



Health Office COVID-19 Guidelines for Parents/Guardians

As we have returned to in-person learning, it will take the cooperation and commitment of the entire school community to help mitigate the risk of COVID-19 and to keep everyone safe and healthy. In order to provide a safe return to in-person learning, District 207 Health Services has developed guidelines based on recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).

The following **Frequently Asked Questions** will provide you with information about COVID-19, health office procedures, dismissal from school, return-to-school guidelines, and testing sites. Please feel free to reach out to your school's building nurse or administrator with questions.

What happens when my child becomes ill at school?

If your child appears or feels unwell, arrangements will be made for the building nurse to check his/her temperature, and to check for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 (see above). This assessment will be completed in a triage area in or near the health office. If your child has any of the signs or symptoms, he/she will be placed in a safe, supervised area in or near the health office to ensure that there is no contact with other students or staff pending your arrival. School nurses will contact you to pick up your child as soon as possible. It is important that you provide the school with current phone numbers for yourself and those you have designated as emergency contacts.

We realize that in certain circumstances you may not be able to pick up your child immediately; therefore, it is imperative that you arrange for other individuals to do so in case you are unavailable. To prevent the spread of infection, individuals with symptoms must be dismissed from school as quickly as possible; therefore, please consider making a plan in advance for your child to be picked up in case of illness at school.

Unvaccinated students will have the opportunity to test

Upon your arrival, you will be given a [Student Dismissal Form](#) that details the symptoms your child is experiencing, requests that you contact your child's healthcare provider, and provides guidelines for returning to school.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

- Fever (100.4°F or higher)
- New onset of moderate to severe headache
- Shortness of breath

- New cough
- Sore throat
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Abdominal pain from unknown cause
- New congestion/runny nose
- New loss of sense of taste or smell
- Nausea
- Fatigue from unknown cause
- Muscle or body aches

For an up-to-date list of symptoms, visit:

[Symptoms of Coronavirus](#)

How long does it take for symptoms to start?

It can take anywhere from 2 to 14 days after exposure to the virus to develop signs and symptoms of illness. People have had a wide range of symptoms reported, from mild discomfort to severe illness. Some people can be positive for COVID-19 and never develop symptoms (asymptomatic).

Will my child have to wear a mask?

All students and staff are required to wear a mask while in any of our school buildings. Students should bring their own masks each day. Masks brought from home must align with dress code policies. Students and staff may only remove their mask while eating lunch or a snack and while drinking, and when outside and able to follow social distancing guidelines. Masks should be taken home and laundered daily. Please teach your child about [masks](#), including wearing and caring for them. For tips on helping your child get used to wearing a mask, [click here](#).

On July 27, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced updated public health guidance. In light of new science, the large number of unvaccinated individuals, and the concerning increase in the number of COVID-19 cases caused by the highly contagious Delta variant, the CDC has updated its guidance to recommend universal masking in schools for all students, faculty and staff, regardless of each individual's vaccination status and local transmission rates.

With the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) fully aligned with the CDC's recommendation regarding universal masking, all Maine South students, faculty, staff and visitors must wear a mask indoors, effective immediately. If you have a medical condition that prevents you from wearing a mask indoors, please send a doctor's note to the health office.

What is the difference between isolation and quarantine?

These terms refer to public safety procedures used to help prevent the spread of germs and disease. **Isolation** means keeping sick individuals apart from the healthy population. This generally means that a person remains home, keeping distance from others. **Quarantine** refers to separating people who may have been exposed to a

sick individual from others. Because individuals can spread the virus to others before symptoms have had time to develop, quarantine prevents them from spreading it to others.

What is “Close Contact”?

For COVID-19, a close contact is defined as anyone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for 15 minutes or more over a 24 hour period, starting from 2 days (48 hours) before the person began feeling sick (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient was isolated. If individuals meet the criteria for close contact, they should remain at home for 14 days since the last time they were in contact with the infected person. If they develop symptoms, they should contact their healthcare provider for further instructions and possible testing.

When should I keep my child home from school?

Your child should stay home if he or she shows **any** signs and symptoms of illness, has been tested for COVID-19 and is awaiting results, has been exposed to someone who tested positive for COVID-19, or has travelled outside the U.S. or certain states within the past 14 days. **Students who present with any COVID-19 symptoms at school will be sent home immediately.**

If a student is sent home sick with suspected COVID-19 symptoms (e.g., cough, fever, diarrhea, shortness of breath, etc.), must all their siblings/household members be sent home as well and quarantined for 14 calendar days?

Yes. If one of the household members is being evaluated for COVID-19, the rest of the household must be quarantined until an alternative diagnosis is made or a negative result received. If the sick student becomes a confirmed case (i.e., tests positive for COVID-19) or a probable case (i.e., has COVID-like symptoms and is epidemiologically linked to known case), the local health department (LHD) conducting contact tracing will place household contacts, including siblings, in quarantine for 14 calendar days. (Note that cases are to isolate for a minimum of 10 calendar days or if symptoms persist, when released by the LHD, while contacts are to quarantine for 14 calendar days. This is because the incubation period--the time they might develop symptoms after an exposure—is 14 calendar days, while the infectious period when a case can transmit illness is approximately 10 calendar days.) The health department also will provide guidance on how to safely quarantine and isolate within the household.

If the symptomatic individual is diagnostically tested and the results are negative, all family members will be considered cleared upon providing written documentation to the Health Office.

What is the procedure for reporting my child’s absence due to illness?

Please follow the regular school procedure for calling in your child’s absence, making sure to provide details of the reason for the illness or injury absence. If your child experiences any of or more of the symptoms of COVID-19, has had contact with someone who has tested positive, or has traveled out of Illinois (specific states) or out of the country, you will need to provide additional information by completing a form sent to you. This information will be reviewed by the building nurse who will contact you to provide you with instructions on remaining home and procedures for returning to school.

How have school health office procedures changed?

A number of changes to health office procedures have been put into place in order to ensure that students and staff remain healthy, and that all health needs can be met efficiently and safely.

- Nurses will be wearing PPE, including masks, and face shields, and gloves and disposable gowns as needed.
- Health offices are reconfigured to allow separate care areas for sick children and for those who require treatment for injuries and routine care such as medication administration. Social distancing guidelines will be observed.
- Traffic flow through the health office will be minimized. Parents will be asked to wait in the main office area when picking up their child or dropping off materials such as health forms.
- Enhanced cleaning measures will be implemented.

What happens when my child becomes ill at school?

If your child appears or feels unwell, arrangements will be made for the building nurse to check his/her temperature, and to check for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 (see above). This assessment will be completed in a triage area in or near the health office. If your child has any of the signs or symptoms, he/she will be placed in a safe, supervised area in or near the health office to ensure that there is no contact with other students or staff pending your arrival. School nurses will contact you to pick up your child as soon as possible. It is important that you provide the school with current phone numbers for yourself and those you have designated as emergency contacts.

We realize that in certain circumstances you may not be able to pick up your child immediately; therefore, it is imperative that you arrange for other individuals to do so in case you are unavailable. To prevent the spread of infection, individuals with symptoms must be dismissed from school as quickly as possible; therefore, please consider making a plan in advance for your child to be picked up in case of illness at school.

Upon your arrival, you will be given a [Student Dismissal Form](#) that details the symptoms your child is experiencing, requests that you contact your child's healthcare provider, and provides guidelines for returning to school.

What are the guidelines for my child to return to school after illness?

Please contact your child's healthcare provider if he/she was sent home from school due to illness or if your child develops illness at home. The following guidelines must be met before your child can return to school.

- Students returning from illness related to COVID-19 or Non COVID-19 (whether reported from home or dismissed from school while ill) or following quarantine should speak with the building nurse to ensure that the following guidelines are adhered to:
- All students sent home with COVID-like symptoms should be diagnostically tested.
- Students should remain home from school until they receive the test results.
- Students who are confirmed or probable cases of COVID-19 must complete 10 calendar days of isolation from the date of first symptom onset and be fever-free for 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medications and other symptoms have improved before returning to school.
- Students returning to school after experiencing COVID-like symptoms but being diagnosed with a non-COVID illness must meet the criteria for returning to school for the illness with which they have been diagnosed. At a minimum, the individual must be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and have had no diarrhea or vomiting in the previous 24 hours.
- Other diseases have specific criteria for when a student can return to school: Follow school health policies and communicable disease guidance for those illnesses. [Communicable Disease Chart for Schools](#)
- A doctor's note documenting the alternative diagnosis and a negative COVID-19 test result should accompany a student returning to school with an alternative diagnosis after experiencing COVID-like symptoms.

- Students with COVID-like symptoms who do not get tested for COVID-19 and who do not provide a doctor's note documenting an alternative diagnosis, must complete 10 calendar days of isolation from the date of first symptom onset and be fever-free for 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medications and other symptoms have improved before returning to school.
- Medical evaluation and COVID-19 diagnostic testing is strongly recommended for all persons with COVID-like symptoms.

[IDPH-COVID19-Exclusion-Decison-Tree](#)

How do I know if my child was around someone who was sick?

You will receive notification from your child's school if it is believed that there has been exposure to a person with COVID-19. School administrators and building nurses will work in conjunction with the local health department (Cook County Department of Public Health) to identify possible exposure and to determine which individuals must be quarantined.

What is the procedure for quarantine if my child was possibly exposed to someone with COVID-19 or if we have travelled outside Illinois or the United States?

If your child has been in close contact (15 minutes or longer and within 6 feet) with a confirmed case of COVID-19 (includes siblings/family members/school contacts) or after travel outside the U.S., or to [restricted states](#) within the U.S., he or she can return 14 days after the last contact with the confirmed case, or 14 days after return to Illinois. During the quarantine period, active symptom monitoring (temperature check twice daily, watch for symptoms) must be completed. If your child develops symptoms of illness, his/her healthcare provider should be notified and the above guidelines must be followed.

What steps can be taken to prevent from getting COVID-19?

Please take the time to talk to your child about everyday steps to stay healthy:

- Frequently washing hands and using hand sanitizer safely
- Avoiding close contact with people who are ill, even within the household
- Remaining 6 apart from others outside the home
- Covering nose and mouth with a cloth face cover when around others outside the home
- Sneezing/coughing into a tissue or inside of elbow
- Avoiding touching face with unwashed hands
- Helping your child identify and monitor his/her own symptoms of illness
- Teaching your child about the importance of wearing a mask

Obtaining adequate rest and exercise and maintaining a healthy diet

[COVID-19: How to Protect Yourself and Others](#)

My child has a chronic health condition. How will care be handled at school?

During registration for the start of the 2020-21 school year, you were given the opportunity to notify us of your child's health conditions and medical needs. Nurses review the health information submitted by parents, contact them for additional details as needed, and develop an individualized healthcare plan when needed. This information will be shared with school staff on an "as needed" basis to ensure that appropriate staff are aware of the particular health concern, yet confidentiality is maintained. If you have any questions about your child's care at school, please contact the health office at your school.

If your child has complex health issues, please consult with his/her healthcare provider to determine which learning option is best (in-person learning or remote learning).

Will symptoms of a known condition (allergies, migraine, etc) be taken into consideration?

Every symptomatic person should be evaluated by their healthcare provider on a case-by-case basis and decisions to test for COVID-19 should be based on their personal health history. Diagnostic testing is strongly encouraged whenever an individual experiences COVID-like symptoms as it is possible to have COVID-19 and other health conditions at the same time. Early diagnosis can prevent further transmission. Individuals who have undergone testing should remain home away from others while waiting for COVID-19 test results.

How will my child remain safe in regard to food allergies?

Please work with nurses to ensure that required forms (Allergy Action Plans and Medication Authorization Forms) are on file, and that emergency medication has been submitted. Students eating in the classroom will remain at their own desk. Students eating in cafeterias will have the same opportunity to eat in an allergen-safe area if required.

How will my child's learning continue in the event of an extended absence?

If your child requires absence due to illness or quarantine due to possible exposure to someone with the virus, the nurse will work with team members to put a plan in place.

How do I talk to my child about staying home from school and COVID-19?

- Find out what your child already knows by asking questions geared toward his/her developmental level.
- Remain calm, offer honesty and reassurance, and allow your child to express fears.
- If you do not know the answer to a question, use the opportunity to learn together.
- Help your child feel in control: discuss healthy habits, put news stories into context, focus on positive advances in controlling the virus.
- Keep the conversation going.

Where can I find COVID-19 testing sites?

The following locations offer testing. Please contact them directly for hours and availability. Or contact your child's healthcare provider for further information.

[Illinois Department of Public Health](#) Testing Sites

[Physician's Immediate Care Center](#)-Park Ridge

[CVS Pharmacy](#)-Niles

[Northshore Immediate Care Center](#)-Niles

[Physician's Immediate Care](#)-Norridge

[Innovative Corona Testing](#) - Chicago

What are the deadlines for mandated health requirements such as Child Health Examination, proof of immunizations, and Dental Exams,

At this time, deadlines for submission of required health documents remain the same. If these should change, you will be notified. Requirements are:

Freshman: Child Health Examination Form: August 17, 2020

Dental Examination for Freshman: May 15, 2021

More information regarding health requirements can be found here:

[Maine South Health Office](#)

How have vision and hearing screening procedures changed?

Prior to the pandemic, schools conducted screenings for mandated grades/programs on a scheduled day. Due to social distancing guidelines and revised cleaning procedures, we will now conduct screenings over an extended period of time. Your child is not required to undergo school vision screening if an optometrist or ophthalmologist has completed and signed a report form indicating that an examination has been administered within the previous 12 months, and that evaluation is on file in your child's health record. Please contact your building nurse if you have submitted documentation of a current examination and are requesting that your child not be screened.

What resources are available to help me talk to my child about Coronavirus?

[*How to talk to your teenager about coronavirus*](#)

[*Teens & COVID-19: Challenges and Opportunities During the Outbreak*](#)

[*Talking with children about Coronavirus*](#)

[*Coronavirus: A Book for Children*](#)

[*Masks and Handwashing Video*](#)

[*My Coronavirus Social Story*](#)

[*My Story About Pandemics and the Coronavirus*](#)

[*Handwashing*](#)

Parent Resources

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/coronavirus-landing-page.html?ref=search>

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/coronavirus-how-talk-child.html>