

Appendix T-1: COVID-19 Protocol for TK-12 Schools

Recent Updates (Changes highlighted in yellow)

8/11/2022

- Deleted sentence that remained in error contradicting new case reporting requirements. Positive test results no longer need to be reported to Public Health unless there is a cluster of 3 or more linked cases within a 14-day period.

8/10/2022

- For the upcoming 2022-2023 school year, masking policy for all students, staff and visitors will reflect current language in the LA County Health Officer Order. At this time, masks are strongly recommended for all persons in indoor public settings, including any indoor school setting. Well-fitting and better filtering masks (e.g., double masks, high filtration cloth masks, medical masks) and respirators (e.g., N95s, KN95s, KF94s) are highly recommended. Updates to school masking recommendations and requirements will be communicated through the Appendix T-1 COVID-19 Protocol and may reflect changes in health officer orders and/or changes in community and school conditions including: the level of community and/or school transmission, changes in illness severity associated with COVID-19, changes in vaccine effectiveness, and changes in state and/or federal guidance.
- Expanded section on student mask exemptions.
- Change in reporting method for COVID-19 exposures to the online secure web application, SPOT (Shared Portal for Outbreak Tracking) to align with Appendix T2.
- Changes in response and outbreak testing requirements for employers to align with updated [Cal/OSHA Emergency Temporary Standards \(ETS\)](#) and the [LA County Health Officer Order](#)
- As of August 1, 2022, reporting of individual cases of COVID-19 in the school setting is no longer required. Moving forward, any clusters of 3 or more linked cases within a 14-day period must be reported immediately and no later than 1 business day.

The County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health (DPH) is adopting a staged approach, supported by science and public health expertise, for schools serving students from transitional kindergarten through grade 12. In addition to the conditions imposed on schools by the State Public Health Officer and the California Department of Education, schools must also be in compliance with any requirements contained in this protocol.

Please note: This document may be updated as new information and resources become available. Go to [LAC | DPH | TK-12 Education Toolkit](#) for updates to this document.

This document starts with a discussion of current provisions for on-campus education in Los Angeles County (LAC), followed by information about safety strategies specific to the school environment.

This TK-12 protocol provides safety measures in five areas:

- (1) Required workplace policies and practices to protect employee and student health
- (2) Measures that allow for improved ventilation and reduced crowding
- (3) Measures to optimize infection control
- (4) Communication with employees, students and families of students and the public
- (5) Measures to ensure equitable access to critical services

NOTE: The terms “employees” and “staff” are used in these protocols to refer to individuals who work in a school facility in any capacity associated with teaching, coaching, student support, provision of therapies or personal assistance to individual students, facility cleaning or maintenance, administration, or any other activity required for the school to function. “Employees” or “staff” may include individuals who are: paid directly by the relevant school system, paid by entities acting as contractors to the school, paid by outside entities acting in collaboration with the school to serve students, paid by third parties to provide individual student services, or unpaid volunteers acting under school direction to carry out essential functions. The term “parents” is used in these protocols to refer to any persons serving as caregivers or guardians to students.

REQUIRED WORKPLACE POLICIES AND PRACTICES TO PROTECT STAFF (“EMPLOYEES”) AND STUDENTS (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

A. The school must have a COVID-19 Containment, Response and Control Plan that describes the school’s comprehensive approach to preventing and containing the spread of COVID-19 on campus. The Plan includes, but is not limited to the following elements:

- ☒ A designated COVID-19 Compliance Team that is responsible for establishing and enforcing all COVID-19 safety protocols and ensuring that staff and students receive education about COVID-19. One member of this team is designated as a liaison to DPH in the event of an outbreak on campus.
- ☒ Protocol outlining steps that will be taken immediately upon notification of school officials that any member of the school community (faculty, staff, student, or visitor) tests positive for COVID-19.
 - Immediate separation of the case from the school community to self-isolation at home if notification occurs while the case is on-site. The plan must allow for temporary, on-site isolation of the case if arrangements are needed for the person’s return to their home.
 - Fact sheets or other informational materials that are to be given to the case (or appropriate family member/s if the case is a child) covering regulations governing self-isolation and links to sites with further information.
- ☒ Protocol to initiate [Appendix T2: Exposure Management Plan for TK-12 Schools](#) **consistent with DPH guidance** that outlines procedures for:
 - Isolation of case(s)
 - Identification of persons exposed to cases at school
 - Actions for exposed staff and students per guidelines described in [Appendix T2: Exposure Management Plan for TK-12 Schools](#)
 - Assurance of access to testing for all exposed students **and staff** within the school **regardless of vaccination status.**
- ☒ **Adherence with New Case Reporting Guidance Effective August 1, 2022.** Schools are required to report clusters of 3 or more cases of COVID-19 in a classroom, office, or pre-defined or identifiable group (i.e., teammates, club members, cohort, etc.) who were on campus at any point within the 14 days prior to illness onset date. The illness onset date is the date COVID-19 symptoms started or the COVID-19 test date, whichever is earlier. All cluster notifications should be reported to DPH immediately, and no later than 1 business day of the school being notified of the cases by submitting a report online at: https://spot.cdph.ca.gov/s/?language=en_US or calling the TK-12 School COVID-19 Case Reporting Call Center. For any questions or assistance with reporting clusters, contact DPH by calling the TK-12 School COVID-19 Case Reporting Call Center or emailing acdc-education@ph.lacounty.gov. The Department of Public Health will work with the school to determine whether the cluster is an outbreak that will require a public health outbreak response.
- ☒ Contingency plans for full or partial closure of in-person school operations if that should become necessary based on an outbreak in the school or community. The school has developed and

- Persons who are hearing impaired, or communicating with a person who is hearing impaired, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication.
- Persons with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability or whose medical provider has determined that it is unsafe for them to wear a mask, may file for an exemption with their school. A certification from a state licensed health care provider attesting that the student has a condition or disability that precludes them from wearing a mask safely will be accepted as proof of exemption. The following licensed health care professionals may provide such attestations: Medical providers including physician (MD or DO), nurse practitioner (NP), or physician assistant (PA) practicing under the authority of a licensed physician; and licensed mental and behavioral health practitioners including Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), clinical psychologist (Psy.D.) Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC), or Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT).

At times when the Health Officer Order may require universal indoor masking, students who are exempt from wearing a mask should wear a face shield with a drape at the bottom, as long as their condition allows it. Schools should enter into an interactive process with individuals who are exempt from wearing a mask and may choose to implement alternative protective strategies when accommodating such students in school. Alternative strategies for consideration include: regular (weekly) screening testing of any unmasked students; strategies to improve ventilation in indoor spaces that accommodate unmasked students; seating unmasked students closer to open windows, exhaust fans, HVAC intake vents, and free standing air purifiers; and offering students and staff who share indoor air spaces with unmasked students upgraded respirator masks (e.g. N95, KN95, KF94).

- Mask exemption for close contacts: Regardless of universal indoor masking policy, the LA County Blanket Quarantine Order currently requires close contacts to a case who remain asymptomatic to wear a highly protective mask for 10 days after last exposure when around others while indoors, and to test at least once 3-5 days after exposure, if they wish to avoid quarantine at home. Students who are identified as close contacts with a valid mask exemption who wish to remain in school after an exposure must remain asymptomatic, monitor for symptoms for 10 days after last exposure, **and test negative for COVID-19 at least once 3-5 days after exposure and once 6-9 days after exposure. Students who are not able to meet these requirements and cannot wear a mask after exposure will need to remain at home for ten days after last exposure.** Furthermore, students, staff, and administrators at schools must cooperate with instructions from LA County DPH outbreak investigators who may implement temporary strategies that differ from these protocols if an outbreak occurs at the school. For example, students who are unable to mask may be instructed to stay home during an active outbreak for the safety of those students and the campus population as a whole.
- For employees who are unable to wear a mask, refer to Cal/OSHA ETS for return-to-work requirements after an exposure event.
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D. Communication of Protocol

- ☒ Copies of this Protocol have been distributed to all employees.
- ☒ A copy of this protocol is posted at the school office and uploaded to a public facing page on the school or district website.

- ☒ Consider offering physical education classes outdoors as much as possible
- ☒ Consider implementing school policies that promote physical distancing in locker rooms. Policies may include:
 - Staggering locker room access. Consider limiting the total time students and student athletes spend in locker rooms, for example, suggest student athletes shower at home after practice and games.
 - Creating alternative options for storage of student clothing, books, and other items.
- ☒ Consider implementing measures to increase physical distancing during school meals when students will be indoors and unmasked. These may include (check all that apply):
 - If students line up to pick up food, tape or other markings are used to promote distance between students. _____
 - If meals take place in a cafeteria, mealtimes are staggered to reduce the number of groups in the cafeteria at any one time. _____
 - If meals take place in a cafeteria, space between all tables/chairs has been increased to maintain distance between students while eating.

MEASURES TO OPTIMIZE INFECTION CONTROL (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY TO THE FACILITY)

- ☐ Employee screenings are recommended to be conducted before employees may enter the workspace, as well for students and visitors. Entry screening should include a check-in concerning cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing and fever or chills and if the employee is currently under isolation or quarantine orders. These screenings can be done in-person upon arrival at the site or remotely before arrival using a digital app or other approach.
 - Students, staff, and visitors who screen positive at entry or who report symptoms at any point during the school day should be reported to the COVID-19 Compliance Team. The COVID-19 Compliance Team will determine whether the individual should be excused from the facility according to DPH guidance on [Symptom and Exposure Screening Pathways](#) at Educational Institutions. Students who screen positive are provided a surgical mask, unless they are already wearing a mask of recommended quality and accompanied to a pre-selected isolation space where they can remain while a determination is made on exclusion and arrangements are made for their return home, where indicated.
- ☐ Pre-entry screening of adults and of middle and high school age students should include a question about close contact with anyone at home, school or elsewhere in the past 10 days who has tested positive for COVID-19. Anyone who is screened for recent exposure and reports close contact with an infected person should be managed per guidance in [Appendix T2: Exposure Management Plan for TK-12 Schools](#).
- ☐ Schools may consider a strategy for periodic testing for asymptomatic individuals with no known exposure. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) is not requiring any particular frequency or procedure for asymptomatic testing at this time. However, during times of high community transmission and increased hospitalizations, such as when LA County is in the CDC-designated High community level, regular testing of all students and staff regardless of vaccination status* is likely to yield a large number of positive cases that would otherwise remain unidentified and allow more significant transmission in the school setting to occur. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health has resources available for schools to assist with testing capacity. Inquiries regarding testing resources may be sent to ACDC-Education@ph.lacounty.gov.
 - *Screening testing is not recommended for persons who have recovered from laboratory confirmed COVID-19 within the past 90 days and are asymptomatic.

- Custodial and other staff responsible for cleaning and disinfecting school surfaces and objects are trained on manufacturer's directions, Cal/OSHA requirements for safe use and as required by the Healthy Schools Act, as applicable. ✓
 - Custodial staff and other staff responsible for cleaning and disinfecting are equipped with appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including gloves, eye protection, respiratory protection and other appropriate protective equipment as required by the product. ✓
 - All cleaning products are kept out of children's reach and stored in a space with restricted access. ✓
 - Ventilation is maximized during cleaning and disinfecting to the extent feasible. If using air conditioning, use the setting that brings in fresh air. Replace and check air filters and filtration systems to ensure optimal air quality. ✓
 - _____
 - Restrooms, lobbies, break rooms and lounges, and other common areas are cleaned at the frequency listed below. Routine cleaning is recommended at a frequency no less than once per day during periods of operation but may be done more frequently.
 - Restrooms: _____
 - Lobbies/entry areas: _____
 - Teacher/staff break rooms: _____
 - Classrooms: _____
 - Cafeteria dining area: _____
 - Cafeteria food preparation area: _____
 - Front office: _____
 - Other offices: _____
 - Other areas: _____
- ☒ Implementing measures to promote frequent hand washing by staff, students, and visitors is recommended. These may include (check all that apply):
- Students and staff are given frequent opportunities to wash their hands for 20 seconds with soap, rubbing thoroughly after application, and use no touch hand driers or paper towels (or single-use cloth towels) to dry hands thoroughly. ✓
 - Younger students are regularly scheduled for frequent handwashing breaks, including before and after eating, after toileting, after outdoor play, and before and after any group activity. ✓
 - Ethyl alcohol-based (contains at least 60% ethanol) hand sanitizer is made available to students and staff at strategic locations throughout the school where there is no sink or portable handwashing station (in or near classrooms, rooms in which support services are provided, music and art rooms). Ethyl alcohol-based hand sanitizer is preferred and should be used in school environments. Hand sanitizers with isopropyl alcohol as the main active ingredient are not used in the school, as it is more irritating and can be absorbed through the skin. ✓
 - Swallowing alcohol-based hand sanitizers can cause alcohol poisoning. Hand sanitizer is not out in the open and should be used with adult supervision for children under age 9. Faculty and staff have been made aware of the risk of ingestion and that they should call Poison Control at 1-800-222-1222 if there is reason to believe that a student has consumed hand sanitizer. ✓
 - Hand sanitizer, soap and water, tissues and trash cans are available at or near the entrance of the facility, at reception, and anywhere else inside the workplace or immediately outside where people have direct interactions. ✓

- It is strongly recommended that schools perform routine screening testing at least weekly of **all** individuals participating in the indoor group practice or performance if masks, bell covers, and distancing are not being implemented.
- When playing wind instruments outdoors, consider using bell covers for the openings of wind instruments, modified masks that allow direct contact with instrument mouthpieces, and specially designed bags with hand openings for woodwind instruments, as well as creating physical distance (6 feet recommended) between individuals playing wind instruments and other participants to minimize the spread of droplets and aerosols.
- When group instruction, practice, or performance occurs in a mix of indoor and outdoor settings, screening testing at least weekly is strongly recommended as described above for indoor settings if masking, bell covers, and distancing are not being implemented.
- For activities that generate more forceful expired respiratory droplets such as singing, increased distance between individuals, and engaging in these activities outside is strongly recommended. Routine testing of all members of the group at least weekly is strongly recommended if singers are vocalizing without masks and without recommended physical distancing while indoors.
- Use disposable absorbent pads or other receptacles, where possible, to catch the contents of spit valves or water keys, discard or clean properly after use.

N/A ☐ **Theater classes**

- It is strongly recommended that students and instructors in theater classes wear face masks at all times when indoors. It is recommended that there be increased physical distance if the participants are enunciating (for example, those in a theater workshop).
- Routine testing at least weekly is strongly recommended for all participants if masks are not used and physical distance is not maintained while practicing or rehearsing indoors.
- Consider holding virtual or outdoor rehearsals and performances instead of indoor. Wearing masks at all times for indoor activities is strongly recommended.

N/A ☐ **Dance classes**

- It is strongly recommended students and instructors wear face masks at all times while indoors, as practicable.
- For activities that generate a greater volume of respiratory droplets such as heavy exertion, increasing the distance between individuals and limiting such activities to outdoor space is strongly recommended.
- Routine screening testing at least weekly is strongly recommended for all participants if masks are not used and physical distance is not maintained during indoor activity.

N/A ☐ **Music Recording**

- Singing in sound booths/recording booths is permitted. Wearing face masks at all times is strongly recommended. Increased distance between singers and all others in the booth is strongly recommended, especially if the vocalist is not wearing a mask, due to the large amount of respiratory droplets released into a relatively small, confined indoor space.
- Playing of wind instruments inside a sound booth with others present in the booth is permitted. Refer to section above on music classes for recommendations on how to improve safety and

MEASURES THAT ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO CRITICAL SERVICES

- ☒ A plan for updating Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and 504 Plans of students with special needs has been developed to ensure that education can continue without undue risk to the student.
 - This plan includes a method for proactive school contact with parents at the beginning of the school year to assure that issues related to the child's education and safety are being addressed.
 - Modifications to individual IEPs and 504 plans may involve remote learning, modifications to the classroom to accommodate student needs, school attendance in a separate area with few students, or a hybrid approach combining in-class and remote learning.
 - Steps taken to modify IEPs and 504 plans to assure student safety comply with relevant provisions of state and federal law.
- ☒ Administrative services or operations that can be offered remotely (e.g., class registration, form submission, etc.) have been moved on-line.

Any additional measures not included above should be listed on separate pages, which the business should attach to this document.

You may contact the following person with any questions or comments about this protocol:

Business Contact

Name:

Phone Number:

Date Last Revised:

Diem Johnson

661-251-2000

8/16/22