



County of Sacramento

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Guidance for Schools and School Districts February 20, 2020

On February 11, 2020 the World Health Organization announced Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) as the official name of the current outbreak of coronavirus disease. It was previously referred to as 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV). For up-to-date information regarding COVID-19, see the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

Based on recommendations from CDC, Sacramento County Public Health is communicating with travelers returning from mainland China to Sacramento County to provide guidance about limiting public interactions for 14 days. Travelers returning from mainland China since February 3, 2020 should be excluded from school for 14 days, beginning the day after they left China.

In the unusual event that a student or staff member is identified who recently traveled from mainland China **AND** has symptoms of respiratory illness, such as fever and cough, please take the following steps:

- Separate the individual from others as much as possible and make arrangements for the individual to go home, and
- Contact Sacramento County Public Health at (916) 875-5881.

This guidance is only **for students or staff who traveled from mainland China since February 3**. It does not apply to a student or staff if only their family, friends, or other household members recently traveled from mainland China. At this time, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan do not have widespread transmission of the novel coronavirus and are not considered part of mainland China for this guidance.

Please note that there have been reports of students and others being stigmatized. We urge schools to ensure student and staff privacy and help prevent discrimination.

At this time, there is low risk to residents of California from COVID-19, but schools can take common-sense precautions to prevent the spread of all infectious diseases. These precautions can help prevent the spread of other common illness such as influenza and gastroenteritis. Encourage all students, parents, and staff to take everyday preventive actions:

1. Stay home when sick.

- Remain at home until fever has been gone for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicines.
- Seek immediate medical care if symptoms become more severe, e.g., high fever or difficulty breathing.

2. Use “respiratory etiquette”.

- Cover cough with a tissue or sleeve. See CDC’s Cover Your Cough page (<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/actions-prevent-flu.htm>) for multilingual posters and flyers, posted at the bottom of the webpage.
- Provide adequate supplies within easy reach, including tissues and no-touch trash cans.

3. Wash hands frequently.

- Encourage hand washing by students and staff through education, scheduled time for handwashing, and the provision of adequate supplies.

4. Routinely clean frequently touched surfaces.

5. Separate sick students and staff from others until they can go home. When feasible, identify a “sick room” through which others do not regularly pass.

6. Encourage flu vaccine for those who have not had it this season to reduce illnesses and absences on campus. The flu vaccine will not protect against COVID-19, but is still highly recommended as flu cases are still increasing.

7. Develop policies to respond to outbreaks and communicable diseases:

- Follow the guidance and contact Sacramento County Public Health at (916) 875-5881 with any questions or concerns.
- Update emergency plans so that they are in place before an outbreak occurs.

A NOTE ABOUT FACE MASKS:

CDC does not recommend the routine use of N95 respirators outside of the healthcare setting. N95 masks are not designed for and should not be worn by children.

In a healthcare setting, patients with respiratory illness may be asked to wear a surgical mask to prevent the spread of germs to others when they cough or sneeze. People who are sick should stay home and not go into crowded public places other than to access medical care, as needed. Workers who are sick should follow CDC guidelines and stay home when they are sick.