

Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Information



Coronavirus Disease 2019

Schools: K-12 FAQs

School Reopening

Guidance and Reopening Plans

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- **What guidance documents for school reopening should we follow?**

It is recommended that schools consult the CDPH Industry Guidance, SDCOE recommendations, and the local Public Health Order when creating reopening plans. The California Department of Education's Stronger Together should be used for implementation strategies.

- **CDPH COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School-Based Programs**
- **CDE Stronger Together: A Guidebook for the Safe Reopening of California's Public Schools**
- **SDCOE COVID-19 Recovery and Reopening Plan**
- **San Diego County Public Health Order**

- **Do schools need to submit their reopening plans to the County or SDCOE**

Schools do not need to submit their reopening plans to the County Health and Human Services Agency or San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE), but you may request that your plans be reviewed by those parties. School reopening plans must be easily accessible for viewing on the school's website.

- **Does the CDPH Cohorting Guidance Apply to Schools?**

The cohorting guidance does not apply to schools who have been authorized to reopen for in-person instruction for all students (such as all schools in San Diego County). Schools must continue to adhere to the **CDPH Industry Guidance for Schools**, which does not specify a required cohort size.

- **If San Diego County moves into the purple range from the red range (based on state categories), will the waiver process be reinstated?**

There is no plan to shut down all schools if the County goes back on the State's watch list (same as purple status), and there is no plan to go back to the waiver system at this time.

Cases and School Closures

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- **How does a school notify the Public Health Department of a suspected case of COVID-19 in a student or staff member?**

Schools are required to report to the local health office the presence or suspected presence of any communicable diseases. If a child, staff or facility contact has tested positive for COVID-19 please contact the Epidemiology Unit by phone at **1(888) 950-9905**. Schools should develop a plan for when a staff member, child, or visitor becomes sick.

- **What steps will a school need to take if there is a confirmed positive case at a school of a staff or student? Will the entire school be required to close for a period?**

1. Notify the local public health department. 1888-950-9905.
2. Isolate the case and exclude the individual(s) from school for 10 days from symptom onset or test date.
3. Identify contacts (**†**), quarantine, and exclude exposed contacts (likely the entire cohort (**††**)) for 14 days after the last date the case was present at school while infectious.
4. Recommend testing of contacts, prioritize symptomatic contacts (but will not shorten 14-day quarantine).
5. Disinfect and clean the classroom and primary spaces where case spent significant time.
6. The school remains open
7. The school community must be notified of a known case

(†) A close contact is defined as any individual who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to positive specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated. In some school situations, it may be difficult to determine whether individuals have met this criterion and an entire cohort, classroom, or other group may need to be considered exposed, particularly if people have spent time together indoors.

(††) A cohort is a stable group with fixed membership that stays together for all courses and activities (e.g., lunch, recess, etc.) and avoids contact with other persons or cohorts.

More information can be found in the **COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Learning Framework for K-12 Schools in California, 2020-2021 School Year**

- **When should in-person learning close?**

- Schools should consult with a public health officer before closing (positive cases should already be reported to local health department)
- A classroom cohort goes home when there is a confirmed case (assuming that the entire cohort is considered a contact as defined above)
- A school is closed when multiple cohorts have cases or more than 5% of the school positive
- A district is closed if 25% or more of their schools are closed within a 14-day period. More information can be found in the **COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Learning Framework for K-12 Schools in California, 2020-2021 School Year**

Screening and Testing

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- **Will employees be required to have a temperature check before coming into work?**

Per the San Diego County **public health order** (item 16b), employees are required to have a temperature screening and employers must prohibit entry to the workplace if an employee has a temperature of 100 degrees or more, if they are exhibiting signs of COVID-19 symptoms as described by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, or if they have recently been exposed to a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 (either directly or through a breach of Personal Protective Equipment in the case of healthcare workers/first responders).

Temperature and symptom screenings for employees may be done from home and reported to the school or schools may institute temperature checks with a no-touch thermometer before entry.

CDPH COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School-Based Programs has additional guidance regarding screening for students and staff.

- **Does the CDPH guidance encourage an active screening of students, staff, and other individuals entering campus?**

Since the original June 5th guidance, CDPH has recommended daily visual wellness and symptoms checks prior to individuals entering campus. In order to facilitate those checks, the California Office of Emergency Services has distributed multiple no-touch thermometers for each school throughout the state to local county offices of education. These checks can happen in a variety of ways, including: As the individuals enters the building or during morning homeroom. Students can be asked about their symptoms or can complete a short checklist of symptoms to be handed in. Follow-up to those checklists should occur whenever symptoms of COVID-19 are identified. Adults must have a temperature check, but this could be done at home, via an app, etc. Whichever method is chosen must be documented. There is no requirement for children to have a temperature check upon entering campus. CDPH School Guidance FAQs

- **If a child presents with fever and sore throat but is tested for strep, can they return to campus without a negative COVID test? Or can the school request COVID clearance?**

The student must be out for 10 days if there is one or more symptom. If they are quarantined for exposure, they will be out of school for 14 days. If symptoms develop during this time, then the 10 days symptom free period begins again. While a COVID test is recommended it cannot be required for school return.

- **If a child has a cough and runny nose but no fever, do they need to go home and stay home for 10 days? What determines whether they stay home for 10 days versus 14 days?**

The student must be out for 10 days if there is one or more *symptom*. If they are quarantined for *exposure*, they will be out of school for 14 days. If symptoms develop during the quarantine period, then the 10-day symptom-free period begins again. While a COVID test is recommended it cannot be required for school return. Refer to the SDCOE decision tree regarding symptoms.

- **Will guidance for schools include staff testing recommendations (i.e. guidelines for routine screening on a rotating basis like they have recommended for nursing home staff)?**

The California Department of Public Health recommends periodic surveillance testing for any school employees who may have contact with students or other staff.

Testing is available at over 20 County-coordinated sites. All are open to school personnel and youth over the age of 12. Most locations require appointments, but no appointment walk-in testing is offered at California State University San Marcos, Tubman-Chavez Community Center and the San Ysidro Border, and a drive-in site at Mar Vista High School in Imperial Beach. Specific testing information is available at [211SanDiego.org](https://www.sandiego.gov/211SanDiego.org).

The San Diego County Office of Education is working with the County to open additional testing sites in late September that will be specifically for school staff.

Most students and their caregivers can receive COVID-19 tests through Rady Children's Hospital. Parents should contact their pediatrician or e-mail Rady Children's Hospital at covidcollaborative@rchsd.org.

Students and caregivers who are covered by Kaiser Permanente can consult their pediatrician or physician directly for guidance on COVID-19 testing by visiting www.kp.org.

- **Where can teachers go for testing?**

Testing is available at over **20 County-coordinated sites**. All are open to school personnel and youth over the age of 12. Most locations require appointments, but no appointment walk-in testing is offered at California State University San Marcos, Tubman-Chavez Community Center and the San Ysidro Border, and a drive-in site at Mar Vista High School in Imperial Beach. The San Diego County Office of Education is working with the County to open additional testing sites in late September that will be specifically for school staff. Specific testing information is available at 211SanDiego.org. Most students and their caregivers can receive COVID-19 tests through Rady Children's Hospital. Parents should contact their pediatrician or e-mail Rady Children's Hospital at covidcollaborative@rchsd.org. Students and caregivers who are covered by Kaiser Permanente can consult their pediatrician or physician directly for guidance on COVID-19 testing by visiting www.kp.org.

- **If an employee has been in contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case, how long do they have to wait before returning to work?**

If an employee has been in contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case, they must go home and quarantine for 14 days from last exposure. Testing is recommended but will not shorten 14-day quarantine. The school/classroom remains open.

If the contact is a person on the campus follow the directions outlined in the **COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Learning Framework for K-12 Schools in California, 2020-2021 School Year**

Additionally: "A close contact is someone who spent 15 minutes or more within 6 feet of an individual with COVID-19 infection during their infectious period, which includes, at a minimum, the 48 hours before the individual developed symptoms."
For additional information:

- **COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Learning Framework for K-12 Schools in California, 2020-2021 School Year**
- **SDCOE Fever/COVID-19 Symptom Decision Tree ([click here](#))**
- **If a student is screened and they are sent home due to a fever, what is the process for them returning to school?**

If a student has a fever it is recommended that the family seek guidance from their medical provider. For those who are uninsured please call 2-1-1. COVID-19 testing is available at no cost. County-run testing facilities can test those 12 year or older. The County is also partnering with Rady Children's Hospital to provide testing to youth.

 - **San Diego County Order of the Health Officer: Isolation of people with or likely to have COVID-19**
 - **CDC What to Do if You Are Sick**
 - **CDC Symptom-Based Strategy to Discontinue Isolation for Persons with COVID-19**
 - **Testing in San Diego County**
 - **County, Rady Children's to Test 2,000 Daily for COVID-19**
 - **COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Learning Framework for K-12 Schools in California, 2020-2021 School Year**
 - **SDCOE Fever/COVID-19 Symptom Decision Tree ([click here](#))**
- **If a family does a temperature screening and symptoms check at home, does the student have to be screened a second time at school?**

It is recommended that schools follow the CDPH guidance and the CDE guidance when feasible which recommends both active and passive screening. Passive screening may take place at home in which parents/guardians ensure their child is healthy and can attend school. Schools will need to determine how they will set up their screening procedures and it is recommended to have multiple entry points and screening stations. If the school determines that student temperature screenings are required upon arrival, then families will need to adhere to that schools' policies.

 - **CDPH COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School-Based Programs**
 - **CDE Stronger Together: A Guidebook for the Safe Reopening of California's Public Schools**
- **What temperature should we consider a fever, 100 degrees Fahrenheit or more?**

County Public Health can issue an order that is stricter than the state's requirement. The County defines a temperature of 100 degrees or greater as a fever while the state's threshold is 100.4 (because no-touch thermometers appear to give temperatures that are lower on average than traditional thermometers).

 - **San Diego Order of the Health Office and Emergency Regulations**
 - **CDPH COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School-Based Programs**
- **Are there forms required to track students' temperatures when screened at school?**

There is no form required and nothing needs to be reported to the County or SDCOE. Schools may record information about temperature screenings, for example, to make sure every student is screened every day.

Shared Items

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- **Are there guidelines on what students should be allowed to bring to school (i.e. water bottles, lunches)?**

The **COVID-19 Industry Guidance for Schools and School-Based Programs** does not specify requirements for water bottles, lunches or other items brought from home. If students bring items from home (water bottles, lunches, etc.) ensure that there is not sharing of items and that students take their personal items home each day to be cleaned and sanitized (pg. 14 "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.") If the school is serving meals, then those meals should be individually plated or bagged meals to avoid buffet or family-style meals.

- **Are students allowed to play games with shared equipment or use of playgrounds?**

Games for a single child can be used by another child after disinfecting. However, board games that require children to touch the same items or surfaces during the game should not be provided. It is recommended to limit sharing items whenever possible. Playground equipment may be used in the context of childcare and it is recommended to sanitize equipment before and after use and to keep children in separate and small cohorts.

- **CDPH COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School-Based Programs** (pg. 10: Limit Sharing)
- **CDE Stronger Together: A Guidebook for the Safe Reopening of California's Public Schools**

Physical Distancing

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- **Are students required to be 6ft apart from each other?**

6-foot physical distancing between students is recommended where practicable. In instances where 6-feet of physical distancing would be impossible, such as within a school bus or entering and exiting school, face coverings must be worn. Districts must place teacher and other staff desks at least six feet away from student desks. Consider spacing students' desks/chairs as widely apart as practicable, using markings on classroom floors to promote distancing. When a 6-foot distance cannot be maintained between desks, consider the use partitions or shields between desks.

- **CDPH COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School-Based Programs** (pg. 12 Classroom Spaces)
- **CDE Stronger Together: A Guidebook for the Safe Reopening of California's Public Schools**
- **SDCOE COVID-19 Recovery and Reopening Plan**

- **Are there specific guidelines as to how the use of plexiglass shields at student desks may allow for increased density?**

Plexiglass shields are not required but may be considered for use when physical distancing is not possible. Plexiglass shields should not take the place of physical distancing and the use face coverings.

CDPH COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School-Based Programs

School Operations and Learning Environment

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- **Are there any health orders related to employees that are 65 years or older? Are there waivers for those that need or want to report to work?**

Please refer to the **CDPH COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School-Based Programs**

(p.9) "Support staff and 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 telework, virtual learning or independent study".

According to the **San Diego County Public Health Order** "18. All essential businesses and reopened businesses that remain in operation in accordance with the Order shall make every effort to use telecommuting for their workforces. 19. A strong recommendation is made that all persons who are 65 years old or older, have a chronic underlying condition, or have a compromised immune system self-quarantine themselves at home or other suitable location".

- **Should schools limit nonessential visitors to campus?**

Each district will need to determine their policies regarding nonessential visitors. It is recommended to limit nonessential visitors in order to decrease potential exposure.

CDPH COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School-Based Programs (pg. 9: Non-Classroom Spaces)

- **Can students work with each other in the classroom (such as science labs) if they wear face coverings and gloves?**

It is not recommended that children work in close proximity. However, if it is a required activity, then the students should wear face coverings, disposable gloves, and the space and equipment should be sanitized before and after use. Non-essential activities that require close contact are not recommended. Research has shown that the longer time people spend together indoors the higher the risk of COVID-19 transmission (**CDC**).

- CDPH COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School-Based Programs
- CDE Stronger Together: A Guidebook for the Safe Reopening of California's Public Schools

- **What are the recommendations regarding use of air conditioning in school reopening?**

According to the **CDPH COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School-Based Programs** pg. 10: "Ensure proper ventilation during cleaning and disinfecting. Introduce fresh outdoor air as much as possible, for example, by opening windows where practicable. When cleaning, air out the space before children arrive; plan to do thorough cleaning when children are not present. 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 (e.g., by allowing pollen in or exacerbating asthma symptoms) to persons using the facility, consider alternatives. For example, maximize central air filtration for HVAC systems (targeted filter rating of at least MERV 13). Consider installing portable high-efficiency air cleaners, upgrading the building's air filters to the highest efficiency possible, and making other modifications to increase the quantity of outside air and ventilation in classrooms, offices and other spaces."

Information about air conditioners can be found at the CDC site here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/cooling-center.html>

Reopening of schools and universities by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers

- **Is 6 feet of physical distancing required in eating areas?**

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

See the **California's Industry Guidance for Schools and School-based Programs** pg.13 for more information

- **Will there be an exemption from the 6-foot distance requirement between teacher and student for special Ed students?**

Teachers desks are required to be six feet or more from student desks, however there will be times when teachers need to be closer to a student. If closer interaction is necessary teachers should limit their time in proximity, wear a face covering, and it is recommended for students to wear face coverings if they can safely do so. Guidance on working with medically fragile and other special education students is forthcoming and will be sharing with all schools.

- **CDPH COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School-Based Programs**
- **SDCOE COVID-19 Recovery and Reopening Plan**

- **Can a cohort contain mixed ages (e.g. middle and high school students)?**

Follow industry guidance for school programs. Use stable cohorts if you can in middle school and high school. Try to create class schedules that minimize movement, such as block schedules, and have teachers move instead of students if possible. Avoid students moving around and mixing to the greatest extent possible.

- **Do high schoolers need to stay in one class along with the teachers?**

Follow industry guidance for schools and school-based programs and use stable groups as practicable. With high schools, there may be some movement. Ideally, schools could create block schedules to prevent movement or use the option of having the teacher moving rather than students moving and mixing with other students.

International Travel

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- **How do schools accommodate students who travel internationally, or who cross the border daily to come to school?**
 - For students/staff who cross the US/Mexico border daily to come to school, they do not need to quarantine.
 - If a student or staff member has recently come back from a trip, it is recommended they follow the **CDC Guidelines for After Your Travel**. You can also recommend they consult the **CDC COVID-19 Travel Recommendations by Destination**. Generally, travel is not recommended because within the US and abroad, the risk remains high.
 - There is not a requirement by the state or our local public health order for schools to exclude students/staff based on their recent travel history. Schools must follow **CDPH the guidelines** to check for signs and symptoms (pg. 15 – 16) . You are welcome to share **CDC Guidelines for After Your Travel** with families and staff.

School-Based Programs

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- **What are the recommendations for after-school groups?**

Cohorts should be maintained to the best of a program's ability. For example, students who are together in a classroom during the day could be kept together in the after-school program. Those who are not together in a classroom during the day could be put into a cohort that remains stable each day in the afterschool program.

Does the cohorting guidance apply to afterschool programs??

- **CDPH COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School-Based Programs**
- **CDE Stronger Together: A Guidebook for the Safe Reopening of California's Public Schools**
- **Do organizations based on school campuses need to have their own reopening plan?**
 - This would depend on the school and your organization. Because your organization operates on the school's campus, you should follow the school's Safe Reopening Plan.
 - If your program activities warrant having your own plan for public safety reasons and in order to ensure that your staff and volunteers clearly understand their duties and responsibilities to adhere to the **public health order** and the **CDPH Industry Guidance for Schools and School-Based Programs** then you may decide to develop your own safe reopening plan that is nested or aligned with the school's plan.

Cleaning and Hygiene II

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- **Where are the best locations for hand sanitizers?**

It is recommended that schools provide hand washing stations or hand sanitizer around restrooms, eating areas, classroom entrances and other high touch frequency areas. Sanitizing stations should be located 6 feet apart from one another to maintain physical distancing.

Students and staff should use fragrance-free hand sanitizer when handwashing is not practicable. Sanitizer must be rubbed into hands until completely dry. Note: frequent handwashing is more effective than the use of hand sanitizers.

Ethyl alcohol-based hand sanitizers are preferred and should be used when there is the potential of unsupervised use by children.

Isopropyl hand sanitizers are more toxic when ingested or absorbed in skin.

Do not use hand sanitizers that may contain methanol which can be hazardous when ingested or absorbed.

Children under age 9 should only use hand sanitizer under adult supervision. Call Poison Control if consumed: 1-800-222-1222.

- **CDPH COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School-Based Programs**
- **CDE Stronger Together: A Guidebook for the Safe Reopening of California's Public Schools**
- **Can students use sanitation wipes to clean their desks?**

Under the California Healthy Schools Act (HSA), disinfectants are considered to be pesticides so their application in schools is regulated by the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (CDPR). San Diego County Office of Education recommended limiting classroom staff to using soap and water because of the application of disinfectants requires special training and precautions. Students can clean with soap and water, but not with disinfectants.

Almost all disinfecting products carry a "Keep Out of Reach of Children" warning and an EPA registration number or pesticidal claim that would require HSA training for use in schools. The **COVID-19 INDUSTRY GUIDANCE: Schools and School Based Programs** (revised 7/17/2020) directs schools to choose disinfecting products from those "approved for use against COVID-19 on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)- approved list "N" and follow product instructions." We're not aware of any products on this list that can be used by children.

One of the greatest challenges to using any disinfectant during the school day is "contact time." The directions for each product include the length of time the product must remain in contact with the surface to be effective. The surface should remain wet throughout the contact time to ensure it is effective. In many cases this can be up to 10 minutes. Children shouldn't be allowed to come into contact with wet disinfectants, employees must be trained to apply them, and the products must be secured out of the reach of children when not in use. The combination of these factors makes it very hard to use them safely in classrooms during the day.

PPE and Face Coverings

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- **Is there any guidance on length of time that staff must wear facial coverings?**

All staff must use face coverings in accordance with CDPH guidelines unless Cal/OSHA standards require respiratory protection.

In limited situations where a face coverings cannot be used for pedagogical or developmental reasons, (i.e. communicating or assisting young children or those with special needs) a face shield can be used instead of a cloth face covering while in the classroom as long as the wearer maintains physical distance from others, to the extent practicable. Staff must return to wearing a face covering outside of the classroom.

The recommendation is that staff wear face coverings at all times, especially while indoors or within 6 feet of another person.

COVID-19 Industry Guidance for Schools and School-Based Programs

CDPH Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings

- **Is there any specific guidance on facial coverings for meal service providers?**

Per the **COVID-19 Industry Guidance for Schools and School-Based Programs**: pg. 8 – 9

All staff must use face coverings in accordance with **CDPH guidelines** unless Cal/OSHA standards require respiratory protection.

Workers or other persons handling or serving food must use gloves in addition to face coverings. Employers should consider where disposable glove use may be helpful to supplement frequent handwashing or use of hand sanitizer; examples are for workers who are screening others for symptoms or handling commonly touched items.

- **Is the County Office of Education going to help facilitate the purchase of PPE products for schools/districts?**

Yes, SDCOE can help facilitate purchasing of PPE products. Contact Mark Cavassa (mark.cavassa@sdcoe.net), Senior Director of Maintenance and Operations.

- **How do public schools that received N95 masks go about getting the masks fit tested?**

SDCOE will send out information on N95 use. They will offer an online training with guidance, but there is still no substitute for medical fit testing. LEAs can receive this training but have to contract with medical providers for clearance.

- **Do face shields count as facial coverings?**

When necessary for instructional purposes a teacher/staff can wear a face shield such as when needed for lip reading. If a student is unable to wear a cloth face covering, they should be encouraged to wear a face shield if able. Ideally the face shield should include a drape to reduce the distribution of airborne droplets from the wearer's mouth and nose. A cloth face covering is more protective than a face shield and should be worn whenever a shield is not needed for instructional purposes.

- **CDPH COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School-Based Programs** (pg. 7 - 9)

- **Here is a guide to best practices while wearing a face shield.** Information and recommendations on facial coverings can be found on the **CDC website**.

- **CDPH Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings**

- **Are face shields ok for students in grades 3 and above if they are in their seat, socially distanced, and have plexiglass dividers?**

The guidance states that a cloth face covering is required for 3rd grade and above when indoors and when 6 feet distance is not possible. Ideally the students should wear a face covering AND be 6 feet apart. Dividers and face shields are not as effective and should only be used in specific situations when required for special needs students or instructional reasons (i.e., speech therapy). Outdoor time should be maximized as this is an opportunity where masks can be removed.

- **If a school implements clear barriers between desks, would face coverings still be required?**

Barriers may reduce droplet transmission but may not be as effective as facial coverings, as smaller aerosols may pass over them. As a result, barriers are not a replacement for face coverings. Six feet of distance should be maintained between the teacher and students. Space between students should be maximized to the greatest extent practicable.

- **CDPH COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School-Based Programs**

- **CDE Stronger Together: A Guidebook for the Safe Reopening of California's Public Schools**

- **San Diego County Public Health Order**

- **Are students required to wear face masks if they are less than 6 feet away but facing away from each other?**

It is recommended that students and teachers and everyone else over age 2 not living in the same household should wear facial coverings in situations where the 6-foot distance cannot be maintained, regardless of which way they are facing. It is recommended to distance desks in classrooms as much as is feasible. Face coverings must be used in accordance with CDPH guidelines unless a person is exempt as explained in the guidelines, particularly in indoor environments, on school buses, and areas where physical distancing alone is not sufficient to prevent disease transmission.

- **CDPH COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School-Based Programs**

- **CDE Stronger Together: A Guidebook for the Safe Reopening of California's Public Schools**

- **San Diego County Public Health Order**

- **Who determines if a student is exempt from wearing a face covering?**

There is no governing body or medical body that approves exemptions. However, the student's family can speak with their healthcare provider to determine the best option. We recommend that schools work with the family to further understand why they cannot wear one and see if perhaps experimenting with types of masks can assist (such as a face shield with a drape on the bottom).

People are exempted from the requirement if they are under age 2, have a medical or mental health condition or disability that would make impede them from properly wearing or handling a mask, or when it would inhibit communication with a person who is hearing impaired. The **CDPH Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings** has more information about qualifications for exemption.

According to the **COVID-19 Industry Guidance for Schools and School-Based Programs** (pg. 10) "In order to comply with this guidance, schools must exclude students from campus if they are not exempt from wearing a face covering under CDPH guidelines and refuse to wear one provided by the school. Schools should develop protocols to provide a face covering to students who inadvertently fail to bring a face covering to school to prevent unnecessary exclusions. Schools should offer alternative educational opportunities for students who are excluded from campus."

- **What are the mask requirements for special needs students?**

If a student is exempt from wearing a cloth face covering, work with the parents to discuss an alternative such as a face shield with a drape. Plexiglass may also be used as a barrier between students and teachers. If a student cannot wear any type of facial covering, and a barrier is not possible, the teacher should wear a face shield and a face covering as an extra precaution. Teachers should only wear an N95 mask if the school has a plan in place for proper use, including fit testing and medical clearance.

Activities

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- **What activities can I do with my child at home?**

The County launched the Live Well @ Home initiative, which provides free resources to help community residents find tips and strategies to stay healthy in both mind and body while staying at home. Visit livewellsd.org to learn more! You can pledge to stay home to keep residents safe and save lives.

<https://www.livewellsd.org/content/livewell/home/live-well-every-day/LiveWellatHome.html>

Childcare

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- **What resources are available for childcare or placement during a crisis?**

Visit the **YMCA Childcare Resource Services page** for information on childcare placement in San Diego County. For additional information on childcare for essential workers and at-risk populations seeking financial assistance for childcare, visit <http://www.sandiegoforeverychild.org/covid19/>.

Distance Learning

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- **Are there resources available for students without computers?**

Computers2Kids San Diego is offering refurbished desktops and laptops with Microsoft Office software for \$80 to \$100 for qualified applicants. You can find out more information at: <https://www.c2sdk.org/>

The San Diego Futures Foundation is offering low cost computers. The process is by appointment only and you can apply at: <https://sdfutures.org/>

- **Are there resources for students without access to the internet?**

Cox Connect2Compete is offering free internet for three months for students who qualify for free lunch and/or are low income: <https://www.cox.com/residential/internet/connect2compete.html>

Spectrum is offering COVID-19 Remote Education Credit: <https://www.spectrum.net/support/internet/covid-19-internet-offer-students/>

Visit the California Department of Education for information on Telecom and Data Companies Extending Services and available plans: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/availableinternetplans.asp>

The San Diego County Office of Education has connectivity resources to get students connected to the internet & plans have special promotional rates as part of COVID-19 response. Find out more information at their website [here](#).

- **What resources are available for distance learning/online learning?**

SDCOE offers Distance Learning Resources on their website: <https://covid-19.sdcoe.net/educators>

- **How can students without printers at home make copies needed for school?**

Each district is taking a unique approach to providing resources to students. Reach out to your district for more specific information. Students attending Juvenile Court and Community Schools are provided with any materials they need. You may also email COVID-Education@sdcounty.ca.gov for more specific information

- **How can I rent a library book or audio book now that libraries are closed?**

Visit San Diego County Library online at SDCL.org and click on eLibrary, and follow the steps indicated when checking out a digital title. All you need is a mobile number to start borrowing free digital titles.

- **Where can I find tutoring help?**

UC San Diego is offering free K-12 Virtual Tutoring. It is open to all K-12 students, with priority going to students attending a Title I school. Virtual Tutoring sessions are offered every Tuesday and Friday from 5 - 7pm PST From April 14 to May 22.

You can access the form to sign up **here**

For more information email: hdhwellness@ucsd.edu

For Parents

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- **What should I be telling my children about COVID-19?**

CDC has a one-sheet on speaking to children about COVID-19. Be calm and reassuring. Make yourself available to listen. Avoid language that might blame others and lead to stigma. Take breaks from news or social media. Provide information that is honest and accurate and appropriate for the age of the child. Address any rumors or misinformation they child brings up. It's important to teach children about the importance of proper hand washing and to cover their coughs and sneezes.

CDC One pager

San Diego County Office of Education: Reassurance, Routines, and Regulation. Link **here**

CDC FAQs

My Hero is You, Storybook for Children on COVID-19

Immunizations

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- **If schools return as 100% distance learning, do children still need to be up to date on their immunizations?**

Yes. Children must be current on vaccinations by the first day of enrollment.

Pediatricians are ready to provide these immunizations. It is recommended that families work with their pediatrician, family doctor, or medical home, to obtain their immunizations. Medical offices are making accommodations for children who need appointments. This may be the safest time to go because medical offices are taking extra precautions. Pediatric populations are also at lower risk for COVID-19.

It is critically important from a public health perspective that children receive these immunizations. Preventative services are still critical during this time, and immunizations are one of the most important public health interventions. Read more about the **#CallYourPediatrician** campaign.

- **There is widespread concern that kids have fallen behind in their routine immunizations during COVID-19. Do the Office of Education's plans address providing "catch-up" immunizations at school, even at sites without school-based health centers?**

No, that is not the role of the County Office of Education. Immunization guidelines are state guidelines from the California Department of Public Health. Visit the **CDPH Immunizations page** for more information.

Mental Health

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- **What mental health and stress management resources are available for families during this time?**

Visit the County's COVID-19 website for information on how to manage your mental health and cope during COVID-19: https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/bhs/covid19_resources.html

- Maintaining mental health and wellness during the COVID-19 outbreak: **Tips for maintaining mental health**
- Call the Access & Crisis Line (888-724-7240) for assistance finding mental health resources or for help during a mental health crisis. Available 24/7, answered by trained clinicians, and available in multiple languages
- Coping with a Disaster or Traumatic Event: **Coping with a disaster tip sheet**
- Mental Health America: COVID-19 Resources and Information: <https://mhanational.org/covid19>
- Greater Good's Guide to Well-being During Coronavirus: including resources for parents & educators (published by the Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley): Visit **here**.

- **How can the Crisis line be accessed?**

Text TALK to 741741, where you can text with a trained counselor for free.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: Call 1-800-273-8255 or visit <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

Nutrition

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- **Besides school lunches, what resources are available for nutrition assistance?**
 - Call 2-1-1 for help locating nutrition program and resources in your community
 - Visit the CalFresh website to learn more or to apply: <https://www.getcalfresh.org/?source=sandiegoweb>
 - San Diego Food Bank Neighborhood Distribution Program: <https://sandiegofoodbank.org/programs/neighborhood-distribution-program/>
 - Food Distribution Locator: <https://feedingsandiego.org/get-help/>
 - COVID-19 and Hunger Relief: San Diego Hunger Coalition: <https://www.sandiegohungercoalition.org/covid19>
 - SDCOE website: www.sdcoe.net/news/Pages/20-03-13-student-food-service-during-district-closures.aspx

Physical Activity

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- **How can we keep kids active during this time?**

Action for Healthy Kids has activities to do with kids at home: **Activities for kids during COVID19**

The YMCA is currently offering virtual memberships for families: **Virtual memberships**

The American Heart Association has ideas for Physical Activity Breaks: **AHA resources for kids**

Other resources for physical activity include: **Power up in 10**, **Instant Recess**, and **Go Noodle**
- **Are youth sports allowed to operate?**

At this time youth/team sports are not permitted. Sport focused day camps however, may operate under the COVID-19 INDUSTRY GUIDANCE: Day Camps and the County of San Diego Day Camp Safety Protocol. Sports focused day camp protocols include a maximum of 12 campers per cohort, no competition, no contact, no spectators and no referees.

 - **COVID-19 INDUSTRY GUIDANCE: Day Camps**
 - **County of San Diego Day Camp Safety Protocol**

Recovery

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- **Are there any websites, webinars or resources to help us prepare for recovery?**

Please San Diego County Office of Education has developed a **Pandemic Response Planning tool**.

Resources

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- **How are schools making (feminine) hygiene products available during the closure?**

May vary by districts. Contact your district for more information.
- **How do you access free courses from National University?**

National University is offering three months of free online classes for high school and college students. Visit **here**.

Safety

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- **How do we help ensure our students are safe from abuse while distance learning?**

Domestic Violence Prevention Amid COVID-19

View the new website and read the recent announcement from the **San Diego District Attorney's Office**.

 - National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233 / TTY 1-800-787-3224
 - Child Abuse Hotline: 858-560-2191 or <https://www.preventdv1.org/>
 - Message from the District Attorney's Office: **Read the message here**
 - San Diego County Child Welfare Services: **Visit their website here**
 - **Abuse reporting during COVID-19**
- **How are Child Welfare Services investigations being handled differently due to COVID-19?**

The main difference is that there are now additional screening questions about COVID-19 risk to make sure social workers are safe while doing in-person visits. In-person visits are still encouraged for the first contact to ensure the safety of the child. In consultation with supervisors, social workers may use video conferencing after the initial in-person contact. Social workers will not be sent to a house if family members are sick.

- **Have there been any change in reports of abuse or neglect since COVID started?**

Reports of abuse and neglect have been trending down. This is not just for San Diego county, but across the nation. This does not necessarily correspond to a decrease in abuse.

- **Is mandated reporting still required within 30 days?**

Yes, but it is currently being done electronically, through a web portal.

- **Is Polinsky Children's Center still operational at this time and if so, what COVID-19 safety precautions are in place for minors who AWOL and then return?**

The **Polinsky Children's Center** is still operating at this time, and there are various measures to ensure safety. Staff have their temperatures taken before shifts, and children also have their temperatures taken. Children that return to the campus or are arriving for the first time are quarantined from the general population. Children are following safety precautions at this time, and very few have gone AWOL.

- **What resources are available for homeless youth?**

Resources for homeless youth include:

- The Disaster Distress Hotline – call 1-800-985-5990, or text TalkWithUs to 66-746
- The Trevor Project (for LGBTQ youth) – call 1-866-488-7386, or text START to 678-678
- 2-1-1 (shelter and basic needs) & Access & Crisis Line: 888-724-7240
- **SDCOE Foster and Homeless Youth Resources**

School Meals

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- **If I'm an advocate/service provider working with the family, can I pick up the food for them if they are unavailable to pick up the food due to lack of childcare and transportation?**

Contact specific district to see what they suggest. Some districts have home delivery available. Contact Jerry Smith if unable to find information, he can be reached at jerry.smith@sdcoe.net

- **Who is eligible to receive school food?**

Any children 18 and under. If students have IEP/special needs, then 22 and under. <https://www.sdcoe.net/news/Pages/20-03-13-student-food-service-during-district-closures.aspx>

- **Do children have to be present when picking up meals?**

Children do not have to be present for parents to pick up meals for their kids. No verification, ID, or registration needed.

- **Some of my students who were not eligible for free and reduced-price meals prior to school closures now have parents who are out of work. Are these students eligible to pick up free school meals?**

Yes, any child 18 and under is eligible to receive school meals. Families are also qualified to get food at any food distribution like those offered by the SDFB or FSD.

For additional questions and resources, please email: COVID-Education@sdcounty.ca.gov