

**TOOLS, TIPS AND
UPDATES TO HELP
PARENTS MEET THE
CHALLENGE OF
RETURNING TO
SCHOOL**

Newsletter Issue 1

BACK TO SCHOOL SAFELY DURING COVID-19



A MESSAGE TO SCHOOL FAMILIES

Dear School Families,

These are stressful times. Like you, we are parents, we care about the health and safety of school staff and children, and we are part of the Sacramento County community.

We share this newsletter as a tool to equip your family with Sacramento County Public Health COVID-19 guidance for schools. We hope this information is helpful toward making wise decisions about in-person instruction, and distance learning possibilities for your family.

Over the past months, Sacramento County Public Health Schools team members have been meeting with school officials, completing school-site visits, developing guidance documents, navigating the school waiver process, progressing through the school contact tracing/case investigation process, and more. We invite you to view these materials yourselves. Of course, guidance may change as we learn more about COVID-19.

— Sacramento County Schools Team

THE SCHOOLS NURSE TEAM

Sacramento County Public Health has assembled a team of nurses to assist schools during this pandemic crisis. The Supervisor of the School Nurse Team is available to support the school's COVID-19 POC (Point of Contact) in an effort to review information of a COVID-19 positive student, faculty or staff member and work with them to determine who may have been exposed and consequently needs to quarantine or isolate. The School Nurse Team also tracks positive COVID-19 cases in the schools and monitors outbreaks. Case Investigation is a primary responsibility of the team, which includes gathering information on contacts, providing isolation and quarantine instructions, as well as connecting families with resources needed during the isolation or quarantine period. The School Nurse Team is available to visit the schools upon request, to offer assistance, guidance, and recommendations to schools during their reopening process.

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SCHOOL REOPENING PLANS

Parents often ask us questions about school reopening. Is it safe for my child's school to reopen? What is my school doing to protect my child? How do I know if my child's school is prepared? The decision to send a child back to school for in-person learning is not a simple one and each family will need to make an informed decision. A good place to start is your school's reopening plan. Prior to inviting students back to school, schools should develop a written plan for safer reopening. That plan should spell out, in detail, how a school plans to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread in the school community and should be posted online so it is easily accessible to families and staff. At minimum, it should address the following areas:

- **Cleaning and Disinfection** – Schools should have a rigorous cleaning and sanitation program.
- **Cohorting** – Students should be kept in stable groups with minimal mixing, as practicable.
- **Entrance, Exit, and Movement Within the School** – Schools should have plans to prevent crowding or gathering when students and staff are coming to school, leaving school, or moving between classes.
- **Face Coverings** – Face coverings should be required in alignment with [CDPH guidance](#), which strongly recommends them for children age 2 to second grade and requires them for grades 3 and up. All adults should wear face coverings with specific exemptions.
- **Health Screenings for Students and Staff** – Students and staff should be screened for symptoms of COVID-19 before entering campus.
- **Healthy Hygiene Practices** – Handwashing should be practiced regularly throughout the day and hand sanitizer should be made available in areas without sinks.

- **Identification and Tracing of Contacts** – Schools should designate staff to conduct onsite contact tracing and liaison with Sacramento County Public Health staff on case reporting and investigations.
- **Physical Distancing** – Students and staff are expected to maintain 6 feet of physical distancing from others while at school, especially in stationary settings (e.g. classrooms).
- **Staff Training and Family Education** – Schools must train staff on COVID-19 procedures and educate families about them too.
- **Staff and Student Testing** – Staff should be periodically tested for COVID-19 (about every 2 months). Staff should be familiar with testing resources available to students and families.
- **Triggers for Switching to Distance Learning** – Schools should identify triggers that would cause the closure of a cohort or class or the entire school.

Parents should review their school's reopening plan. If the plan seems insufficient or if the school is not following their plan as written, we recommend contacting school administration and sharing your concerns.

DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION OR CONCERN?

If you have a question for Sacramento County Public Health or you would like to submit your concerns to Public Health please utilize our COVID19 e-mail box: COVID19@saccounty.net. This email is answered regularly and when questions or concerns are submitted in writing we can share the information with the Schools Team to get you a quick and informed response.

The Schools Phone Line should be used exclusively by school staff to report cases and contacts or obtain time sensitive clarification on quarantine, isolation and school closures.

To find out more about the COVID-19 Reopening In-Person Learning Elementary Education Waiver process visit [HERE](#)

COVID-19: QUARANTINE VS. ISOLATION

QUARANTINE keeps someone who was in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 away from others.

If you had close contact with a person who has COVID-19

- Stay home until 14 days after your last contact.
- Watch for symptoms of COVID-19.
- If possible, stay away from people who are at higher-risk for getting very sick from COVID-19.

ISOLATION keeps someone who is sick or tested positive for COVID-19 without symptoms away from others, even in their own home.

If you are sick and think or know you have COVID-19:

Stay home until after

- At least 10 days since symptoms first appeared and
- At least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication and
- Symptoms have improved

If you tested positive for COVID-19 but do not have symptoms:

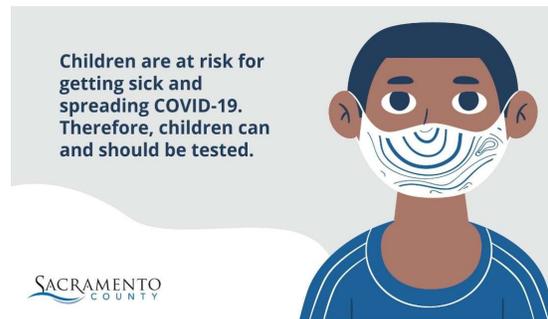
Stay home until after

- 10 days have passed since your positive test

If you live with others, stay in a specific “sick room” or area and away from other people or animals, including pets. Use a separate bathroom, if available.

GET TESTED

Be prepared if your child has had close contact with someone who has COVID-19 (i.e., in-person learning at school). If they are exposed, keep them home and get them tested. Anyone living in the county who is 2 years old and older can get tested at the 11 community-based testing sites in Sacramento County. Find testing locations [HERE](#)



Additional resources can be found on our schools website page [HERE](#)

HELPFUL TIPS FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

If someone, who lives in the child’s house has symptoms of COVID-19 infection or was exposed to COVID-19 and is being tested:

- Children must stay home until test results are known.

If someone in the household is being tested for COVID-19, but does not have symptoms or a close exposure (surveillance testing):

- Children may go to school or childcare.

In either case:

- If the test result is positive, children must stay home for 14 days (quarantine), counting from the last day they had close contact with the person who tested positive.

