

# Cal/OSHA COVID-19 General Checklist for Schools and School-Based Programs

July 17, 2020

This checklist is intended to help schools and school-based programs implement their plan to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace and is supplemental to the [Guidance for Schools and School-Based Programs](#). This checklist is a summary and contains shorthand for some parts of the guidance; familiarize yourself with the guidance before using this checklist.



## General Measures

- Establish and continue communication with local and State authorities to determine current disease levels and control measures in your community.
- Establish and implement a workplace-specific COVID-19 prevention plan to protect employees that includes:
  - The person(s) responsible for implementing the plan.
  - A risk assessment and the measures that will be taken to prevent spread of the virus.
  - Use of face coverings, in accordance with the [CDPH guidance](#).
  - Training and communication with workers and worker representatives on the plan.
  - A process to check for compliance and to document and correct deficiencies.
  - A process to investigate COVID-cases, alert the local health department, and identify and isolate close workplace contacts and infected workers.
  - Protocols for when the workplace has an outbreak, in accordance with [CDPH guidance](#).
  - Ensure that any external community organizations that use the facilities also follow this guidance.
  - Develop a plan for the possibility of repeated closures when persons associated with the facility or in the community become ill with COVID-19.
  - Develop a plan to further support students with access and functional needs who may be at increased risk of becoming infected or having unrecognized illness due to COVID-19.



## Promote Healthy Hygiene Practices

- Teach and reinforce [washing hands](#), avoiding [contact with one's eyes, nose, and mouth](#), and [covering coughs and sneezes](#) among students and staff.
- Consider portable handwashing stations throughout a site and near classrooms to minimize movement and congregations in bathrooms to the extent practicable.

- Develop routines enabling students and staff to regularly wash their hands at staggered intervals.
- Ensure adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors, including soap, tissues, no-touch trashcans, face coverings, and hand sanitizers with at least 60% ethyl alcohol for staff and children who can safely use hand sanitizer.
- Face coverings must be used in accordance with [CDPH guidelines](#) unless a person is exempt as explained in the guidelines.
- Provide and ensure staff use face coverings and all required protective equipment.
- Strongly recommend that all students and staff be immunized each autumn against influenza unless contraindicated by personal medical conditions.



## Face Coverings

- Face coverings must be used in accordance with [CDPH guidelines](#) unless a person is exempt as explained in the guidelines.
- Teach and reinforce use of [face coverings](#), or in limited instances, face shields.
- Remind students and staff not to touch the face covering and to [wash their hands](#) frequently.
- Provide information to all staff and families in the school community on [proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings](#).
- Train on policy on how to address people who are exempted from wearing a face covering.
- When a cloth face covering or face shield is temporarily removed for meals, snacks, naptime, or outdoor recreation, ensure it is placed in a clean paper bag marked with the student's name and date until it needs to be put on again.
- Exclude students from campus if they are not exempt from wearing a face covering under CDPH guidelines and refuse to wear one. Develop a protocol to provide a face covering to students who inadvertently fail to bring a face covering to school to prevent unnecessary exclusions. Offer alternative educational opportunities for students who are excluded from campus.
- All staff must use face coverings in accordance with [CDPH guidelines](#) unless Cal/OSHA standards require respiratory protection.
- In limited situations where face coverings cannot be used, wear a face shield instead while maintaining physical distance from others.
- Workers or other persons handling or serving food must use gloves in addition to face coverings. Consider disposable gloves to supplement frequent handwashing or use of hand sanitizer, for example, for workers who are screening others for symptoms or handling commonly touched items.



## Ensure Teacher and Staff Safety

- Ensure staff maintain physical distancing from each other.
- Ensure that all staff use face coverings in accordance with CDPH guidelines and Cal/OSHA standards.

- Support staff who are at higher risk for severe illness or who cannot safely distance from household contacts at higher risk, by providing options such as telework, where appropriate, or teaching in a virtual learning or independent study context.
- Conduct all staff meetings, professional development training and education, and other activities involving staff with physical distancing measures in place, or virtually, where physical distancing is a challenge.
- Minimize the use of and congregation of adults in staff rooms, break rooms, and other settings.
- Implement procedures for daily symptom monitoring for staff.



## Intensify Cleaning, Disinfection, and Ventilation

- Consider suspending or modifying use of site resources necessitating sharing or touching items, such as using personal reusable water bottles instead of shared drinking fountains.
- Staff should [clean and disinfect](#) frequently touched surfaces at school and on school buses at least daily and, as practicable, frequently throughout the day by trained custodial staff.
- Disinfect buses after transporting any individual who is exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms. Provide drivers with disinfectant wipes and disposable gloves.
- Limit use and sharing of objects and equipment, such as toys, games, art supplies, and playground equipment. When shared use is allowed, clean and disinfect between uses.
- Use products approved for use against COVID-19 on the [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)-approved](#) list and train workers on chemical hazards, product instructions, ventilation requirements, Cal/OSHA requirements, the CDPH [asthma-safer cleaning methods](#), and as required by the Healthy Schools Act, as applicable. Avoid use of products containing peroxyacetic (peracetic) acid, sodium hypochlorite (bleach), or quaternary ammonium compounds.
- Provide proper PPE to custodial staff and other employees who clean and disinfect.
- Establish a cleaning and disinfecting schedule to avoid both under- and over-use of cleaning products.
- Ensure safe and correct application of disinfectant and keep products away from students.
- Ensure proper ventilation during cleaning and disinfecting. Introduce fresh outdoor air as much as possible. Do thorough cleaning when children are not present. When cleaning, air out the space before children arrive. If using air conditioning, use the setting that brings in outside air. Replace and check air filters and filtration systems to ensure optimal air quality.
- If opening windows poses a safety or health risk, maximize central air filtration for HVAC systems (targeted filter rating of at least MERV 13).
- Consider upgrades to improve air filtration and ventilation.
- Ensure all water systems are [safe](#) to use to minimize risk of [Legionnaires' disease](#).



# Implementing Distancing Inside and Outside the Classroom

## ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

- Maximize space between students and between students and the driver on school buses and open windows to the greatest extent practicable.
- Minimize contact between students, staff, families, and the community at the beginning and end of the school day. Minimize contact between adults at all times.
- Stagger arrival and drop off-times and locations as consistently as practicable as to minimize scheduling challenges for families.
- Designate routes for entry and exit, using as many entrances as feasible.
- Put in place other protocols to limit direct contact with others as much as practicable.
- Implement health screenings of students and staff upon arrival.
- Equip each bus with extra unused face coverings for students who may have failed to bring one.

## CLASSROOM SPACE

- Students must remain in the same space and in cohorts as small and consistent as practicable, including for recess and lunch. Keep the same students and teacher or staff with each group to the greatest extent practicable.
- Prioritize the use and maximization of outdoor space for activities where practicable.
- Minimize movement of students and teachers or staff as much as practicable. In secondary schools or in situations where students have individualized schedules, plan for ways to reduce mixing among cohorts and to minimize contact.
- Maximize space between seating and desks, arrange seating to minimize face-to-face contact, and use physical partitions where needed. Distance teacher and other staff desks at least six feet away from student desks.
- Consider redesigning activities for smaller groups and rearranging furniture and play spaces to maintain separation.
- Develop instructions for maximizing spacing and ways to minimize movement in both indoor and outdoor spaces that are easy for students to understand and are developmentally appropriate.
- Do not permit activities where there is increased likelihood for transmission from contaminated exhaled droplets, such as band and choir practice and performances.
- Only conduct activities involving singing outdoors.
- Implement procedures for turning in assignments to minimize contact.
- Consider using privacy boards or clear screens to increase and enforce separation between staff and students.

## NON-CLASSROOM SPACES

- Limit nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving other groups at the same time.

- Limit communal activities where practicable. Alternatively, stagger use, properly space occupants, and disinfect in between uses.
- Consider use of non-classroom space for instruction, including outdoor space if weather permits.
- Minimize congregate movement through hallways as much as practicable.
- Serve meals outdoors or in classrooms instead of cafeterias or group dining rooms where practicable. Where cafeterias or group dining rooms must be used, keep students together in their cohort groups, ensure physical distancing, and consider assigned seating. Serve individually plated or bagged meals. Avoid sharing of foods and utensils and buffet or family-style meals.
- Consider holding recess activities in separated areas designated by class.



## Limit Sharing

- Keep each child's belongings separated and in individually labeled storage containers, cubbies or areas. Ensure belongings are taken home each day to be cleaned.
- Ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing of high-touch materials (art supplies, equipment, etc.) to the extent practicable or limit use of supplies and equipment to one group of children at a time and clean and disinfect between uses.
- Avoid sharing electronic devices, clothing, toys, books, and other games or learning aids as much as practicable. If sharing occurs, clean and disinfect between uses.



## Train All Staff and Educate Families

- Train all staff and provide educational materials to families in enhanced sanitation practices, physical distancing guidelines and their importance, [proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings](#), screening practices, COVID-19 [symptoms](#) and transmission, how to prevent COVID-19 spread, when to seek medical attention, the plan and procedures to follow when someone becomes sick at school, and the plan and procedures to protect workers from COVID-19 illness.
- Consider conducting the training and education virtually, or, if in-person, ensure distancing is maintained.



## Check for Signs and Symptoms

- Prevent discrimination against students who (or whose families) were or are diagnosed with COVID-19 or who are perceived to be a COVID-19 risk.
- Actively encourage staff and students who are sick or who have recently had [close contact](#) with a person with COVID-19 to stay home.
- Develop policies that encourage sick staff and students to stay home without fear of reprisal and ensure staff, students, and students' families are aware of these policies.
- Symptom screenings and/or temperature checks for all staff and students entering the facility.

- Conduct visual wellness checks of all students upon arrival or establish procedures for parents to monitor at home.
- Take temperatures with a no-touch thermometer.
- Ask all individuals if they or anyone in their home is exhibiting [COVID-19 symptoms](#).
- Make available and encourage use of handwashing stations or hand sanitizer.
- Document/track incidents of possible exposure and notify local health officials, staff and families immediately of any positive case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality.
- If a student shows symptoms of COVID-19, communicate with the parent/caregiver and refer to the student's health history form and/or emergency card.
- Monitor staff and campers throughout the day for signs of illness; send home campers and staff with a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, cough or other [COVID-19 symptoms](#).
- Develop policies not to penalize students and families for missing class.



## Plan for When a Staff Member, Child, or Visitor Becomes Sick

- Work with school administration, nurses and other healthcare providers to identify an isolation room or area to separate anyone who exhibits symptoms of COVID-19.
- Immediately require any students or staff exhibiting symptoms to wear a face covering and wait in an isolation area until they can be transported home or to a healthcare facility, as soon as practicable.
- Establish procedures to arrange for safe transport home or to a healthcare facility, as appropriate, when an individual is exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms.
- For serious injury or illness, call 9-1-1 without delay. Seek medical attention if COVID-19 symptoms become severe, including persistent pain or pressure in the chest, confusion, or bluish lips or face. Updates and further details are available on [CDC's webpage](#).
- Notify local health officials immediately of any positive case of COVID-19, and exposed staff and families as relevant while maintaining [confidentiality](#) as required by state and federal laws.
- Close off areas used by any individual suspected of being infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 and do not use before cleaning and disinfection. To reduce risk of exposure, wait 24 hours before you [clean and disinfect](#). If it is not possible to wait 24 hours, wait as long as practicable. Ensure a [safe and correct application](#) of disinfectants using personal protective equipment and ventilation recommended for cleaning. Keep cleaning and disinfectant products away from students.
- Advise sick staff members and campers not to return until they have met CDC criteria to discontinue [home isolation](#), including at least 3 days with no fever, symptoms have improved and at least 10 days since symptoms first appeared.
- Ensure that students, including students with disabilities, have access to instruction when out of class.

- Offer distance learning based on the unique circumstances of each student who would be put at risk by an in-person instructional model.
- Implement the necessary processes and protocols when a school has an outbreak, in accordance with [CDPH guidelines](#).
- Investigate the COVID-19 illness and exposures and determine if any work-related factors could have contributed to risk of infection. Update protocols as needed to prevent further cases.
- Update protocols as needed to prevent further cases. See the CDPH guidelines, [Responding to COVID-19 in the Workplace](#).



## Maintain Healthy Operations

- Monitor staff absenteeism and have a roster of trained back-up staff where available.
- Monitor the types of illnesses and symptoms among your students and staff to help isolate them promptly.
- Designate a staff liaison or liaisons to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. Train employees on who they are and how to contact them. Train the liaison to coordinate the documentation and tracking of possible exposure, in order to notify local health officials, staff and families in a prompt and responsible manner.
- Maintain communication systems that allow staff and families to self-report symptoms and receive prompt notifications of exposures and closures, while maintaining confidentiality.
- Consult with local health departments if routine testing is being considered by a local educational agency.
- Support students who are at higher risk for severe illness or who cannot safely distance from household contacts at higher risk, by providing options such as virtual learning or independent study.



## Considerations for Reopening and Partial or Total Closures

- Check State and local orders and health department notices daily about transmission in the area or closures and adjust operations accordingly.
- When a student, teacher, or staff member tests positive for COVID-19 and has exposed others at the school, refer to the [CDPH Framework for K-12 Schools](#). Consult with the local health department to determine whether to close the school or to clean and quarantine exposed persons, based on the risk level within the community; close off the classroom or office where the patient was based and do not use the areas until cleaned and disinfected; communicate with students, parents, teachers, staff and the community; inform staff regarding labor laws and leave time (See additional [information on government programs supporting sick leave and worker's compensation for COVID-19](#), including worker's sick leave rights under [the Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#) and employee's rights to workers' compensation benefits and presumption of the work-relatedness of COVID-19 pursuant to the [Governor's Executive Order N-62-](#)

[20](#), while that Order is in effect); remind parents, teachers, and staff to use physical distancing in the community and discourage them from gathering elsewhere; develop a plan for continuity of education, including nutrition; and maintain regular communications with the local public health department.

