks should be changed regularly.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Prohibit physical contact such as handshakes, fist-bumps, high-fives, etc.</li> </ul>
<p>Expectations for the posting of signs in highly visible locations, that promote everyday protective measures and how to stop the spread of germs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure information is about everyday protective measures such as by proper washing hands, proper face covering and social distancing is available throughout the school (signage, announcements, etc.) and made available to parents/guardians (websites, emails, etc.)</li> </ul>
<p>Procedures for cleaning, sanitizing, disinfecting, and ventilating learning spaces and any other areas used by students (i.e. restrooms, hallways, and transportation)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects within the school and on school buses at least daily, including desktops, chairs, electronic devices door handles, sink handles, etc.</li> <li>• Ensure ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air by opening windows and doors when possible.</li> <li>• Discontinue the use of drinking fountains and provide safe alternatives for providing water when possible.</li> <li>• Consider the unique needs of music programming (e.g., band, orchestra, choir) to address hygiene, disinfection of equipment.</li> </ul>
<p>Protocols for distancing student desks/seating and other social distancing practices <del>classroom/learning space occupancy</del> that allows for 6 feet of separation among students and staff throughout the day to the maximum extent feasible</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While staggered schedules to limit the number of individuals in classrooms and other spaces is optimal, if this is not feasible, minimally the following is required:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Turn desks to face in the same direction or have students sit on only one side of tables to limit face-to-face seating.</li> <li>○ Target six feet between students to the extent possible; when not possible target three feet</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Limit activities in classrooms that do not support social distancing.</li> <li>• Ensure social distancing in offices and staff lounges, and during staff meetings.</li> <li>• Limit large gatherings, events, and extracurricular activities to those that can maintain social distancing.</li> <li>• Implement strategies to reduce the number of individuals</li> </ul>



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	<p>in the hallways at one time such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Use one way traffic patterns in hallways along the outside edges.</li> <li>○ Stagger end of class periods to reduce the number of students in the hallways at one time.</li> <li>○ For older students, consider requiring masks when in hallways and restrooms.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Monitor school to ensure staff or students do not commune; close communal areas if needed.</li> </ul>
<p>Procedures for restricting the use of cafeterias and serving meals in classrooms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Staff and students should wash hands before and after lunch/snacks.</li> <li>● Schools able to serve meals in classrooms should use plated meals/box lunches and avoid buffet style meals.</li> <li>● School not able to serve meals in classrooms should avoid face-to-face seating and allow for three to six feet social distancing.</li> <li>● Staff should avoid face-to-face seating while eating.</li> <li>● Avoid sharing of food and utensils.</li> </ul>
<p>Protocols for sporting activities consistent with the <a href="#">CDC Considerations for Youth Sports</a> for recess, and physical education classes (guidance for organized school sports will be published separately)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The decision to resume sports-related activities, including conditioning, practices and games, is the discretion of a school entity’s governing body. Each school entity must develop and adopt an Athletics Health and Safety Plan – see <a href="#">Pennsylvania Guidance</a>.</li> <li>● Limit travel to areas not in the “green” phase.</li> </ul>
<p>Methods of limiting the number of individuals in classrooms and other learning spaces, and interactions between groups of students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● See social distancing above.</li> </ul>
<p>Procedures to limit the sharing of materials among students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Limit shared items to the maximum extent possible.</li> <li>● Clean and disinfect shared items including technical devices between uses.</li> <li>● Keep each student’s belongings separated from others’ and in individually labeled containers, cubbies, lockers or other areas.</li> </ul>
<p>Processes for identifying and restricting non-essential visitors and volunteers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Refrain from scheduling large group activities such as field trips, inter-group events, and extracurricular activities.</li> <li>● Restrict nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities that involve outside groups.</li> </ul>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If restrictions for nonessential visitors/volunteers are not feasible the school must screen for symptoms and temperature prior to entry and require face covering while on school property.</li> </ul>
<p>Protocols for adjusting transportation schedules and practices to create social distance between students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Promote social distancing on bus stops.</li> <li>● Buses can operate with a maximum of two students per seat.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Students from the same family should sit together.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Older students are encouraged to wear face covering (mask or shield) while on the bus; optional for younger students.</li> <li>● Bus drivers must wear face covering (mask or shield) while whenever others are on the bus unless specifically prohibited by the bus company/school policy.</li> <li>● Buses must be disinfected after each run and thoroughly cleaned daily.</li> </ul>
<p>Health Department Communications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Establish regular communication with the Chester County Health Department – see <a href="#">Notifications</a>.</li> </ul>

### Symptom Monitoring

- Take temperature with temporal or forehead touchless thermometer
- Are you taking any medication to treat or suppress a fever? Yes/No
- Are you currently experiencing any of the following symptoms<sup>1</sup>?

Column A 1 or more symptoms	Column B 2 or more symptoms	
Fever (99.5°F or higher <sup>2</sup> ) Cough Shortness of breath Difficulty breathing	Lack of smell or taste (without congestion) Sore throat Chills Muscle pain	Headache Congestion or runny nose Nausea or vomiting Diarrhea

"Has Symptoms" is defined as having 1 or more symptom(s) in Column A

**OR** 2 or more symptoms in Column B

**OR** Yes to medication to suppress a fever.



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<sup>1</sup> For a current list of symptoms see CDC’s website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

<sup>2</sup> The temperature considered a fever during screening differs based on how temperature is taken. Any fever reported by an employee, even if no thermometer was used, should be considered as symptomatic.

Mode	Temperature for Fever
Walk through scanner	97.5°F or higher
Axillary and temporal	99.5°F or higher
Oral	100.0°F or higher

### Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Frequently used surfaces must be cleaned at least daily.
- Shared equipment to include technology, gym equipment, etc. must be cleaned after each use.
- When staff or students become sick, or test positive for COVID-19:
  - The building does not need to be evacuated.
  - Close off areas used by a sick person and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting.
  - Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If not feasible, wait as long as possible. If seven days have passed since the individual was in the affected area, cleaning is not needed.
- Follow CDC cleaning guidance at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/clean-disinfect/index.html>.



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#### Exclusion From and Return to School Requirements

Scenario	Exclude From School	Return to School After...
#1 – No Symptoms	No	Not applicable
#2 – COVID-19 Symptoms	Yes	Individual should be tested for COVID-19. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ If test result is <u>negative</u>, return to school 3 days after symptoms are no longer present.</li> <li>➤ If test result is <u>positive</u>, follow return to school guidance for scenario #3.</li> </ul>
#3 – Positive COVID-19 PCR Test <u>with</u> Symptoms	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 3 days with no fever <b>and</b></li> <li>✓ improvement in symptoms <b>and</b></li> <li>✓ 10 days since symptoms first appeared</li> </ul>
#4 – Positive COVID-19 PCR Test <u>without</u> Symptoms	Yes	10 days after the PCR test was collected <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ If symptoms develop during 10 days, follow return to school guidance for scenario #3.</li> </ul>
#5 – Close Contact <u>with</u> Symptoms	Yes	Individual should be tested for COVID-19. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ If test result is <u>negative</u>, return to school 14 days after last exposure to the person with COVID-19 and symptoms have resolved.</li> <li>➤ If test result is <u>positive</u>, follow return to school guidance for scenario #3.</li> </ul>
#6 – Close Contact of COVID-19 <u>without</u> Symptoms	Yes	14 days after the date of last exposure to the person with COVID-19 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ If symptoms develop during 14 days, follow return to school guidance for scenario #5.</li> </ul>

#### Notifications

- Staff and students should notify the school if an absence is due to COVID-19.
- Schools should notify the Chester County Health Department by calling 610-344-6452 of any confirmed case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality. The Chester County Health Department will conduct an investigation and contact tracing, and provide appropriate guidance.





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- The Chester County Health Department will notify the school/coach if staff or students test positive, are exposed, or become ill and have to self-isolate.
- The Chester County Health Department will not notify the general community if staff or students test positive, are exposed, or become ill and have to self-isolate.