



NJDOH Public Health Recommendations for K-12 Schools - 2021-2022 School Year

Date: September 1, 2021

Public Health Message Type: Alert Advisory Update Information

Intended Audience: All public health partners Healthcare providers Infection preventionists
 Local health departments Schools ACOs
 Animal health professionals Other:

Key Points or Updates:

1. **Masks:**

Masks must be worn indoors by staff, students, and visitors in all situations except as delineated in EO 251. During school transportation, [CDC's Order](#) applies to all public transportation conveyances including school buses. Passengers and drivers must wear a mask on school buses, including on buses operated by public and private school systems, regardless of vaccination status, subject to the exclusions and exemptions in CDC's Order.

2. **Physical Distancing and Cohorting:**

- a. Within classrooms, maintain 3 feet of physical distancing to the greatest extent practicable, combined with masking for all individuals per [EO 251](#).
- b. Outside of classrooms including in hallways, locker rooms, indoor and outdoor physical education settings, and school-sponsored transportation, maintain physical distancing to the greatest extent practicable.

The CDC recommends a distance of at least 6 feet between students and teachers/staff and between teachers/staff who are not fully vaccinated in all settings.

3. **Cleaning, Disinfection and Airflow:**

Wait as long as possible (at least several hours) before cleaning and disinfection.

4. **Outbreaks:**

An outbreak in a school setting is defined as three or more laboratory-confirmed (by RT-PCR or antigen) COVID-19 cases among students or staff with onsets within a 14-day period, who are epidemiologically linked, do not share a household, and were not identified as close contacts of each other in another setting during standard case investigation or contact tracing.

5. **Contact Tracing and Notification:**

Exception to close contact in K-12 classroom only - In the K-12 indoor classroom setting, the close contact definition excludes students who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student (laboratory-confirmed or a clinically compatible illness) where both the infected student and the exposed student(s) correctly and consistently wore well-fitting masks the entire time. This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting. Students within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student should still monitor for symptoms for 14 days after exposure.

Minor updates to the K-12 Screening Testing Guidance includes information on home-based testing, information on available funding to support screening testing and inclusion of high-risk extracurricular activities in the screening testing matrix.

Additionally, CDC has posted new resources for schools and parents which can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>.

Contact Information:

- The Communicable Disease Service at (609) 826-5964 during business hours.

References and Resources:

[CDC Schools and Child Care Programs](#)

[NJDOH COVID-19: Information for Schools](#)