



# HAVERHILL PUBLIC SCHOOL NURSES

CHARTING THE COURSE FOR SCHOOL HEALTH

Haverhill Public Schools will align its COVID-19 protocols with MDPH as defined below. As new guidance is published, the district will review and amend as needed.

## **COVID-19 Isolation and Exposure Guidance for Children and Staff in Child Care, K-12, Out-of-School Time (OST) and Recreational Camp/Program Settings**

Guidance for children and staff in certain settings

### **Overview**

Effective August 15, 2022, children and staff in child care, K-12, out-of-school time (OST) and recreational camp settings should follow the below guidance.<sup>1</sup>

- A **rapid antigen test**, such as a self-test, is preferred to a PCR test in most situations.
- To count days for isolation, Day 0 is the first day of symptoms OR the day the day positive test was taken, whichever is earlier.
- Contact tracing is no longer recommended or required in these settings, but schools or programs must continue to work with their Local Board of Health in the case of outbreaks.
- The Commonwealth is not recommending universal mask requirements, surveillance testing of asymptomatic individuals, contact tracing, or test-to-stay testing in schools. While masks are not required or recommended in these settings except for in school health offices, any individual who wishes to continue to mask, including those who face higher risk from COVID-19, should be supported in that choice. For those who need or choose to mask, masking is never required in these settings while the individual is eating, drinking, sleeping or outside.
- All individuals are encouraged to stay up-to-date with vaccination as vaccines remain the best way to help protect yourself and others.

### **Isolation and exposure guidance and protocols**

Guidance for Children and Staff in Child Care, K-12, OST, and Recreational Camp Settings:

- Quarantine is no longer required nor recommended for children or staff in these settings, regardless of vaccination status or where the exposure occurred. All exposed individuals may continue to attend programming as long as they remain asymptomatic. Those who can mask should do so until Day 10, and it is recommended that they test on Day 6 of exposure. If symptoms develop, follow the guidance for symptomatic individuals, below.
- Children and staff who test positive must isolate for at least 5 days. If they are asymptomatic or symptoms are resolving and they have been fever free without the use

of fever-reducing medicine for 24 hours, they may return to programming after Day 5 and should wear a high-quality mask through Day 10:

- If the individual is able to mask, they must do so through Day 10.
  - If the child has a negative test on Day 5 or later, they do not need to mask.
  - If the individual is unable to mask, they may return to programming with a negative test on Day 5 or later.
- Symptomatic individuals can remain in their school or program if they have mild symptoms, are tested immediately onsite, and that test is negative. Best practice would also include wearing a mask, if possible, until symptoms are fully resolved. For symptomatic individuals, DPH recommends a second test within 48 hours if the initial test is negative.
  - If the symptomatic individual cannot be tested immediately, they should be sent home and allowed to return to their program or school if symptoms remain mild and they test negative, or they have been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and their symptoms are resolving, or if a medical professional makes an alternative diagnosis. A negative test is strongly recommended for return.

Note: At this time, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved or authorized any at-home rapid antigen test for use in children under 2 years of age. However, at-home rapid antigen tests may be used off-label in children under 2 years of age for purposes of post-exposure, isolation, and symptomatic testing. It is recommended that parents or guardians deciding to test children under 2 years of age administer the at-home rapid antigen test themselves.

## COVID-19 symptoms

- Fever (100.0° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills
  - Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Muscle aches or body aches
  - Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
  - Sore throat, *when in combination with other symptoms*
  - Nausea, vomiting, *when in combination with other symptoms*
  - Headache, *when in combination with other symptoms*
  - Fatigue, *when in combination with other symptoms*
  - Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies), *when in combination with other symptoms*
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Jeffrey C. Riley  
*Commissioner*  
*Massachusetts Department of*  
*Elementary and Secondary Education*



Margaret Cooke  
*Commissioner*  
*Massachusetts Department of Public Health*

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Superintendents, Charter School Leaders, Assistant Superintendents,  
Collaborative Leaders, Leaders of Approved Special Education Schools  
**From:** Jeffrey C. Riley, Commissioner, Department of Elementary and Secondary  
Education and Margaret Cooke, Commissioner, Department of Public Health  
**Date:** August 15, 2022  
**Subject:** Update on COVID-19 Matters in K-12 Schools for Fall 2022

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Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Department of Public Health (DPH) have provided guidance and support to K-12 schools and districts across the Commonwealth to promote the health and safety of our students, staff, and families.

As we prepare to open schools and welcome back students in the coming weeks, we are all looking forward to providing our students with in-person experiences that will offer rich learning opportunities, robust extra-curricular activities, and an educational environment for positive social interactions among students and between students and staff.

With COVID-19 vaccines now readily available, treatments accessible to those at higher risk for severe disease, and widespread availability of self-tests, DESE and DPH have continued to evolve our support for schools in collaboration with the medical community and in line with the most [recent CDC guidance](#) issued August 11, 2022. This upcoming school year, districts and schools should focus their COVID mitigation strategies towards vulnerable and symptomatic individuals.

The Commonwealth is not recommending universal mask requirements, surveillance testing of asymptomatic individuals, contact tracing, or test-to-stay testing in schools. Districts and schools are reminded that there is no longer any statewide masking mandate in schools (other than school health offices) and there is no testing requirement for schools. We concluded our statewide testing program in the spring and have provided schools and districts with information about how they can purchase face masks and testing kits, if they choose to do so to address local needs. This memo is intended to provide a brief update and review of recommendations on COVID-19 matters as we begin the 2022-23 school year. As always, schools and districts should continue to call the Rapid Response Help Center at 781-338-3500 with any questions or concerns.



**HAVERHILL PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR (including Summer Programming 2023)  
***MEDICAL DIRECTIVE - Dismissal/Exclusion Guidelines***

**Guiding Principles**

1. Our collective health relies, in part, on individual attention and responsibility. If you, as a staff member, or student feels unwell, please consider the need to stay home.
2. Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) communicable disease guidelines for quarantine and isolation will be followed when an individual tests positive for, or is exposed to, any communicable disease.
3. School Nurse assessment is guided by Standards of Practice for School Nurses.
4. Each student or staff illness is assessed to determine the need for dismissal or exclusion, based on State and Federal recommendations, and these guidelines.
5. If a student or staff member is sent home from school by the school nurse, he/she is not allowed to return to school the following day, as most symptoms require at least 24 hours to resolve.

**Symptoms/Conditions for Dismissal and/or Exclusion**

1. **Fever** (elevated temperature of 100.0 or higher) upon arrival or during school hours. Must remain home until fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicines such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil).
2. **Vomiting and/or diarrhea**, with 2 or more episodes within the previous 24 hours or during the school day. Once dismissed, the student may not return to school until there has been no vomiting and/or diarrhea for 24 hours.
3. **Rash of unknown origin**, particularly those accompanied by fever or behavior change suggestive of infectious disease. Must be evaluated by a doctor and must have documentation that the student is able to return to school and is not contagious.
4. **Live head lice**. Must be treated at home, and then re-checked by the school nurse, preferably with parent/guardian present, upon return to school.
5. Irritability, lethargy, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, or other signs of severe illness.

These medical directives must be renewed annually for each academic school year, and are effective from August 29, 2022 through August 28, 2023.

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John L. Maddox, M.D., School Physician

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Date

## **Vaccine Clinics**

Vaccines continue to be the best way to protect individuals against the effects of COVID-19. DESE and DPH strongly recommend that all faculty, staff, and students, including the Commonwealth's youngest children ages 6 months – 5 years, receive the COVID-19 vaccine primary series and all boosters, as they become eligible for them. For schools that are interested in setting up vaccine clinics on campus with a DPH-approved mobile vaccination provider, including clinic staff and vaccination administrators, free of charge, please fill out a request via the [online form](#). Please see this [link](#) for more information.

Throughout this August and September, DPH is offering [free family-friendly vaccine clinics to prepare teachers, staff, students, and family members](#) for going back to school. No ID, health insurance, or appointment is needed at these clinics, and fliers to promote them to families are available in multiple languages and can be found [here](#). Information about these vaccination clinics and others across the state is available online at [VaxFinder](#).

In addition to recommending the COVID-19 vaccine, it continues to be essential that the educational and public health communities, as well as cities and towns, work together to ensure as many children and adults as possible receive flu vaccines. This will reduce the number of students and staff who need to stay home due to illness.

## **Isolation and Exposure Precautions**

Effective August 15, 2022, all students and staff in childcare, school in grades K-12, or participating in out-of-school time (OST) and recreational camp settings should follow the updated isolation and exposure guidance issued by DPH, in alignment with recently issued guidance from CDC. No asymptomatic person should be excluded from school as a result of exposure, regardless of vaccination status or exposure setting.

As a reminder, contact tracing is no longer recommended statewide in K-12 schools.

## **Masking**

There is no statewide requirement for masking in schools, apart from in [school health offices](#), and the Commonwealth is not recommending universal mask requirements. As always, any individual who wishes to continue to mask, including those who face higher risk from COVID-19, should be supported in that choice.

Schools and districts may purchase masks through the [statewide contract](#).

## **COVID-19 Testing**

With the conclusion of the statewide K-12 COVID-19 testing program, staffing, supplies, software, and all other services previously provided via CIC Health are no longer available through the state.

In line with recent CDC guidance, screening testing and test to stay are not recommended. As communicated in an [updated testing memo](#) released on May 25, 2022, **DESE and DPH strongly recommend that schools and districts interested in implementing their own testing program during the 2022-23 school year limit that program to symptomatic rapid testing.** Districts

and schools choosing to implement in-school testing must secure whatever staffing and test supplies are necessary to implement their program.

Additionally, districts are encouraged to purchase a supply of self-tests for students and staff through [statewide contract](#) HSP 41 to prepare for possible outbreaks.

Please note, per DPH and Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) requirements, all schools administering in-school testing either by using the remaining supply of tests from the state or their own supply must adhere to the following requirements:

<b>Situation</b>	<b>CLIA Certificate of Waiver Required</b>	<b>Reporting to DPH Required (Positives Only)</b>	<b>Provider's Order Required</b>
BinaxNOW "Professional" or other official Point of Care test, any testing reason	Yes	Yes	Yes
Self-Test sent home, any testing reason	No	No	No
Self-Test performed and result interpreted at school by the individual being tested, any testing reason	No	No	No
Self-Test performed or result interpreted by third party (e.g. staff), any testing reason	Yes	Yes	Yes

*Reporting positive results:*

Beginning in summer 2022 and going forward, only positive tests conducted at school sites by school staff (per the above CLIA parameters) must be reported to the DPH using SimpleReport. These results will be incorporated into DPH's aggregate case reporting. Positive case counts no longer will be reported through DESE's security portal.

For detailed information regarding the above requirements, including applying for the CLIA Certificate of Waiver, obtaining a provider's order, and using SimpleReport, please refer the [COVID-19 Testing FAQ](#) released on June 9, 2022. Schools and districts interested in applying for a CLIA Certificate of Waiver should do so as soon as possible. Questions may be directed to [k12covid19testing@mass.gov](mailto:k12covid19testing@mass.gov).

**School Health Offices**

School nurses have an important role in monitoring and supporting the health and safety of students and school staff and supporting safe in-person learning. The [DPH guidance](#) for school health offices, condensed in spring 2022, addresses areas of particular importance to school

nurses, including PPE, key health office protocols, procedures for working with specific populations, and working with and communicating with local boards of health.

### **Operational Considerations**

Structured learning time: Please note that the 180-day school year requirement remains in effect. Any school closures due to COVID-19 emergencies will be treated like snow day closures, with additional days added to the school year if needed to meet the 180-school day requirement.

Attendance reporting: As a reminder, schools can reduce student absences by allowing individual students to livestream their classes from home during the period of isolation, if feasible.

Ventilation: Districts are encouraged to continue to:

Assess their ventilation systems and ensure they are operating properly

Conduct routine maintenance (such as replacing filters and repairing duct work)

Consider adding air purifiers

Increase outdoor air flow supply such as by opening windows in classrooms as feasible

Open windows on school buses as feasible

More information about ventilation is available [here](#).

### **Rapid Response Help Center**

The Rapid Response Help Center continues to be a resource for district and school leaders.

Please contact the Help Center at 781-338-3500 with any questions. Districts and schools must contact the Help Center for guidance if they are experiencing a high volume of cases.

Notification should also be provided to local boards of health and district leadership.

### **Closing**

We are grateful for your diligence and resourcefulness throughout the pandemic. We will continue to share information through the [Commissioner's Weekly Update](#) and on the [Guidance/On the Desktop](#) section of the DESE website.



