

# HAMILTON COUNTY

## School Reference Guide for COVID-19

— 2020 —



PREVENT. PROMOTE. PROTECT.





# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This document contains Hamilton County Public Health's requirements, recommendations, and guidelines for suspected, probable or confirmed case of COVID-19. These guidelines are based on current data and guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Ohio Department of Health. These guidelines are subject to change.

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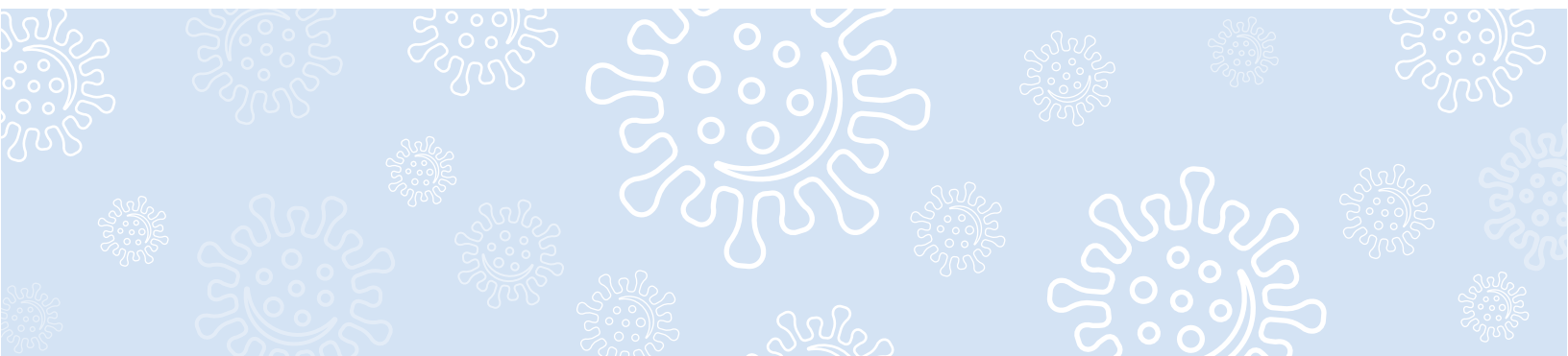
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## TO REPORT A CASE OF COVID-19 PLEASE CONTACT

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# INTRODUCTION

This document is intended for use by schools that fall within Hamilton County Public Health's jurisdictions, as shown in the map to the right.

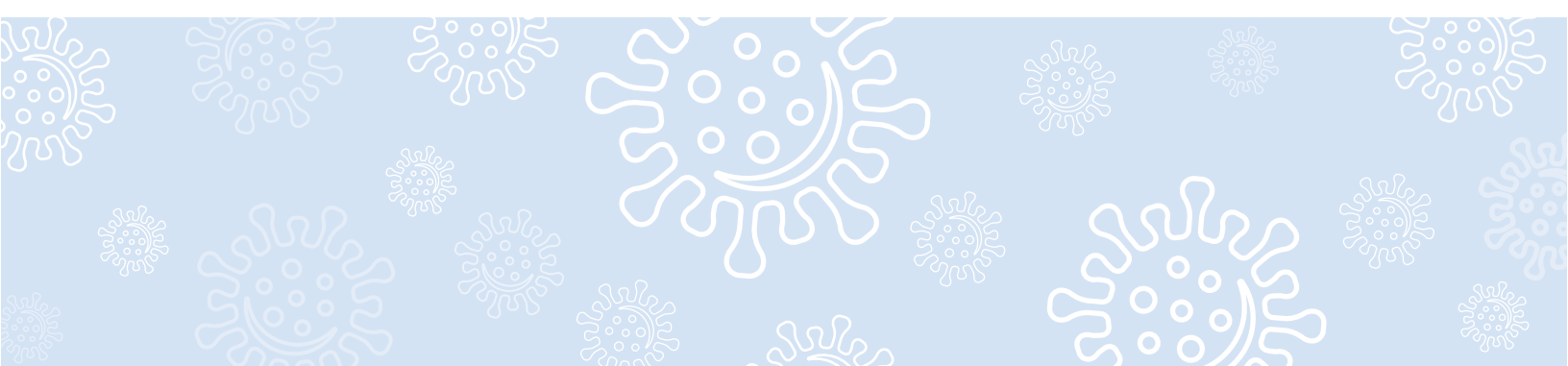
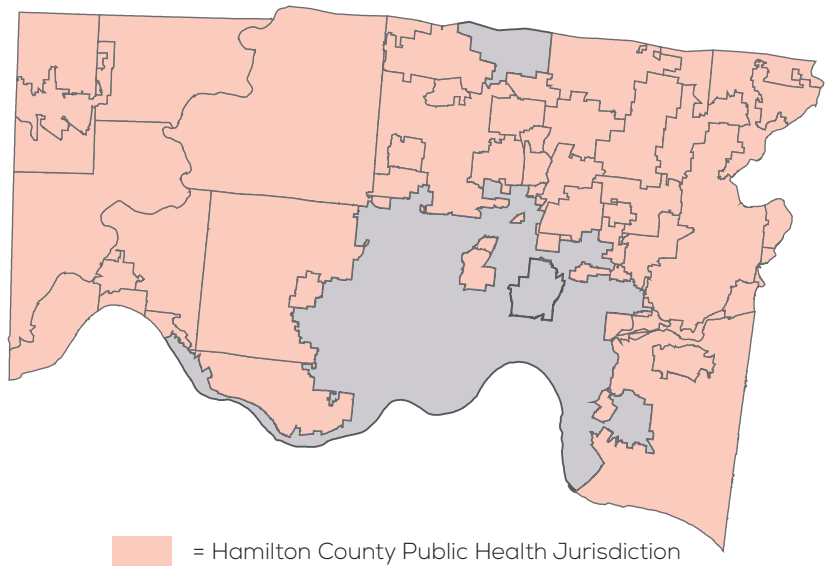
This document is intended to be used as a tool to help educational leaders in Hamilton County respond to suspected, probable or confirmed cases of COVID-19 in school grades K-12.

This document does not outline all detailed public health responses to cases of COVID-19. For additional information on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and infection control items please visit:

- [Ohio's Reset and Restart Education](#)
- [COVID-19 Health and Prevention Guidance for Ohio K-12 Schools](#)

This document outlines protocols for school staff members to follow when responding to positive COVID-19 test results. These protocols are meant to help staff members identify the next steps in responding to students or staff members that are suspected, probable or confirmed cases of COVID-19.

Figure 1. Hamilton County Public Health Jurisdictions



# ESTABLISHING A POINT OF CONTACT

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, the school should establish a Point of Contact. The Point of Contact will be the liaison between Hamilton County Public Health's Communicable Disease Specialists or COVID-19 Outbreak Mitigation Team Member and the school. The following is an example of the Point of Contact form that will be completed and kept on file by both the school and Hamilton County Public Health.

CONTACT INFORMATION	
School Point of Contact	Hamilton County Public Health Communicable Disease Specialist or COVID-19 Outbreak Mitigation Team Member
School Name:	
Name:	Name:
Phone Number:	Phone Number:
Email Address:	Email Address:

# SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

Individuals who were diagnosed with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported. These symptoms can range from mild symptoms to more severe illnesses. Symptoms may appear up to 14 days after exposure to the virus. However, some individuals may have symptoms appear in as little as two days after exposure to the virus. Individuals with the following symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever ( $\geq 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$  measured or subjective fever) ;
- Chills;
- Shortness of breath;
- Difficulty breathing;
- Fatigue;
- Muscle or body aches;
- Headache;
- New loss of taste or smell;
- Sore throat;
- Congestion or runny nose;
- Nausea or Vomiting;
- Diarrhea.



This list does not include all possible symptoms, and may continue to be updated as we learn more about COVID-19.

## WHEN TO SEEK EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE

Look out for any **emergency warning signs\*** for COVID-19. If any individual is experiencing any of the following signs, **seek emergency medical care immediately**:

- Trouble breathing;
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest;
- New confusion;
- Inability to wake or stay awake;
- Blueish lips or face.

**Call 911 or call ahead to your local emergency facility.** Alert the operator that you are seeking care for someone who has or may have COVID-19.

This list does not include all possible symptoms. Please call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning.

# TRANSMISSION OF COVID-19

The virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person, through respiratory droplets. Respiratory droplets are produced when an individual infected with COVID-19 coughs, sneezes or talks. These droplets can land in the mouth or nose of other people who are within close distance of the infected individual and can be inhaled into the lungs. Spread is more likely to occur between people who are in close contact with one another, within approximately six feet from each other.

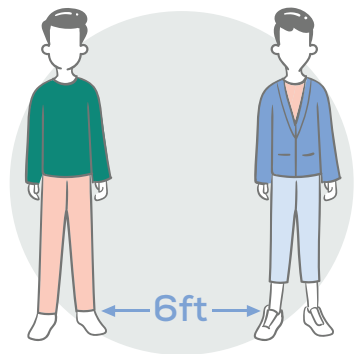


The virus that causes COVID-19 spreads very easily and can be sustained between people. Recent studies suggest that COVID-19 may be spread by individuals who are not displaying symptoms. It may be also be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a contaminated surface or object and then touching their mouths, nose or possibly eyes. However, this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

## PERIOD OF COMMUNICABILITY

It is unknown how long the virus can be passed from person-to-person. Based on what we know of similar human coronaviruses, COVID-19 may be shed after the resolution of symptoms. It is believed that a person who is infected with COVID-19 is most contagious while symptomatic and for no longer than 10 days after symptom onset.

## CLOSE CONTACTS



Avoid close contact

A close contact is any individual (e.g., students or staff members) that has been within six feet of a case of COVID-19 for 15 minutes or more during the infectious period.

Identifying close contacts begins 48 hours before the onset of symptoms or 48 hours before the date of the COVID-19 test if the individual never developed symptoms of COVID-19. These close contacts will include students and staff members with or without face coverings.

Hamilton County Public Health's COVID-19 Outbreak Response Team and the Point of Contact at the school will work together to determine who will be considered a close contact.



# TYPES OF COVID-19 CASES

*Hamilton County Public Health strongly recommends that all symptomatic students and staff be tested for COVID-19. An individual who does opt to receive the recommended testing should remain out of school until the test results are known.*

There are three main types of COVID-19 cases: suspected, probable and confirmed cases of COVID-19.

## SUSPECTED COVID-19 CASES

A suspected case of COVID-19 is where a student, parent, caregiver, or staff member is ill with symptoms of COVID-19 and does **not** have any known exposure to a known case of COVID-19 or laboratory confirmed evidence of infection (i.e., COVID-19 test). If a student or staff member falls into the suspected case of COVID-19 group, they would be excused from school in accordance with the existing school illness management policies. Students or staff members who are sick with contagious illnesses should not attend school, however, most illnesses do not require the same level or length of isolation that COVID-19 does. Excluding students from school for longer than what is called for in existing school policies (e.g., fever free without medication for 24 hours) based on COVID-19 symptoms alone risks repeated, long-term unnecessary student absence.

Additional information from the CDC can be found using the following link:

[Screening K-12 Students for Symptoms of COVID-19](#)

## PROBABLE COVID-19 CASES

A probable case of COVID-19 is where a student, parent, caregiver, or staff members has had exposure to another case of COVID-19 (probable or confirmed), does not wish to or did not receive a COVID-19 test, **AND** meets symptoms from either Category 1 or Category 2 (shown below). The determination of a probable case will be made by Hamilton County Public Health using guidance provided by CDC and the Ohio Department of Health.

### CATEGORY 1

One of the following symptoms

- ☐ Cough
- ☐ Shortness of breath
- ☐ Difficulty breathing

### CATEGORY 2

Two of the following symptoms

- ☐ Fever ( $\geq 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$  measured or subjective)
- ☐ Chills
- ☐ Rigors (chills with shaking)
- ☐ Myalgia (body aches)
- ☐ Headache
- ☐ Sore throat
- ☐ New loss of taste or smell



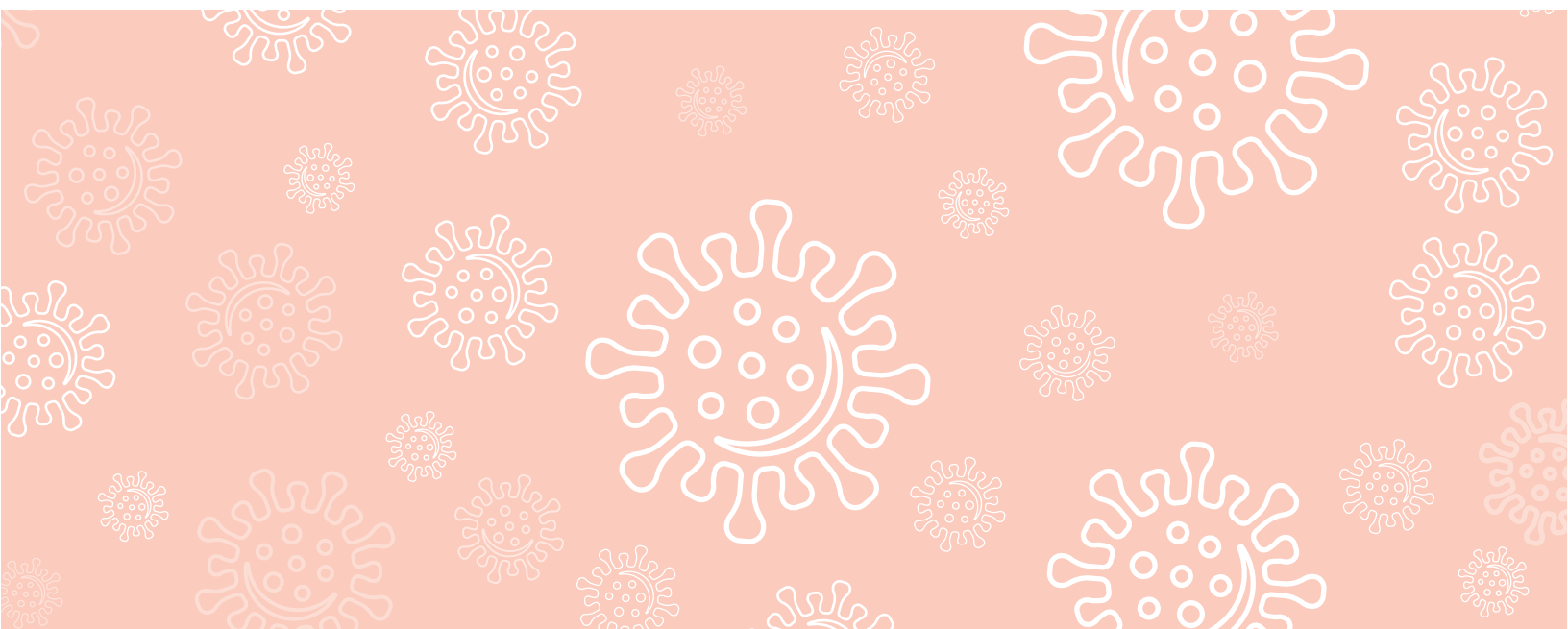
## CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASES

A confirmed case of COVID-19 is where a student, parent, caregiver, or staff member has laboratory confirmed evidence of infection (i.e., COVID-19 test). A confirmed case of COVID-19 can be further classified by being either a symptomatic confirmed case of COVID-19 or an asymptomatic case of COVID-19. A symptomatic confirmed case of COVID-19 is where the individual is showing signs and symptoms of COVID-19 **and** has laboratory confirmed evidence of infection (i.e., COVID-19 test). An asymptomatic confirmed case of COVID-19 is where the individual has laboratory confirmed evidence of infection (i.e., COVID-19 test) and never developed symptoms of COVID-19.

## IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO COVID-19

Be alert for any symptoms of COVID-19. Watch out for fever, cough, shortness of breath, or any of the other symptoms of COVID-19. Take your temperature and follow the guidance provided by CDC and your local health department.

Most people who get COVID-19 will be able to recover at home. However, some people may need emergency medical attention. If you need emergency medical attention **call 911 or call ahead to your local emergency facility**. Alert the operator that you are seeking care for someone who has or may have COVID-19.



# ISOLATION REQUIREMENTS

Isolation helps to protect the public by preventing exposure to people who already have COVID-19. Isolation separates people who are sick with a contagious disease, such as COVID-19, from people who are not sick.

If an individual is confirmed or thought to have COVID-19 (e.g., a probable case of COVID-19), and has shown symptoms of COVID-19, that person shall be required to isolate until the following criteria are met:

- At least 10 days\* have passed since symptom onset **and**,
- The individual has been fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication **and**,
- Their other symptoms have improved.

If an individual is confirmed to have COVID-19, and has never developed symptoms of COVID-19 (asymptomatic), that person shall be required to isolate until the following criteria are met:

- At least 10 days\* have passed since the date of their positive COVID-19 Test (RT-PCR test for SARS-CoV-2 RNA, **not** the antigen or antibody test) and has not developed symptoms of COVID-19.

\*A limited number of individuals with severe illness may still spread the virus beyond the 10 days, that may warrant extending the duration of isolation for up to 20 days after symptom onset or COVID-19 testing date. These may include, but are not limited to, individuals who were hospitalized and required oxygen or ventilation, and immunocompromised individuals.

# QUARANTINE REQUIREMENTS

Quarantine, much like isolation, also helps to prevent exposing the public to individuals who may have COVID-19. Quarantine separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease, such as COVID-19, to see if they become sick.

If an individual is a close contact of a case of COVID-19, that individual will be quarantined for 14 days from the date after the last exposure (date they were last around the case). The individual shall remain in quarantine for the complete 14 days even if they receive a COVID-19 test and the results are negative. However, there are instances in which the individual can be excluded from quarantine. For these exclusions and a detailed definition of close contacts, please refer to the COVID-19 Exclusions section of this report starting on page 17.

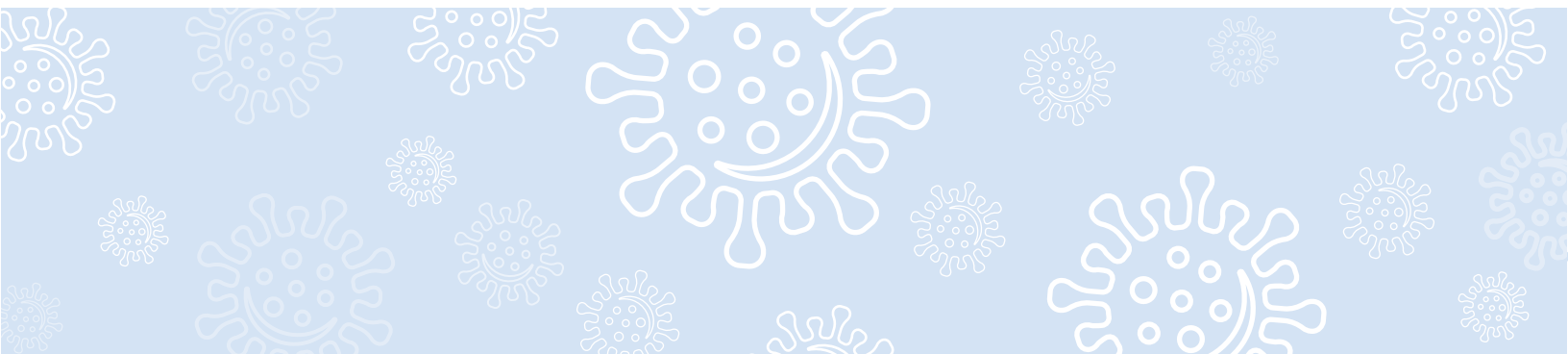


# RISK ASSESSMENTS

The risk of spread for COVID-19 increases as a student or staff member interacts with more people. The longer the interaction, the higher the risk of spread. The risk of COVID-19 spread increases in the setting is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 2. Risk Assessment Level and Type of Risk

LOWEST RISK	Students and teachers engage in virtual-only classes, activities, and events.
MODERATE RISK	Small, in-person classes, activities, and events. These small groups of students stay together with the same teacher throughout the school day and do not mix with other students. Students remain at least 6 feet apart and do not share objects.
HIGHEST RISK	Full-sized, in-person classes, activities, and events. Students are not spaced apart, share classroom materials or supplies, and mix between classes and activities.

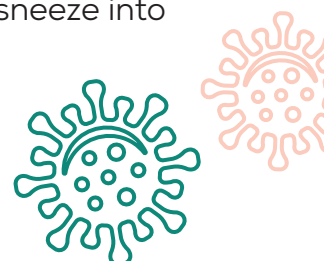
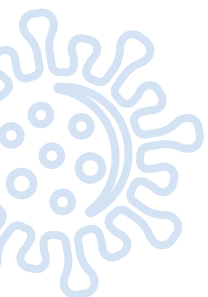


# SAFETY PLAN (INFECTION PREVENTION & CONTROL MEASURES)

Implementation should be guided by what is feasible, practical, acceptable, and tailored to fit the needs of each school. Schools in Hamilton County should consider the implementation of several strategies to encourage healthy behaviors in students and staff to prevent COVID-19.

The recommended strategies to help prevent the spread of illness, are:

- Students and staff should stay home if they are ill.
- Avoid close contact with anyone who may be ill, encourage students and staff to stay at home as much as possible, and ensure there is adequate distance between yourself and other people.
- Schools should develop policies that encourage sick students and staff to stay at home without the fear of reprisal and ensure staff, students, and families are aware of these policies
  - Consider not having perfect attendance awards, not assessing the school based on absenteeism, and consider offering virtual learning and telework options if feasible.
- Educate students, staff, and families about when to stay home and when they can return to work.
  - Actively encourage students and staff who are ill or who have had recent close contact with a person who has COVID-19 to stay home.
  - Students and staff should stay home if they have tested positive for or are showing symptoms of COVID-19.
  - Schools should work with Hamilton County Public Health to determine when staff can return to work.
- Hand Hygiene
  - Teach and reinforce hand-washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and increase monitoring to ensure adherence among students and staff.
    - If soap and water are not readily available, alcohol-based hand sanitizers can be used.
    - The alcohol-based hand sanitizer should contain at least 60% alcohol
- Respiratory Etiquette
  - Encourage staff and students to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue.
  - Used tissues should be thrown away in the trash and hands washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
  - If tissues are not available, encourage students to cough or sneeze into their elbow.



## ○ Cloth face coverings

- Teach and reinforce the use of cloth face coverings. Face coverings may be challenging for students, especially younger students, to wear in an all-day setting such as school.
- Face coverings must be worn by students in grades K-12 and staff, and are most essential in times when physical distancing is difficult.
- Individuals should be frequently reminded not to touch the face covering and to wash their hands frequently.
- Information should be provided to staff, students, and families on the proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings.
  - Cloth face coverings should not be placed on:
    - Children younger than two years old.
    - Anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious.
    - Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance.
- Cloth face coverings are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected but does not have symptoms.
- Cloth face coverings are not surgical masks, respirators or other medical personal protective equipment.



## ○ Adequate supplies

- Support healthy hygiene behaviors by providing adequate supplies such as:
  - Soap
  - Alcohol-based hand sanitizer
  - Paper towels
  - Tissues
  - Disinfectant wipes
  - Cloth face coverings
  - No-touch/foot-pedal trash cans

## ○ Signs and Messages

- Post signs in highly visible locations that promote everyday protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs.
  - How to properly perform hand washing.
  - How to properly wear a cloth face covering.
- Broadcast regular announcements on reducing the spread of COVID-19 on PA systems.
- Include messages about behaviors that prevent the spread of COVID-19 when communicating with students, staff, and families on school websites, in emails and in school social media accounts.
- Find free CDC approved print and digital resources on the CDC's website: [www.cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)

## HAND HYGIENE

Students and staff should perform frequent hand hygiene through the day. Reinforce the use of hand sanitizer by providing stations through the school premises and assign continuous oversight to ensure hand hygiene stations are regularly refilled.

Create habits of performing hand hygiene at regular intervals during the day, but especially in the following situations:

- Upon entering the building
- When returning to the classroom
- After using the restroom
- After sneezing, coughing, or blowing the nose
- Before and after touching the face
- Before eating or handling food
- After a break
- After handling potentially contaminated objects
- Whenever visibly soiled

Hand-washing with soap and water is the most effective method against COVID-19. Scrub hands together for at least 20 seconds, covering all surfaces. Dry using a single-use drying material or air dry.

Alcohol-based hand sanitizer is another great option when soap and water are not immediately available as long as hands are not visibly soiled. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer should be 60–95% alcohol to be the most effective.

### WASH YOUR HANDS TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF GERMS



WET HANDS AND  
APPLY SOAP



RUB PALM TO PALM



RUB PALMS WITH  
FINGERS INTERLACED



SCRUB THE BACK  
OF YOUR HANDS



CLEAN BASE  
OF THUMBS



WASH FINGERTIPS  
AND FINGERNAILS



RINSE HANDS  
WITH WATER



DRY HAND WITH  
TOWEL



YOUR HANDS ARE  
NOW CLEAN



## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

All students in grades K-12 are required to wear masks. Exemptions may be made for students and staff with medical conditions that prevent wearing masks. Masks may help prevent people who have COVID-19 from spreading the virus to those around them. When widely used by people in public settings, masks help to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Masks should **not** be worn by children under the age of two, or anyone who has trouble breathing, who is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

Hamilton County Public Health recommends masks as a barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from traveling into the air and onto other people when the person wearing the mask coughs, sneezes, talks or raises his/her voice.

This recommendation is based on the CDC's guidance and scientific knowledge about the role respiratory droplets play in the spread of COVID-19. Emerging evidence from clinical and laboratory studies shows that masks help reduce the spread of droplets when worn over the mouth and nose.



## FACE COVERING DO'S AND DONT'S

### DO:

- ✓ Make sure you can breathe through it.
- ✓ Wear it whenever going out in public.
- ✓ Make sure it covers your nose and mouth.
- ✓ Wash after using.

### DON'T:

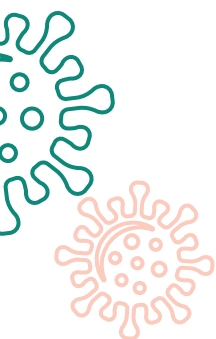
- ✗ Use if under two years old.
- ✗ Use surgical masks or other personal protective equipment intended for healthcare workers.

## WATER FOUNTAIN USE

To minimize the risk of COVID-19 and diseases associated with water, take steps to ensure that all water systems and features (e.g., sink faucets, drinking fountains, decorative fountains) are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown. CDC provides guidance related to mold and Legionella that can be found using the following link:

[Guidance for Reopening Buildings After Prolonged Shutdown or Reduced Operations](#)

Drinking fountains should be cleaned and sanitized. The proximity of people's mouths and noses to drinking fountains while they are in use creates an unacceptable level of risk for spreading COVID-19. Drinking fountains should not be allowed for direct drinking access. If appropriate precautions can be taken, limited access to a small number of drinking fountains can be allowed exclusively for filling water bottles. However, Hamilton County Public Health strongly encourages staff and students to bring their own water to minimize the use and touching of water fountains.



Precautions for using drinking fountains to fill water bottles:

- Clean and sanitize drinking fountains frequently.
- Consider restricting use to faculty and staff only.
- Do not allow water bottles to come into contact with the nozzle when refilling.
- Test the water flow and let the water flow for 10 seconds to allow for fresh, clean water to come through before drinking.
- If the fountain requires you to push a button or lever, clean the surface before and after, or use your elbow.
- Clean your hands afterward with soap and water, or alcohol-based hand sanitizer if hand washing facilities are not readily available.

## CLEANING AND DISINFECTION METHODS

Cleaning an area will remove germs, dirt, and impurities on the surface, while disinfecting will kill germs on surfaces, further reducing the risk of spreading infection.

### **How to Clean & Disinfect Exposed Areas**

To ensure the proper cleaning and disinfecting of any areas that may have been exposed to COVID-19:

- Wear disposable gloves to clean and disinfect.
- Clean the surfaces using soap and water first, then use a disinfectant.
- Follow the instructions on the label to ensure the safe and effective use of the product.
- Practice routine cleaning on frequently touched surfaces.  
More frequent cleaning and disinfection may be required based on the level of use.



Diluted household bleach solutions can also be used if appropriate for the surface. The bleach solution must be at least 1000ppm sodium hypochlorite or a concentration of 5%-6%. To prepare a bleach solution for cleaning and disinfecting you want to:

- Check to ensure that the product is not past its expiration date.
- Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser.
- Mix bleach solution using the following instructions:
  - 5 Tablespoons ( $\frac{1}{3}$  cup) bleach per gallon of room temperature water or,
  - 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of room temperature water.

For a list of EPA approved products and instructions, please see:

[Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2](#)

### **Timing and Location of General Cleaning and Disinfection**

Staff members should clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (e.g., playground equipment, door handles, sink handles, drinking fountains) within the school and on school buses at least daily or between use as much as possible. Use of shared objects (e.g., gym or physical education equipment, art supplies, toys, games) should be limited when possible or cleaned between use. The CDC offers guidance on how to safely clean and disinfect school buses or other vehicles in [What Bus Transit Operators Need to Know About COVID-19](#).

Cleaning Tips for Schools that will help stop the spread of germs:

- Develop a schedule for increased routine cleaning and disinfection.
- Ensure safe and correct use and storage of cleaning and disinfection products, including storing products securely away from children.
- Use products that meet EPA disinfection criteria.
- Cleaning products should not be used near children, and staff should ensure that there is adequate ventilation when using these products to prevent children or themselves from inhaling toxic fumes.

### **Timing and Location of General Cleaning and Disinfection After Persons Suspected/Confirmed to Have COVID-19 Have Been in the Facility**

If a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19 has been identified, the school should take these steps to clean and disinfect the exposed area:

- Close off areas visited by the ill persons.
- Open outside doors and windows and use ventilating fans to increase air circulation in the area.
- Wait 24 hours or as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection.
- Cleaning staff should clean and disinfect all areas such as offices, classrooms, bathrooms, common areas, and shared electronic equipment, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.

*If it has been more than 7 days since the person with suspected/confirmed COVID-19 visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection are not necessary.*

### **Hard (Non-porous) Surfaces**

If hard surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water before disinfection. Once the surface is clean and dried, it should be disinfected with an effective disinfectant. Please follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfecting products for concentration, application method, and contact time, and to ensure safe and effective disinfection use.

### **Soft (Porous) Surfaces**

If soft surfaces such as carpeted floors, rugs, and drapes become dirty, clean visible contamination (if present). Clean items with appropriate cleaners indicated for use on the surfaces. If applicable, launder the item by the manufacturer's instructions using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and then dry items completely.

### **Linens, Clothing, and Other Items that go in the Laundry**

Wash items as appropriate by the manufacturer's instructions. If possible, launder items using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and dry items completely. Dirty laundry that has been in contact with an ill person can be washed with other people's items. To minimize the possibility of dispersing virus through the air, do not shake dirty laundry.

*Clean and disinfect hampers or other carts for transporting laundry according to the guidance above for hard or soft surfaces.*

## Electronics

For electronics such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls, and ATMs, remove visible contamination if present. Please follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products. If no manufacturer guidance is available, consider the use of alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol to disinfect touch screens. Dry surfaces thoroughly to avoid the pooling of liquids.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANING CHECKLIST

Schools can use the following checklist to help identify frequently touched surfaces and objects that should be cleaned.

### COVID-19 Cleaning & Disinfection Checklist

**Clean and disinfect at least daily (or between use as much as possible) frequently touched surfaces and objects such as:**

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Face shields*            | <input type="checkbox"/> Handrails                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Push-buttons on vending machines & elevators |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Door knobs & handles     | <input type="checkbox"/> Light switches                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Shared toys                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stair rails              | <input type="checkbox"/> Bus seats & handrails                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Shared remote controls                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom desks & chairs | <input type="checkbox"/> Sink handles & faucets                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Shared telephones                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lunchroom tables         | <input type="checkbox"/> Drinking fountains (if open)                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Shared desktops                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lunchroom chairs         | <input type="checkbox"/> Playground equipment                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Shared computer keyboards and mice^          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Countertops              | <input type="checkbox"/> Handles on equipment (i.e., athletic equipment) |   |

\*Face shields should be cleaned following manufacturer's instructions. 1) While wearing gloves, carefully wipe the inside, followed by the outside of the face shield or goggles using a clean cloth saturated with neutral detergent solution or cleaner wipe. 2) Carefully wipe the outside of the face shield or goggles using a wipe or clean cloth saturated with EPA-registered hospital disinfectant solution. 3) Wipe the outside of face shield or goggles with clean water or alcohol to remove residue. 4) Fully dry (air dry or use clean absorbent towels). 5) Remove gloves and perform hand hygiene.

^Computer keyboards are difficult to clean. Shared computers should have signs posted instructing proper hand hygiene before and after using them to minimize disease transmission. To facilitate cleaning, consider using covers that protect the keys but enable use of the keys

## EPA REGISTERED COVID-19 DISINFECTANT LIST

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has a list of all products that meet the EPA's criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. To find a product use the link below. Clicking on the "Other Search Options" button at the bottom of the page will allow you to search by active ingredient, product name, formula type, surface type, and other criteria.

[List N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2 \(COVID-19\)](#)

## STAFF TRAINING

COVID-19 has impacted staff, students, and families across Hamilton County. To help keep the school community safe, the school should consider offering training and resources for staff on coronavirus to help prepare them for their new normal. Focusing on prevention will help keep school members and communities safe and healthy during the COVID-19 pandemic. Educators and other staff members should be trained on all safety protocols and how to recognize the signs and symptoms of COVID-19.

# ACTIVE & PASSIVE MONITORING

Schools should encourage staff, students, and families to self-report to the school if they flag for any of the following scenarios:

- They are having symptoms of COVID-19
- Are being tested for COVID-19
- Test positive for COVID-19
- Are exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the last 14 days

This is following the guidance from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' [health information sharing regulations for COVID-19](#). Once a person has been identified, the Point of Contact at the school should notify Hamilton County Public Health as soon as possible.

## PASSIVE MONITORING

If there are no cases of COVID-19 identified within a school, the school may do passive monitoring. Staff, students, and families should monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 at home. Schools should encourage individuals and families to monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 before reporting to school.

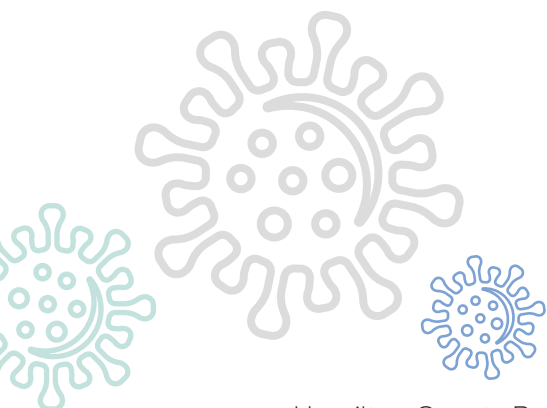
If staff members or students screen positive for COVID-19, they should not attend school, and they should notify the school as soon as possible. Passive monitoring, or monitoring at home, should include **temperature, signs, and symptoms of COVID-19, COVID-19 testing, and COVID-19 exposure**.

If a staff member or student reports yes to any of these items, the Point of Contact at the school should notify the Hamilton County Public Health COVID-19 Outbreak Response Team as soon as possible.

## ACTIVE MONITORING

Once a student or a staff member has been identified as a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19, the school should consider active monitoring of the facility. The school should implement screenings before students and staff enter a school bus or building. Hamilton County Public Health encourages the facility to use the screening tool on page II of the Appendices.

If a student or staff member screens positive, the Point of Contact at the school should notify the Hamilton County Public Health COVID-19 Outbreak Response Team as soon as possible.



# EXCLUSIONS FOR CASES OF COVID-19

If a student, whether in school or at home, develops symptoms of COVID-19, notify Hamilton County Public Health at (513) 946-7919. A Communicable Disease Specialist at Hamilton County Public Health and the Point of Contact at the school will determine how to proceed.

If a student or staff member develops symptoms of COVID-19 they will:

- Be excluded from school;
- Be advised by the school to seek medical attention.

If the symptoms are non-COVID-19 related (e.g., Asthma, allergies, Pertussis, etc.), the individual may return to school based on the guidance following their diagnosis.

## SUSPECTED COVID-19 CASES

If a student or staff member is classified as a suspected case of COVID-19, they should be excused from school in accordance with the existing school illness management policies.

## PROBABLE COVID-19 CASES

If a student or staff member is classified as a probable case of COVID-19 the individual will be excluded from school until the following criteria are met:

- At least 10 days have passed since symptom onset **and**,
- The individual has been fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication **and**,
- Their other symptoms have improved.

The student or staff may return to school the day after they are released from isolation.

## CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASES

If a student or staff member is classified as a confirmed case of COVID-19 the individual will be excluded from school until the following criteria are met:

- At least 10 days have passed since symptom onset **and**,
- The individual has been fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication **and**,
- Their other symptoms have improved.

If a student or staff member is classified as an asymptomatic confirmed case of COVID-19, the individual will be excluded from school until the following criteria are met:

- At least 10 days\* have passed since the date of their positive COVID-19 Test (RT-PCR test for SARS-CoV-2 RNA, **not** the antigen or antibody test) and has not developed symptoms of COVID-19.

## ESSENTIAL EMPLOYEES

Teachers, school nurses, school administration, food service and transportation are all considered to be essential employees. Hamilton County Public Health recommends that all staff that can work remotely, be allowed to do so.

If a staff member is considered a close contact of a case of COVID-19, they may be considered part of Hamilton County's critical infrastructure. A Communicable Disease Specialist or member of the COVID-19 Outbreak Response Team at Hamilton County Public Health will work with the school's Point of Contact to determine if staff who are close contacts will be considered part of the critical infrastructure. If the close contact is asymptomatic (they are not showing symptoms) and they are deemed as part of the critical infrastructure they may return to work if they follow certain guidelines. The guidelines they must follow are:

- The individual takes their temperature twice a day, once in the morning and once in the evening.
- The individual must wear a mask when they are working.
- When the individual is done with work they must return home and self-quarantine for 14 days from the date of their last exposure.

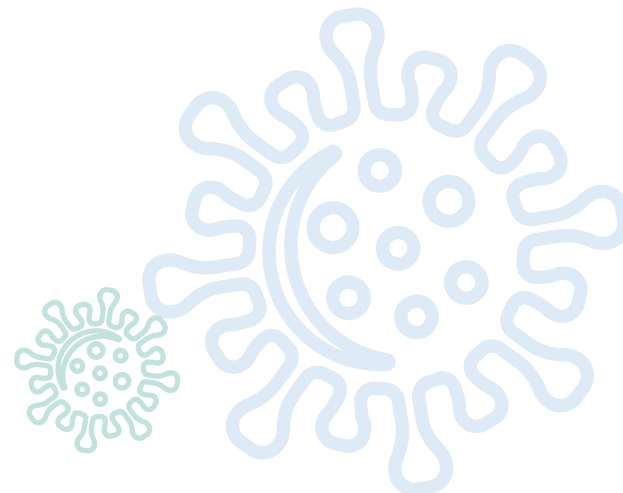
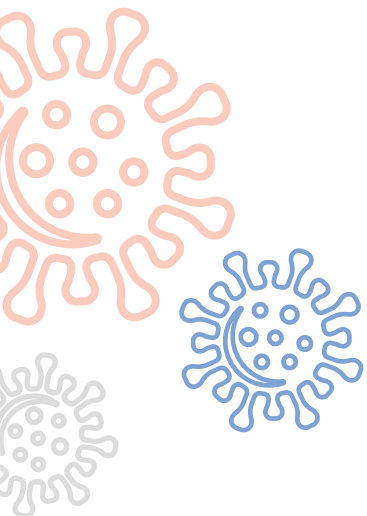
## SYMPTOMS BASED APPROACH

The CDC, Ohio Department of Health and Hamilton County Public Health recommend a symptoms-based resolution requirement to allow students and staff to return to work.

A symptoms-based approach means that the school should utilize the time frame and resolutions of symptoms described earlier in the Isolation Requirements section of this report. It is not recommended that the school utilize or require negative testing to return to school or work.

If the school has a policy in place that requires negative testing to return to school, Hamilton County Public Health will support the school's decision. They must also follow the guidance for returning to school utilizing the following guidance:

- **Negative Test Results**
  - For students and staff members to return to work using the test to cure methods, they will need two negative test results. These two negative tests must be 24 hours in-between tests.
- **Positive Test Results**
  - If the student or staff member tests positive, their exclusion requirements will extend 10 days after the test was taken.





# CLOSURE RECOMMENDATIONS

School districts should utilize local data to determine if/when schools should close due to COVID-19 as well as to assess the risk of various types of learning environments (in person, hybrid, or remote learning). Hamilton County Public Health in collaboration with the Cincinnati Health Department and Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center have adapted recommendations from the Harvard Global Public Health Institute for use by schools and their administrators to make these decisions. Hamilton County Public Health supports the use of these guidelines by schools and will assist with facilitating these recommendations as needed. The entire set of guidance can be found at the following location under 'School Planning': [www.hamiltoncountyhealth.org/covid19](http://www.hamiltoncountyhealth.org/covid19)



## COVID-19 SCHOOL OUTBREAK DEFINITIONS

Hamilton County Public Health will help schools monitor the cases of COVID-19 in their buildings to determine if there is an outbreak of COVID-19 in the school. The type of outbreak will be classified by the number of COVID-19 cases identified in the school.

### Suspected COVID-19 Outbreaks

A school will be considered to have a suspected outbreak of COVID-19 if one student or staff member is determined to be a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19. The school will be monitored for 28 days (or two incubation periods) to ensure there is no community spread of COVID-19 within the school. If after 28 days of monitoring and no additional staff or students develop COVID-19, the outbreak will be classified as not an outbreak and closed.

### Not a COVID-19 Outbreak

A school will be considered to not have a COVID-19 outbreak only under two circumstances.

- If there are no cases of COVID-19 at the school, or if a suspected case of COVID-19 was determined to not be a case (received a negative COVID-19 test) or,
- Only one case of COVID-19 was found to be at the school, and after 28 days of monitoring for additional cases of COVID-19 in the school there were no other cases identified, the suspected outbreak will be classified as not an outbreak.

### Confirmed COVID-19 Outbreaks

A school will be considered to have a confirmed outbreak of COVID-19 if more than one student or staff member is determined to be a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19. The school will be monitored for 28 days to help control and stop the spread of COVID-19. Hamilton County Public Health will consider the outbreak closed if, after 28 days from the last case of COVID-19 was identified no other staff or students develop COVID-19.

## SCHOOL & CLASSROOM CLOSURE RECOMMENDATIONS

If a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19 is discovered at the school, the designated Point of Contact will notify Hamilton County Public Health as soon as possible so that quick action may be taken. Hamilton County Public Health will assign an Outbreak Response Team Member to work with the school to help source control.

**The Outbreak Response Team at Hamilton County Public Health can be reached at (513) 946-7919.**

### HAMILTON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH'S RECOMMENDATION

In alignment with CDC guidance, schools experiencing a case of COVID-19 should assess the risk of transmission to other students when determining steps for school/classroom closures. The area(s) identified from this assessment (ranging from a classroom to the entire facility) are recommended to be closed for a minimum of 2 days in order to put a safety plan in place, perform contact tracing, and deep clean the facility. Schools should consider alternative learning environments while facilities are cleaned and contact tracing is performed.

#### Cleaning and Disinfecting

If a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19 is identified in a school, the school should close off the areas used by the sick student or staff member. These areas should not reopen until after cleaning and disinfecting have occurred.

The school staff should wait at least 24 hours before returning to the area for cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, it is recommended to wait as long as possible to being cleaning and disinfecting the area.

#### Safety Plan Recommendations

A Safety Plan is the most important step in keeping students and staff members safe and informed. Once a positive case of COVID-19 has been identified within the school, administration and Hamilton County Public Health will need to take swift action to stop the spread of the virus.

#### Notification

A letter of notification will be sent out to the school. This letter will be provided by a COVID-19 Outbreak Response Team Member at Hamilton County Public Health. A template of this document can be found on page V of the appendix. The school may send it to those in the affected classrooms or the entire school population.

#### Universal Face Masks

State guidance requires facial coverings for all students K-12 with exceptions for medical issues.

## **Cleaning Commonly Touched Surfaces**

To lower the risk of spread, schools should continue routine cleaning with soap and water and an EPA-approved cleaner. Routine cleaning will help to remove germs and dirt from surfaces.

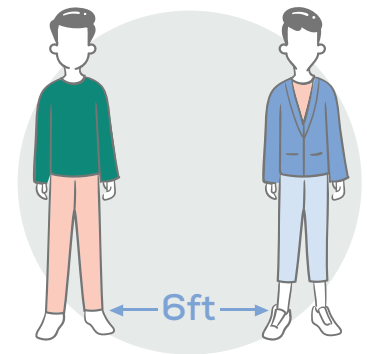
Once a student or staff member has been diagnosed with COVID-19, the school should implement a more proactive approach to cleaning. Commonly touched surfaces should be cleaned as often as every 30 minutes. Commonly touched surfaces can include tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, sinks, water fountains, etc.

## **Active Monitoring**

If the school is not already actively monitoring students and staff members before they enter the building, Hamilton County Public Health highly recommends that they begin to do so. This recommendation will continue until 28 days after the onset of symptoms of the last case of identified COVID-19 at the school. Active monitoring includes the implementation of the Hamilton County Public Health COVID-19 screening tool. The screening tool can be found on page II of the appendix.

## **Social Distancing**

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, the CDC, the Ohio Department of Health, and Hamilton County Public Health recommend that all students and staff practice social distancing. Social distancing, or physical distancing, means keeping at least six feet between oneself and other people who are not from one's household.



Avoid close contact

## **Cohorting Students**

Schools should keep students and staff in small groups, commonly referred to as cohorts. Keeping cohorted groups from moving and intermingling within the school will help slow the spread of COVID-19.

## **Contact Tracing**

Hamilton County Public Health's Outbreak Response Team Member will work with the Point of Contact at the school to help with contact tracing. Using the provided line list, found on page VII of the appendix, the Point of Contact will complete all fields for every close contact of a positive case of COVID-19.

Close contact is any student, staff member, or visitor who was less than six feet from the positive case for longer than 15 minutes, cumulatively. Close contacts are identified starting 48 hours before symptom onset until the case of COVID-19 began isolation.

Hamilton County Public Health will provide the school with a close contact notification letter, found on page VI of the appendix. This letter will be sent by the school to all close contacts identified. The school will also remind the close contacts that they are required to self-quarantine for 14 days from the date of last exposure (date the individual was last around the positive case) and that Hamilton County Public Health will contact them.

### Provided Information

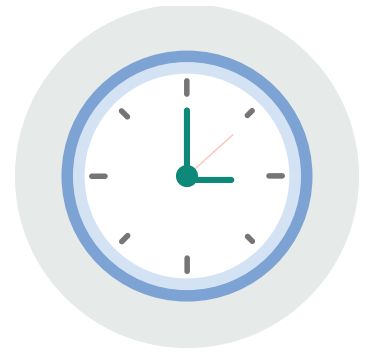
The school will be required to notify staff, students, and families within 24 hours of when a case of COVID-19 is identified within the school. This notification should be sent out via the school's communication system. These notifications need to follow all privacy policies and applicable laws that the school is required to follow.

## DURATION OF PREVENTION MEASURES

When a case or outbreak of COVID-19 is identified within the school, Hamilton County Public Health will monitor the staff and students for 28 days after the most recent symptom onset date. This monitoring will help limit community spread and minimize infection within the school.

During the monitoring period the school will need to:

- Actively screen staff and students for COVID-19;
- Clean and disinfect as often as every 30 minutes;
- Cohort students;
- Encourage social distancing
- Require universal face coverings.



## OUTBREAK CLOSURE

*Outbreaks are considered closed after two incubation periods (28 days) have passed since the last probable or confirmed case of COVID-19.*

Once a COVID-19 outbreak is resolved, it is recommended the school administration conduct an after-action review. This review allows for the identification of the strengths and weaknesses of the response process. Identifying strengths and weaknesses will provide an opportunity to identify areas that may be improved upon for future outbreaks.

After the closure of a COVID-19 outbreak, the school returns to passive monitoring.

**If another case of COVID-19 is identified at the school, the Point of Contact should reach out to the Hamilton County Public Health Outbreak Response Team at (513) 946-7919.**



# Appendix

Samples or templates of documents and forms will be provided in electronic fillable copies by a member of Hamilton County Public Health’s COVID-19 Outbreak Response Team.

Links to Resources and Signage.....	I
Screening Tool .....	II
Symptoms of COVID-19 Comparison.....	III
COVID-19 Screening Guide.....	IV
COVID-19 Notification Letter .....	V
COVID-19 Close Contact Letter .....	VI
Master Line List.....	VII
Infection Control Measures Checklist .....	VIII
References .....	X

# LINKS TO RESOURCES AND SIGNAGE

School can find additional resources and signage that can be used throughout the school provided by the Ohio Department of Health, Ohio Department of Education, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

- CDC Toolkit Schools K-12:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/toolkits/schools.html>
- CDC Print Resources for Schools:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/print-resources.html?Sort=Date%3A%3Adesc&Audience=Schools>
- CDC Handwashing: Clean Hands Saves Lives. Promotion Materials:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/materials.html>
- CDC Operational Considerations for Schools:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/global-covid-19/schools.html>
- CDC Considerations for K-12 Schools: Readiness and Planning Tool:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/community/School-Admin-K12-readiness-and-planning-tool.pdf>
- Ohio Department of Education, Reset and Restart:  
<http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Reset-and-Restart>
- Ohio Department of Health K-12 COVID-19 Checklist:  
<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/checklists/english-checklists/k-12-schools-covid-19-checklist>
- Ohio Department of Health Remote-Learning Resource Guide:  
<http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Student-Supports/Coronavirus/Remote-Learning-Resource-Guide.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US>









# SCREENING TOOL

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Staff and Students should check their temperature and complete this form twice daily for 14 days after the date of the last exposure. If the temperature is above or equal to 38.0°C/100.0°F, staff report subjective fevers, or any of the following symptoms, they should self-isolate and notify their healthcare facility or call their local public health department. They should ensure their temperature is below 38.0°C/100.0°F and that they don't have any of the following symptoms before they leave home and report to work.

COVID-19 Screening Tool						
School Name:						
Person Completing Form:			Date & Time:		Screening Location:	
First & Last Name: DOB:		Have You been Tested for COVID-19		Y / N	Date:	Temperature:
Student / Staff		Have You been Exposed to COVID-19 in the last 14 days?		Y / N	Date:	Notes:
Symptoms (check if you have any of the following)						
Subjective Fever <input type="checkbox"/>	Sore Throat <input type="checkbox"/>	Chills <input type="checkbox"/>	Shortness of Breath <input type="checkbox"/>	Cough <input type="checkbox"/>	Runny Nose <input type="checkbox"/>	Muscle Aches <input type="checkbox"/>
Headache <input type="checkbox"/>	Fatigue <input type="checkbox"/>	Abdominal Pain <input type="checkbox"/>	Nausea or Vomiting <input type="checkbox"/>	Diarrhea <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____	None <input type="checkbox"/>
First & Last Name: DOB:		Have You been Tested for COVID-19		Y / N	Date:	Temperature:
Student / Staff		Have You been Exposed to COVID-19 in the last 14 days?		Y / N	Date:	Notes:
Symptoms (check if you have any of the following)						
Subjective Fever <input type="checkbox"/>	Sore Throat <input type="checkbox"/>	Chills <input type="checkbox"/>	Shortness of Breath <input type="checkbox"/>	Cough <input type="checkbox"/>	Runny Nose <input type="checkbox"/>	Muscle Aches <input type="checkbox"/>
Headache <input type="checkbox"/>	Fatigue <input type="checkbox"/>	Abdominal Pain <input type="checkbox"/>	Nausea or Vomiting <input type="checkbox"/>	Diarrhea <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____	None <input type="checkbox"/>

# SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19 COMPARISON

## Symptoms of COVID-19

Symptoms of COVID-19	Strep Throat	Common Cold	Flu	Asthma	Seasonal Allergies
FEVER 	✓		✓		
COUGH 		✓	✓	✓	✓
SORE THROAT 	✓	✓	✓		✓
SHORTNESS OF BREATH 				✓	
FATIGUE 		✓	✓	✓	✓
DIARRHEA OR VOMITING 	✓		✓		
RUNNY NOSE 		✓	✓		✓
BODY/ MUSCLE ACHES 	✓	✓	✓		

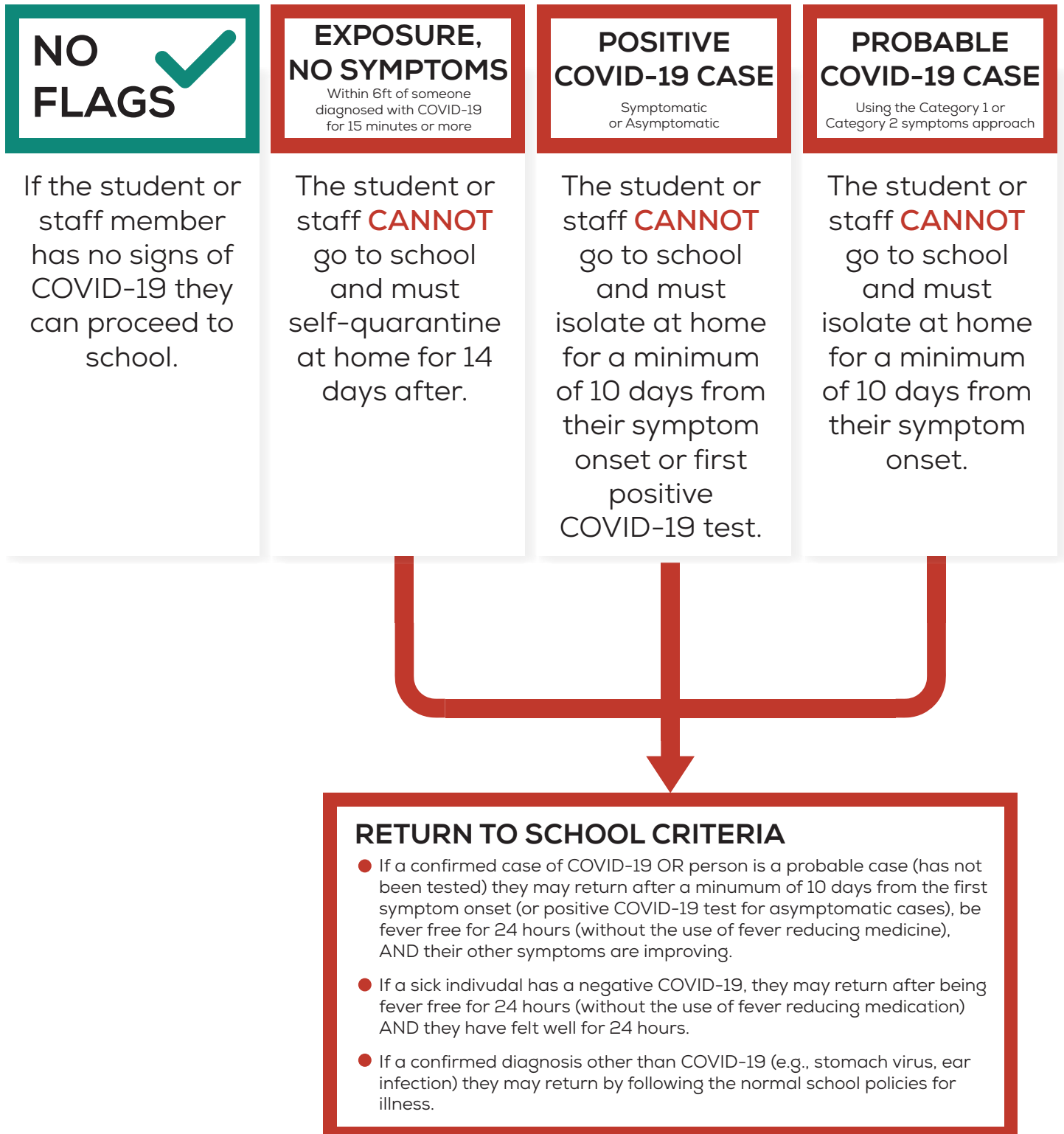
✓ Symptom of illness



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus)

316917-A July 23, 2020 10:04 AM

# COVID-19 SCREENING GUIDE



# COVID-19 NOTIFICATION LETTER



PREVENT. PROMOTE. PROTECT.

250 William Howard Taft Road  
Cincinnati, OH 45219  
Phone: 513.946.7800 Fax: 513.946.7890  
hcuph.org

(DATE)

Dear (Facility Name) Staff, Parents, and Students,

This letter is to notify you that a student or staff member at (SCHOOL NAME) has been diagnosed with COVID-19. In order to contain the spread of this infection, we are asking parents to monitor your child(ren) for symptoms, keep your sick child(ren) home and take them to see a physician for testing and treatment if you observe any signs or symptoms of COVID-19. Please take this letter with you when you go to your physician. The period of observing your child related to this exposure ends (DATE).

**Here are the steps we need you to do to protect our community:**

- Please monitor your student(s) for symptoms of COVID-19, which may include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Other symptoms include chills, rigors, muscle aches, headache, sore throat, or loss of taste/smell
- If your student develops symptoms consistent with COVID-19 please keep your attendee at home and consult with your physician regarding next steps.
- Please notify school administration if you choose to get your attendee tested or if they develop symptoms.

The overall health and well-being of the students and employees at (FACILITY NAME) and throughout Hamilton County continues to be our top priority. Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our community healthy. Please contact Hamilton County Public Health's COVID-19 Hotline (513) 946-7919, Monday through Friday 8am-4pm, if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "GK", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Greg Kesterman  
Health Commissioner  
Hamilton County Public Health  
250 William Howard Taft  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219



*Healthy choices. Healthy lives. Healthy communities.*

# COVID-19 CLOSE CONTACT LETTER



PREVENT. PROMOTE. PROTECT.

250 William Howard Taft Road  
Cincinnati, OH 45219  
Phone: 513.946.7800 Fax: 513.946.7890  
hcuph.org

(DATE)

Dear Parent/Guardian,

During our contact tracing of a confirmed COVID-19 case in Hamilton County, your child has been identified as a close contact. Here is what we will need you to do in order to prevent the spread of disease:

- Please self-monitor them for symptoms, which may include fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, body aches, headaches, sore throat, and loss of taste/smell. You are to self-monitor them until (Date). During this time you will also need to self-quarantine your child (stay at home away from others).
- Should your child develop symptoms, please call Hamilton County Public Health at 513-946-7919 as their monitoring period and restrictions may change.
- If their symptoms require medical attention, please contact their primary care physician and tell him/her that they have been identified as a possible COVID-19 exposure.

The purpose of this letter is not to frighten you. However, with your assistance, Hamilton County Public Health is working to prevent the spread of COVID-19. It is also important to understand that most people who contract the virus will have mild symptoms.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "G. Kesterman".

Greg Kesterman  
Health Commissioner  
Hamilton County Public Health  
250 William Howard Taft  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219



*Healthy choices. Healthy lives. Healthy communities.*

The schools will complete a master line list for both students and staff.

Hamilton County Public Health // **School Reference Guide for COVID-19** // Page VII

# INFECTION CONTROL MEASURES CHECKLIST

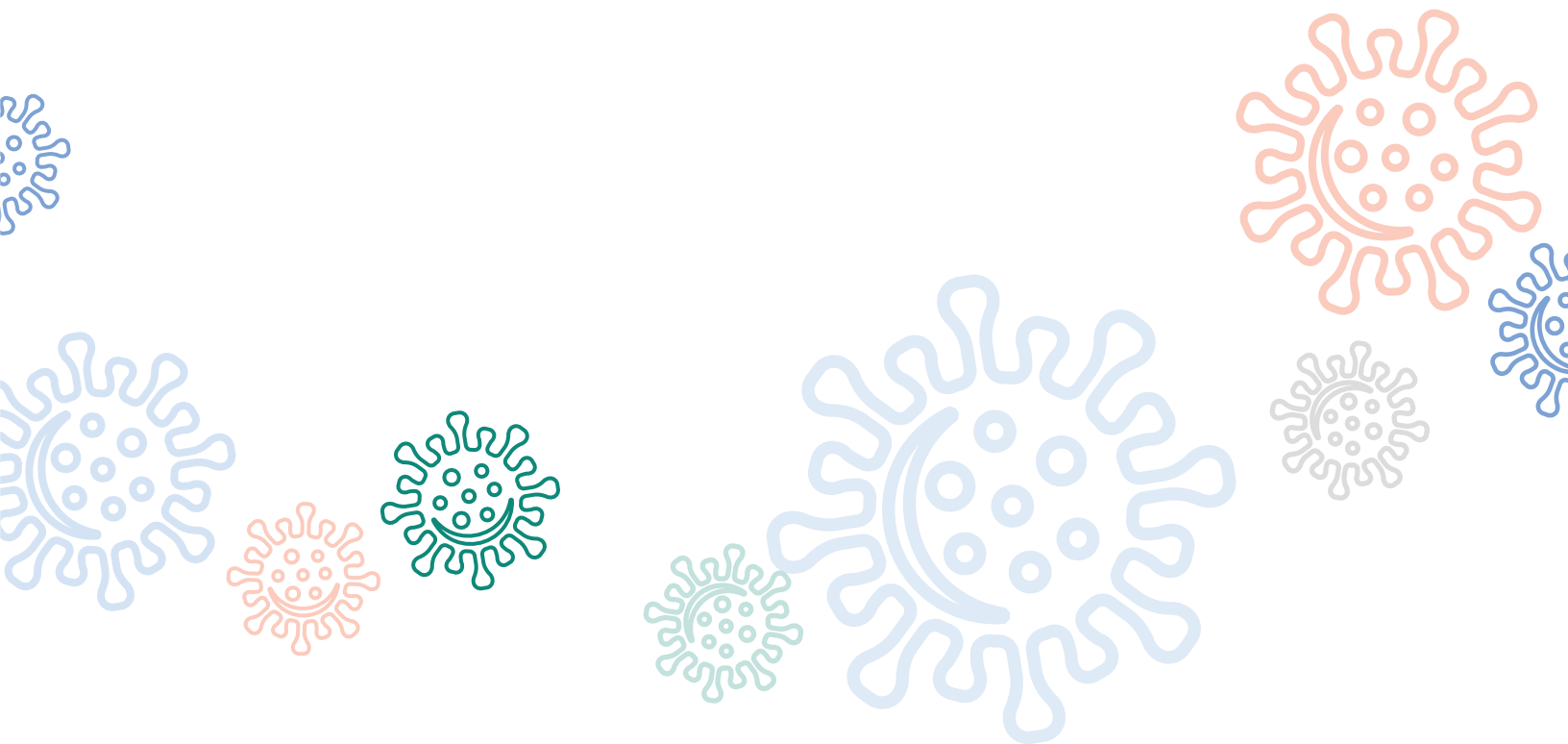
COVID-19 Outbreak Interventions					
Communication	Applies	N/A	Completed By	Date	Signature
Facility Administration Notified					
Facility Covid-19 Point of Contact and Team Notified					
Regional Division of Quality Assurance Licensing Agency Notified					
Local Health Department Notified					
Staff, Students, Families, and Community Notified					
Investigation and Monitoring	Applies	N/A	Completed By	Date	Signature
Students evaluated for COVID-19. Symptomatic students are sent home and placed in isolation					
Staff members evaluated for COVID-19. Symptomatic staff are sent home and placed in isolation.					
Student line list completed					
Staff line list completed					
Floor plan is sent to LHD to help map cases					
Update and report all new cases to LHD on daily basis					
Testing	Applies	N/A	Completed By	Date	Signature
Symptomatic students are referred to providers for testing					
Symptomatic staff are referred to providers for testing					
Infection Control Measures	Applies	N/A	Completed By	Date	Signature
School or affected classroom closure for 2-5 days					
COVID-19 notification letter sent to staff, students, and family					
Contact tracing					

Close contacts notified and sent home to quarantine for 14 days. Letter sent home with affected students and staff.					
Cleaning and disinfecting affected areas					
Safe return plan in place					
Active monitoring in place					
Universal face masks in place					
Social distancing in place					
Cohort students in place					
Enhanced environmental cleaning conducted throughout the outbreak period.					
<b>Safe Return</b>	<b>Applies</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Completed By</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Signature</b>
Students return to school					
Staff return to school					
<b>Hand Hygiene</b>	<b>Applies</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Completed By</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Signature</b>
Staff performs hand hygiene with soap and water or alcohol-based sanitizer frequently.					
Staff performs hand hygiene with soap and water or alcohol-based sanitizer frequently.					
<b>Education</b>	<b>Applies</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Completed By</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Signature</b>
Training provided to all staff on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19					
Education materials are given to the staff					
Control measure discussed					

# REFERENCES

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6. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020. Interim Considerations for K-12 School Administrators for SARS-CoV-2 Testing. Updated June 30, 2020. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-testing.html>. Accessed August 3, 2020.
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8. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020. Preparing K-12 School Administrators for a Safe Return to School in Fall 2020. Updated August 1, 2020. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/prepare-safe-return.html> Accessed August 7, 2020
9. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and US Environmental Protection Agency, 2020. Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes. CS316485C April 28, 2020. [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/pdf/Reopening\\_America\\_Guidance.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/pdf/Reopening_America_Guidance.pdf).

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