

Key Areas for School Waivers and COVID-19 Safety Plans

Screenings:

- Per CDPH guidance, daily visual wellness and symptom checks prior to entering campus recommended.
- Please use full [CDC list of symptoms](#) for symptom screening; touchless thermometer preferred.
- Generally, endorsement of *any* symptoms is considered a positive screen (there is no requirement of fever nor minimum number of symptoms needed).
- Questions that should be used: Any symptoms? Any known exposure to COVID-19? Have you or anyone in the home recently tested for COVID-19 (and awaiting results)?

Symptomatic Staff and Students:

Out of caution, anyone who endorses symptoms of COVID-19 should be treated presumptively as if it is COVID-19 until it is ruled out: Stay home in isolation and recommend testing ASAP. Any household contacts in school, such as siblings or relatives, should quarantine until a negative test result is confirmed.

- o **If the test is negative:** they can return per usual school sick protocol (typically at least 24 hours without fever, vomiting, diarrhea).
- o **If the test is positive:** they should isolate and return when CDC criteria is met (at least 10 days have passed from symptom start, symptomatic improvement, and no fever in at least previous 24 hours without fever-reducing medicines).
- o **If a test is refused or not done:** recommend isolating for 10 days as above and return when CDC criteria is met OR a doctor's note (i.e. if symptoms from a chronic known condition, for example) permitting child to return sooner than 10 days per usual school sick protocol. ,

Masks and Cloth Face Coverings:

- Per [state mandate](#), masks or cloth face coverings are to be worn indoors at all times (including buses) and outdoors when unable to socially distance unless exempt. Medically exempt persons may use face shields (preferably with cloth drape to better catch droplets) as their condition allows.
- Per CDPH, masks or cloth face coverings are required for 3rd grade and up except for those with medical exemptions. Masks or cloth face coverings are strongly recommended in TK-2nd grade; a face shield, preferably with cloth drape, may be an alternative.
- Certain pedagogic activities, such as speech therapy, may temporarily switch to face shields (preferably with cloth drape) during lessons with social distancing in place as able.
- Masks or cloth face coverings may be removed indoors for eating and drinking only (please consider how to safely store masks during these times, such as brown paper bag with student name).
- Social distancing and face coverings are both important and should be in place. Social distancing is not a substitute for masking when indoors, though especially important during mask-free times such as lunch.
- Wash hands (or use hand sanitizer if unavailable) before and after mask removal.

Quarantine and Isolation:

When can someone return after a positive test? [CDC criteria](#) is used to determine when someone is "cleared" from isolation:

- ✓ At least 10 days have passed since symptoms started
- ✓ Symptoms have improved overall
- ✓ No fevers in the last 24 hours

(If someone has not had any symptoms, then the test date is used as the isolation start date). Some people take longer to recover than others and some people may need a note from their doctor before they are able to come back depending on their personal health history. Retesting is no longer recommended. Schools may use time- and symptom- based criteria with a doctor's note, public health clearance, or school nurse clearance.

When can someone return after an exposure/quarantine? High-risk contacts quarantine at home 14 days after the last exposure. It is recommended all high-risk contacts get tested. If anyone has symptoms, they should test ASAP; otherwise testing at the end of quarantine is recommended (to rule out asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic infections).

Contact Tracing:

- It's imperative that someone on site is designated to assist with determining contacts at school.
- Per [CDC](#), wearing of masks is not taken into account for general risk assessments in determining when to quarantine (masks/cloth coverings still recommended to reduce spread and are good preventive practice).
- Identify who was within 6' for 15 minutes of cumulative time within a 24 hour period.

- Generally, entire cohort will be considered high-risk and need to quarantine to limit spread within the school. This and guidance re: family notification is addressed in [CDPH Reopening Framework](#).
- Testing recommended for all high-risk contacts; ASAP if symptomatic, otherwise at end of quarantine.

Surveillance Testing:

School staff are essential workers including teachers, paraprofessionals, cafeteria workers, janitors, bus drivers, or any other school employee that may have contact with students or other staff. School districts and schools shall test staff periodically, as testing capacity permits and as practicable. Examples of recommended frequency include testing all staff over 2 months, where 25% of staff are tested every 2 weeks, or 50% every month to rotate testing of all staff over time. Per [CDPH Reopening Framework](#)

- List testing locations and consider test payment/insurance coverage as those are common staff questions
- Link to testing sites: <https://covid19.tularecounty.ca.gov/covid-19-testing-sites/>

Block Scheduling/Cohorts: Size limitations from [CDPH cohort guidance](#) are not an exact requirement in waivers, however it's recommended they be followed as much as practicable for schools applying for waiver. This includes a general desire to keep groups as small/stable as possible, limit mixing of cohorts, etc. If cohorting is done per their guidance, when a positive case is identified, the cohort can be quarantined without it affecting the other classes or rest of the school. The smaller the cohorts, the smaller the number of students that are affected each time.

- A/B schedule with shared teacher is allowable per CDPH guidance (though not preferred from an infection control standpoint, ideally each group would have their own stable teacher).
- A blocked scheduling plan to consider is a Mon/Tues (A) and Th/Fri (B) blocking if it works with your school. It'd have some advantages particularly with cleaning (Wed and weekend deep cleans between cohorts) and potentially when doing exposure risk assessments with contact tracing (48 hr before symptom start, so timing can be a consideration here). If this does not work for your school, deep cleaning between every cohort recommended.
- Also, please be advised that if cohorts share the same teacher and/or aides, there is an increased risk of exposure between A/B cohorts. In event of positive case in cohort, teacher/aide will likely need to quarantine which will affect staffing for other cohort; if teacher/aide is positive, both classes quarantine. This should be communicated with families.

Lunch and recess: Goal is to remain in cohorts as much as possible and limit gathering points like cafeteria lines.

- Eating in classroom or outdoors preferred, maintaining 6-ft social distancing between persons
- Consider sack lunches or pre-plated meals to reduce lines
- Consider staggered lunch times and staggered recesses to limit chance of cohort mixing
- Consider designated play areas for each cohort
- Staff breakrooms and lunch times are also exposure risks, same infection prevention measures apply for adults

Social Distancing and Activities:

- Social distancing and face coverings for staff during all breaks, consider staff-to-staff exposure risk (not just from students)
- Per CDPH, no band (woodwinds, brass), indoor singing, or indoor vigorous exercise
- Per CDPH, desks and seating at least 6 feet apart; also for any other activities and bus

Buses:

- Consider seating back to front per bus pick-up route to avoid passing by in aisles; seat siblings together
- Face coverings for children and driver while in bus (and children/parents waiting for bus)
- Keep windows open as weather allows
- Maintain 6-ft social distancing on buses
- Bus cleaning plan

CDPH References:

- [CDPH COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School-Based Programs 8/3/2020](#)
- [CDPH COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Learning Framework for K-12 Schools in California, 2020-2021 School Year 7/17/2020](#)
- [CDPH Guidance on the Use of Face Coverings 6/18/2020](#)
- [Cohort Guidance Summary 8/25/2020](#)
- [CDPH Cohort FAQ 9/4/2020](#)