

COVID-19 Exposure Management Plan Guidance in TK-12 Schools: Appendix T2

Recent Updates: (Changes highlighted in yellow)

8/8/2022

- 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.
- Strongly recommends identification of close contacts in classrooms and similar sized indoor spaces align with CDPH's close contact definition (individuals who shared indoor airspace with the infected person for 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period).
- Clarifies requirements for student close contacts who are asymptomatic and have mask exemptions for remaining on site after a COVID-19 exposure.

A targeted public health response to contain COVID-19 exposures at a community-level can help maximize the impact of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (DPH) COVID-19 response.

Primary and Secondary Schools serving students from Transitional Kindergarten through Grade 12 (TK-12 Schools) are trusted community partners that can help DPH improve the timeliness and impact of the Public Health response through rapid initiation of a COVID-19 Exposure Management Plan (EMP). Immediate implementation of an EMP when a single case of COVID-19 is identified at a school can accelerate the ability to contain the spread of infection and prevent outbreaks from occurring.

The steps for managing exposures to COVID-19 cases at TK-12 Schools are described below and summarized in Appendix A. Because TK-12 Schools will vary in the level of resources available for COVID-19 exposure management, *required* steps are the minimum elements that must be included in the EMP. *Recommended* steps include optional elements for exposure management where school resources are sufficient. The requirements and recommendations presented are specific to TK-12 instructional and non-instructional facilities serving TK-12 Schools. For the purposes of this plan, the word "School" applies to both TK-12 instructional and non-instructional facilities. Additional resources for TK-12 Schools can be located in the [TK-12 School COVID-19 Toolkit](#).

Exposure Management Planning Prior to Identifying 1 COVID-19 Case at School

- ☑ **Required:** A designated School COVID-19 Compliance Officer that is responsible for establishing and enforcing all COVID-19 prevention and exposure management protocols and ensuring that staff and students receive education about COVID-19. A designated COVID-19 Compliance Officer who serves as a liaison to DPH for sharing site-level information to facilitate public health action.
- ☑ **Required:** A plan for all students, employees, and visitors who (1) have symptoms consistent with COVID-19, (2) were exposed at school, or (3) are at a school with an active public health investigation to have access to testing or be tested for COVID-19.
- ☑ **Required:** A plan to report all known COVID-19 hospitalizations and/or deaths among students or staff to DPH by sending a notification to ACDC-Education@ph.lacounty.gov.
- ☑ **Recommended:** Seating charts in classrooms and participant rosters for students and staff participating in school extracurricular programs to facilitate identification of close contacts of persons

considered infectious from 2 days before their test was taken until their isolation ends.

- Close Contact: Persons may be considered to have been exposed to a case (close contact) during the infectious period if they shared the same indoor airspace at school with the infected person for 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. **This definition of close contact is strongly recommended for identification of student close contacts in classrooms and similar sized indoor spaces.** This definition is required for identification of staff close contacts per Cal/OSHA ([COVID-19 Prevention ETS](#)). In large indoor airspaces, students and staff considered exposed may be limited to 1) those in a pre-defined or identifiable group (e.g., teammates, club members, cohort, etc.) or 2) those within 6 feet of the infected person for 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period within that large indoor airspace.
 - Alternatively, schools may limit designation of student close contacts to students who were within 6 feet of the infected person for 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period and may apply this definition in all settings, including classrooms.

NOTE: Persons with an outdoor exposure at school are not considered close contacts.

- ☒ **Required:** The School Compliance Officer must notify Public Health of all clusters of 3 or more cases of COVID-19 in a classroom, office, or other pre-defined or identifiable group (i.e., cohort, team/club, etc.) who were on campus at any point within the 14 days prior to illness onset date (school-associated cases). Cases include employees, children/students, and visitors with confirmed COVID-19.
- ☒ **Required:** All school-associated COVID-19 clusters should be reported online through the secure web application, the Shared Portal for Outbreak Tracking (SPOT): https://spot.cdph.ca.gov/s/?language=en_US. For reporting multiple cases, schools can submit their reports using the "Bulk Upload Template" located within the SPOT Portal. All clusters with information for the cases should be reported to Public Health immediately, and no later than 1 business day of being notified of the third, or last, case in the cluster.
 - Schools that need assistance on COVID-19 case reporting or other exposure management processes can call the TK-12 School COVID-19 Case Reporting Call Center, Monday through Friday from 8:00AM to 5:00PM. School administrators that do not have the Call Center number should contact ACDC-Education@ph.lacounty.gov for the number.
- ☒ **Required:** All close contacts to a COVID-19 positive case at school are notified by the School Compliance Officer of the exposure and provided with actions to take.
 - Notification can be done using an individual notification or group notification method where individuals are notified of their exposure and actions to take. Refer to the sample exposure notification letter (posted on ph.lacounty.gov/EducationToolkitTK12) for the appropriate templates that can be adapted for this notification.
 - If applying the within 6 feet of an infected person for 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period definition for identifying close contacts in a classroom or similar size settings, all other individuals who shared in the same indoor airspace with the infected person for 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period must be notified of a potential exposure and provided with recommended actions to take.

Actions for close contacts

- Asymptomatic close contacts are not required to quarantine; they may remain on campus if they follow all [requirements for close contacts](#). Specifically: (1) monitor for symptoms; (2) wear a [highly protective mask](#) around others indoors, except when eating or drinking, for 10 days after the last date of exposure; (3) test with an FDA-authorized viral COVID-19 test (e.g., PCR or Antigen test, including at-home tests) within 3-5 days since the last date of exposure.*

of the ETS, an over-the-counter (OTC) COVID-19 test may be both self-administered and self-read if verification of the results, such as a time and date stamped photograph of the result or an OTC test that uses digital reporting with time and date stamped results, is provided. Additionally, staff may request masks and respirators from their employer at no cost to staff. See [Wear a Mask and Know your Rights](#) for more information.

☑ *Required:* Schools are required to have a plan to facilitate COVID-19 response testing for persons who have an exposure at school. Staff and students who are tested must inform the school of the test results. Testing resources include: School Testing Programs, Employee Health Services or Occupational Health Services, Student Health Center, Personal Healthcare Providers, LA City and County Testing Sites: covid19.lacounty.gov/testing, and [Community-Based Testing Sites](#) (local health centers and pharmacies). Individuals who need assistance finding a medical provider can call the LA County Information line 2-1-1, which is available 24/7.

☑ *Required:* The School Compliance Officer will work with Public Health to determine whether the cases within the reported cluster are epidemiologically linked, meaning that the affected individuals were present at some point in the same setting during the same time period while either or both were infectious.* Determination of epidemiological links between cases may require further investigation to assess exposure history and identify all possible locations and persons that may have been exposed to the case while infectious at the site.

*A case is considered to be infectious from 2 days before symptoms first appeared until isolation ends. A person with a positive COVID-19 test but no symptoms is considered to be infectious from 2 days before their test was taken until isolation ends.

- Epidemiologically linked cases include persons with identifiable connections to each other such as sharing a physical space (e.g., in a classroom, school event, sports team, other extracurricular activities, school transportation, office site), indicating a higher likelihood of linked spread of disease in that setting rather than sporadic transmission from the broader community. If epidemiological links exist, DPH will advise the school on important steps to take and communications to students and employees on precautions to take to prevent further spread at the school, including implementation of site- specific interventions for infection control. Schools should contact DPH for assistance in determining whether cases are epidemiologically linked by emailing ACDC-Education@ph.lacounty.gov or by calling the TK-12 School COVID-19 Case Reporting Call Center.
- Public Health will determine if the outbreak criteria have been met: at least 3 confirmed cases of COVID-19 within a 14-day period of each other in a specified group* with members who are epidemiologically linked, do not share a household, and are not a close contact of each other outside of the campus.
 - If outbreak criteria are not met, DPH will advise the school to continue with routine exposure management.
 - If outbreak criteria are met and DPH recommends an outbreak response, DPH will notify the school that an outbreak investigation has been activated and a public health investigator will communicate directly with the school to coordinate the response.

*Specified group include persons that share a common membership at school (e.g., classroom, school event, sport teams, other school extracurricular activities, school transportation, office site). Epidemiological links require the infected persons to have been present at some point in the same setting during the same time period while infectious.

APPENDIX A: Steps for Managing Exposures to COVID-19 Cases at School

1 Case	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>Required:</i> School notifies case to follow isolation instructions. 2) <i>Required:</i> School identifies school close contacts. Schools can call the TK-12 School COVID-19 Case Reporting Call Center for assistance with identification of close contacts and exposure management. 3) <i>Required:</i> School notifies school close contacts of exposure.
2 Cases	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>Required:</i> School notifies cases to follow isolation instructions. 2) <i>Required:</i> School identifies and notifies school close contacts of exposures. 3) <i>Recommended:</i> If the 2 cases occurred within 14 days of each other, school consults with DPH to determine whether the cases have epidemiological (epi) links. If epi links exist, school implements additional infection control measures. Schools can call the TK-12 School COVID-19 Case Reporting Call Center or email ACDC-Education@ph.lacounty.gov for assistance in determining whether cases have epidemiological links.
3+ Cases	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>Required:</i> School notifies cases to follow isolation instructions. 2) <i>Required:</i> School identifies and notifies school contacts of exposures. 3) <i>Required:</i> If a cluster of 3 or more cases in a classroom, office, or in a pre-defined group (i.e., cohort, team, or club, etc.) who were on campus at any point within the 14 days prior to illness onset date, the school immediately notifies DPH by calling the TK-12 School COVID-19 Case Reporting Call Center and reporting online at: https://spot.cdph.ca.gov/s/?language=en_US. 4) <i>Required:</i> DPH determines if the outbreak criteria have been met. If a DPH outbreak investigation is activated, a public health investigator will contact the school to coordinate the outbreak investigation. 5) <i>Recommended:</i> School sends general notification to inform the school community of the cluster(s) and precautions taken to prevent spread.