

HOWARD ZUCKER, MD, JD, COMMISSIONER

SHANNON L. TAHOE, INTERIM COMMISSIONER

School (PreK-12) Guidance:
COVID-19
Please distribute to all appropriate staff.

Introduction

Education Health 05 2020 regarding the novel Coronavirus- which has been renamed COVID-19. This document is an important update to the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and New York State Education Department (NYSED) guidance. As a reminder, the situation is rapidly evolving and for the latest numbers and/or guidance please refer to the NYSDOH and NYSED websites within this guidance.

NYSDOH and NYSED are providing this guidance to update schools on next steps needed to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak as well as recommend non-pharmaceutical interventions and community containment measures that reduce disease transmission in the community, including schools. If COVID-19 exhibits greater severity, NYSDOH and NYSED may issue revised guidance, which may recommend additional steps.

NYSDOH will continue to assess the

Travel

to cover the mouth or nose is preferable to using the hands. Always perform hand hygiene after sneezing,

Communication

It is

Frequently Asked School and COVID-19 Questions and Answers

Are schools required to close if any students or staff are diagnosed with COVID-19?

When a school initially has a student or staff that tests positive, the entire school will close for 24 hours while the local department of health investigates and sets forth a plan for any further precautionary measures that the school must take to contain exposure, which may result in additional closure. During this time, the entire school building shall be disinfected in accordance with guidelines from NYSDOH with approved cleaners. Additional closure beyond the 24

Acronyms

CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
LHD	Local Health Department
NPI	Non-pharmaceutical Intervention
NYCDOHMH	New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
NYS DOH	New York State Department of Health
NYSED	New York State Education Department

Glossary

Chronic Medical Condition - a health related state that lasts for a long period of time (e.g. cancer, asthma)

Community Mitigation Intervention or Measure - a strategy for the implementation at the community level of interventions designed to slow or limit the transmission of a pandemic virus.

Environmental Infection Control - routine cleaning and disinfection strategies applied for the environmental management of illness.

Fever - the temporary increase in the body's temperature in response to some disease or illness.

Fever-Like Symptoms/Signs of a Fever - a child has a fever when their temperature is at or above one of these levels:

- 100.4°F (38°C) measured in the bottom (rectally)
- 99.5°F (37.5°C) measured in their mouth (orally)
- 99°F (37.2°C) measured under their arm (axillary)

An adult probably has a fever when their temperature is above 99 - 99.5°F (37.2 - 37.5°C) and (e) (1) B7C 0 Tw

School Pandemic Planning Checklist

Schools are important partners in protecting the public's health and safety

Plan for staff and student absences by developing flexible attendance and sick leave policies. Follow NYSDOH guidance for when staff and students may return to school following illness.

Identify critical job functions and plan for coverage with cross training.

Develop a continuity of operations plan for essential central office functions including payroll and ongoing communication with students and parents.

Identify strategies to continue essential student services (e.g., low income students who rely on the school for lunch service)

Please note that hand sanitizers contain alcohol and are flammable. They must not be placed in hallways, or near an open flame or source of sparks (e.g. science labs with Bunsen burners or shop classes) If you require further guidance please contact your BOCES health and safety staff, the [State Education Department's Office of Safety, Health and Environmental Prevention and Control](#) .

For a fact sheet and further information on the use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers in schools please visit the New York State & H Q W H U I R U 6 F K R R Website <https://www.schoolhealthny.com/coronavirus> and under A-Z Resources under H hand sanitizer.

Additional Resources

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

- x [CDC Health Promotion Materials](#), includes downloadable posters;
- x Information on [proper handwashing technique](#); and
- x

Interim Cleaning and Disinfection Guidance for Primary and Secondary Schools for COVID -19

Background:

In December 2019, a new respiratory disease called Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) was detected in China. COVID-19 is caused by a virus (SARS-CoV-2) that is part of a large family of viruses called coronaviruses. To help prevent spread of COVID-19, schools should continue to educate students, faculty and staff about proper hand and respiratory hygiene.

Hand hygiene:

- x Regular hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds should be done:
 - o Before eating;
 - o After sneezing, coughing, or nose blowing;
 - o After using the restroom;
 - o Before handling food;
 - o After touching or cleaning surfaces that may be contaminated; and
 - o After using shared equipment like computer keyboards and mice.

If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. School medical directors should approve and permit the use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers in their facilities without individual's physician orders as alcohol-based hand sanitizers are considered over-the-counter drugs. Student use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers should always be supervised by adults. Parents/guardians can inform the school that they do not want their child to use alcohol-based hand sanitizers by sending a written notice to the school.

Respiratory hygiene:

- x Covering coughs and sneezes with tissues or the corner of elbow; and
- x Disposing of soiled tissues immediately after use.

What steps should schools in NYS take for COVID-19?

Now:

Schools should continue performing routine cleaning. Specific high-risk locations warrant cleaning and disinfection at least daily.

If an individual with laboratory confirmed COVID -19 was symptomatic in a school -setting: Cleaning and disinfection throughout the school.

Routine Cleaning:

Soiled and frequently touched surfaces can be reservoirs for pathogens, resulting in a continued transmission to people. Therefore, for pathogenic microorganisms that can transmit disease through indirect contact (transmission through contaminated surfaces), extra attention must be paid to surfaces that are touched most often by different individuals. As part of standard infection control practices in school settings, routine cleaning should be continued.

In New York State, all primary and secondary schools are required to use green cleaning products. For additional information on the laws regarding the use of green cleaning products, see the [Policies, Guidelines and Report](#) section of NY's Green Cleaning Program website. Routine cleaning of school settings include:

- x Cleaning high contact surfaces that are touched by many different people, such as light switches, handrails and doorknobs/handles.
- x Dust- and wet-mopping or auto-scrubbing floors.
- x Vacuuming of entryways and high traffic

Cleaning and Disinfection:

Cleaning removes germs, dirt and impurities from surfaces or objects, while disinfecting kills germs on surfaces or objects. If a laboratory confirmed case of COVID -19 was symptomatic while in the school setting, custodial staff should perform cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched areas throughout the school.

Step 1: Cleaning: Always clean surfaces prior to use of disinfectants in order to reduce soil and remove germs. Dirt and other materials on surfaces can reduce the effectiveness of disinfectants. For combination products that can both clean and disinfect, always follow the instructions on the specific product label to ensure effective use. In New York State, all primary and secondary schools, state agencies, and state authorities are required to use green cleaning products. For additional information on the laws regarding the use of green cleaning products, see the Policies, Guidelines and Report section of NY's Green Cleaning Program website.

Step 2: Disinfection: Cleaning of soiled areas must be completed prior to disinfection to ensure the effectiveness of the disinfectant product. NYS Green Cleaning Program does not address the use of disinfection products. Disinfection products may be used in school settings as needed at any time. If EPA- and DEC*-registered products specifically labeled for SARS-CoV-2 are not available, disinfect surfaces using a disinfectant labeled to be effective against rhinovirus and/or human coronavirus. If such products are unavailable, it is also acceptable to use a fresh 2% chlorine bleach solution (approximately 1 tablespoon of bleach in 1 quart of water). Prepare the bleach solution daily or as needed. EPA- and DEC*- registered disinfectants specifically labeled as effective against SARS-CoV-2 may become commercially available at a future time and once available, those products should be used for targeted disinfection of frequently touched surfaces.

Examples of frequently touched areas in schools:

- x Classroom desks and chairs;
- x Lunchroom tables and chairs;
- x Door handles and push plates;
- x Handrails;
- x Kitchen and bathroom faucets;
- x Light switches;
- x Handles on equipment (e.g., athletic equipment);
- x Buttons on vending machines and elevators;
- x Shared telephones;
- x Shared

