

COVID-19 HEALTH PROTOCOLS

We learn more about COVID-19 every day, and as more information becomes available, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) will continue to update and share information. As our knowledge and understanding of COVID-19 evolves, this guidance may change. However, based on the best available evidence at this time:

- The CDC does not currently recommend universal symptom screenings (screening all students grades K-12) be conducted by schools.
- Parents or caregivers must monitor their children for signs of infectious illness every day and for any potential COVID-19 exposure.
- Students who are sick or who have had any potential COVID-19 exposure, should not attend school in-person.

COVID-19 is a newly identified disease caused by the virus, SARS-CoV-2. Scientists are still learning about how it spreads, how it impacts children, and what role children may play in its spread. Limited data about [COVID-19 in children](#) suggest that children are less likely to get COVID-19 than adults, and if they do contract COVID-19, they generally have less serious illness than adults. While uncommon, deaths and rare illnesses such as multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C) may still occur.

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of reported symptoms – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to SARS-CoV-2. Symptoms can include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Daily Health Screenings

Students

Howell Township Public Schools Daily Health Screening

- Parents will be responsible to complete the Home Screening Checklist each day their child will be in school
- Students will be kept home if they answer “Yes” to any of the questions on the Home Screening Checklist and parents will inform school.
- Students will be admitted to the building through designated entrances throughout each building as identified by the building principal in o-849e30e5-65e4-40ca-a4a0-1e8a8d63f93a.pdf to maintain proper social distancing.
- All students will be required to enter the building wearing a [face covering](#) that properly covers their nose and mouth. Students will be required to wear a [face covering](#) when in the building and outdoors any time social distancing cannot be maintained.
- As students are entering the building, all students should be visually observed by staff members. Upon entering the building, any student who presents with flushed appearance, cough, difficulty breathing, or who verbalizes feeling unwell with an associated symptom, should notify the Health Office immediately for further assessment and direction.

Staff

Howell Township Public Schools Daily Health Screening for Staff

- Staff will be responsible for monitoring their own temperature, symptoms and history of exposure to COVID-19 daily and as needed.
- Staff should stay home if they are ill.
- Non-contact thermometers will be available for staff to self-check no less than twice a day.
- Any staff member who presents with any of the symptoms related to COVID-19, must be safely isolated from others and should notify their building administrator immediately, and then leave the building.
- The school nurse will determine the staff member's ability to drive home.

Visitors

- Nonessential visitors will be limited in school buildings during regular school hours.
- Any visitor deemed necessary to enter the building, must wear a [face covering](#).
- All visitors will be screened for symptoms and prior exposure to COVID-19 prior to gaining access to the building. Screening questions for staff and students will be used for visitors.
- Anyone who presents with symptoms related to COVID-19, or who has had a close contact/potential exposure to COVID-19, will not be allowed access into the building.

Return to School/Work: Students and Staff

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fprevent-getting-sick%2Fwhen-its-safe.html

The district will utilize re-admittance policies consistent with current doctor's orders provided by the district physician, Department of Health guidance and information for schools and Department of Health/Communicable Disease Service's Quick Reference Guidance on Discontinuation of Transmission-Based Precautions and Home Isolation for Persons Diagnosed with COVID-19. Once staff and/or students have been sent home due to fever of 100 or more and/or other suspected COVID-19 symptoms, the following protocol will take effect.

The staff member or student may return to work/school after:

- At least 10 days since symptoms first appeared
- AND
- At least 24 hours fever free, without fever reducing medication
- AND
- Once symptoms are improving
- OR**
- Fever free for at least 24 hours without fever reducing medication
- AND
- Negative for COVID test (RTPCR test only)
- OR**
- Approval from district physician to return to school based upon medical documentation of alternate diagnosis from an attending physician stating that the individual's symptoms are not due to COVID.

The district will respond to a positive case of COVID-19 in the following way:

- Upon learning that a member of district staff or a student of the district has tested positive for COVID-19, a staff member will report that information to the school leadership and / or school nurse.
- The school nurse will relay that information to school leadership, and then the district Head Nurse. The school nurse will report all known information surrounding the positive COVID-19 incident to the local department of health.
- School leadership will contact district leadership who will arrange contact with the local health department and develop a plan to assist with contact tracing.
- In consultation with the local health department, the Head Nurse, Superintendent and/or designee, and school principal or designee will determine which staff and

student families will require notification that an individual in the building has tested positive for COVID-19.

- The notification will not include identifying information and will be consistent with all privacy laws and regulations.
- In consultation with, and under the guidance of the Monmouth County Department of Health, the Superintendent and/or designee may, with knowledge of the Board of Education President, close one or more classrooms, school buildings, or the district if the situation warrants.

The district will respond to a suspected positive case of COVID-19 in the following way:

Individuals who have symptoms of COVID-19 AND have not been tested (i.e. monitoring for symptoms at home) should stay home and away from others until:

- At least 10 days have passed since their symptoms first appeared

AND

- They have had no fever for at least 24 hours (one full day without the use of fever reducing medication)

AND

- Symptoms have improved (e.g. cough, shortness of breath)
- Individuals who have NO symptoms and have tested positive should stay home and away from others until:
- 10 days have passed from the collection date of their positive COVID-19 diagnostic test

AND

- They have not developed symptoms.
- Contact tracing based on CDC guidelines will be further outlined by the Monmouth County Health Department.
- Medical clearance to return may be required.

School Isolation Protocols

Student Isolation

- Staff will observe students throughout the school day for any signs or symptoms of illness or any reported symptoms of illness including:
 - Fever or chills
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Fatigue
 - Muscle or body aches
 - Headache
 - Loss of taste or smell
 - Sore throat
 - Congestion or runny nose
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Diarrhea
- Staff will contact the nurse and communicate student symptoms. Students should not be sent to the Health Office without direct approval from the nurse.
- Nurse will advise the staff member of the procedure for sending the student to the Health Office or screening area for assessment.
- Nurse will assess the student, gather information from the student's health records and document findings.
- Once assessed, the nurse will determine whether a student should be placed in an isolation area separate from staff and other students:
 - School staff (e.g., workers, teacher aides, school health staff) who interact with a student who becomes ill while at school should use [Standard and Transmission-Based Precautions](#) when caring for sick people.
 - Students who are sick should go home or to a healthcare facility depending on how severe their symptoms are, and follow [CDC guidance for caring for oneself and others](#) who are sick.
- Any students identified at school through the [Howell Township Public Schools Daily Health Screening for Students](#) questionnaire who develop any of the symptoms in Section 1 AND answer YES to any of the questions in Section 2 should be placed in an isolation area separate from staff and other students, and then sent home or to a healthcare facility if symptoms indicate a need for further evaluation:
 - If a school needs to call an ambulance or bring a student to the hospital, they should first alert the healthcare staff that the student may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19.
 - After the student leaves the isolation area, school staff who work in the isolation area should follow CDC's [Considerations for Cleaning and Disinfecting your Building or Facility](#).

- Appropriate safeguards should be put into place to ensure that students are isolated in a non-threatening manner, within the line of sight of adults, and for very short periods of time.

Staff Isolation

- Should a staff member show symptoms or self-identify symptoms at any time, they should immediately leave the building (if possible) and notify school administration, or be escorted to the isolation room, which is located in the proximity of the nurse's room.
- The staff member's temperature and/or other symptoms will be assessed by the nurse, and reassessed as necessary.
- If a staff member who self-identifies with symptoms should need to leave the school, they must immediately report their need to leave to the building administration.
- If a staff member is unable to drive themselves home, they should wait in the isolation area until transportation can be arranged. If the school needs to call an ambulance or bring a staff member to the hospital, they should first alert the healthcare staff that the staff member may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19.

Notification

- If school staff becomes aware of an individual who has spent time in a district facility has tested positive for COVID-19, the staff member must report any known information to the school nurse and building administration.
- The school nurse, in consultation with the District Head Nurse, building administration and district administration will immediately notify local health officials, staff and families while maintaining confidentiality.
- All school staff will be expected to cooperate and collaborate with the local health department in gathering any information needed for contact tracing.

Face Coverings

Face Mask Exemption

All staff and students are required to wear face coverings, unless doing so would inhibit the individual's health. It is expected that all staff and students wear a proper [face covering](#). Face shields, scarves, bandanas, gaiters, and masks with ventilation are not permitted. Staff members may be allowed to remove masks when in classrooms or offices alone. When in the presence of students or colleagues, masks should be worn at all times.

It is necessary to acknowledge that enforcing the use of face coverings may be impractical for young children or individuals with disabilities.

Exceptions:

- Doing so would inhibit the student's health.
- The student is in extreme heat outdoors.
- The student is in water.
- A student's documented medical condition, or disability as reflected in an Individualized Education Program (IEP), precludes the use of face covering.
- The student is under the age of two (2), due to the risk of suffocation.
- During the period that a student is eating or drinking. Face coverings should not be placed on anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, or anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance (e.g. face coverings should not be worn by Pre-K students during nap time).
- The student is engaged in high intensity aerobic or anaerobic activities.
- Face coverings may be removed during gym and music classes when individuals are in a well-ventilated location and able to maintain a physical distance of six feet apart.
- When wearing a face covering creates an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task.

Update to Conditions of Learning, Health and Safety, July 30, 2020

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/cloth-face-cover.html>