

Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19): Guidance for Schools and Childcare Facilities

This document provides guidance for COVID-19 prevention in DC Schools and Childcare Facilities. For additional information, including current District COVID-19-related public health data, please visit coronavirus.dc.gov.

PREVENTION OF COVID-19

COVID-19 prevention strategies for Schools and Childcare Facilities are divided into 2 categories: Everyday prevention measures that should be kept in place during all COVID-19 Community Levels¹ (including **Low**), and enhanced prevention measures that can be implemented during **Medium** or **High** COVID-19 Community Levels OR in response to facility and student-specific needs (e.g. during a facility outbreak or to maintain a safe in-person learning environment for disabled or immunocompromised students). These are summarized below for easy reference. For full details, see *Operational Guidance for K-12 Schools and Early Care and Educational Programs to Support Safe In-Person Learning* at cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-childcare-guidance.html.

- **Everyday prevention measures (regardless of COVID-19 Community Level):**
 - COVID-19 vaccination
 - Staying home when sick
 - COVID-19 diagnostic testing
 - Isolation (for symptomatic or COVID-19 positive people)
 - Quarantine (for people exposed to COVID-19)
 - Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
 - Optimizing indoor ventilation and air quality
 - Cleaning and disinfection
- **Enhanced prevention measures:**
 - For **Medium** or **High** COVID-19 Community Levels (or facility-specific-needs)
 - Masks/respirators
 - COVID-19 screening testing
 - For **High** COVID-19 Community Levels (or facility-specific needs)
 - Avoiding crowding in the facility
 - Prioritizing outdoor activities
 - Cohorting

ADDITIONAL FACILITY RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Contact identification and communication**
 - When a case of COVID-19 is identified at a school or childcare facility, contact identification should be carried out by facility administration to identify and dismiss potential close contacts.
 - Facilities should have a process in place to notify individuals who may have been exposed to COVID-19 at the facility (e.g., a letter, an email, a phone call).
 - Contact identification should focus on COVID-19 **cases** who started having symptoms or tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 5 days. Contact notification

¹ **COVID-19 Community Levels** are a CDC tool to help communities and individuals decide what prevention steps to take based on the COVID-19 level in their area. There are 3 levels: **Low**, **Medium**, and **High**. To look up current COVID-19 Community Levels for DC and other areas of the U.S., see cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/covid-by-county.html.

- should focus on those who were exposed in the last 5 days.
 - Schools and childcare facilities should share the following with potentially exposed staff and parents/guardians of potentially exposed students:
 - Education about COVID-19, including the signs and symptoms of COVID-19
 - Referral to *Guidance for Close Contacts of a Person Confirmed to have COVID-19: Quarantine and Testing*, available at coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance
 - Information on options for COVID-19 testing in the District of Columbia, available at coronavirus.dc.gov/testing.
 - The privacy of the staff or student must be maintained.
- **Reporting:**
 - Schools and childcare facilities **must** notify DC Health if:
 - They have 25 or more confirmed COVID-19 cases tied to a single event that occurred at or was hosted/sponsored by the facility.
 - Notify DC Health by submitting an online form on the DC Health COVID-19 Reporting Requirements website: dchealth.dc.gov/page/covid-19-reporting-requirements.
 - ❖ Submit a Non-Healthcare Facility COVID-19 Consult Form. If you are unable to access the Non-Healthcare Facility COVID-19 Consult Form, please submit the cases via email to covid19.epita@dc.gov.
 - ❖ DC Health must be notified on the same day the outbreak was reported to the facility, as soon as possible after the facility was notified.
 - Note: Childcare facilities licensed by OSSE must report any instance of communicable disease, including COVID-19, to OSSE by submitting an unusual incident report, as required by OSSE licensing regulations.

The guidelines above will continue to be updated as the District's pandemic response evolves. Please visit coronavirus.dc.gov regularly for the most current information.