

## 2019 Novel Coronavirus

### About this virus

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that cause symptoms of colds. However, this is a “novel” virus, originating in China in late 2019 (hence the name, 2019 Novel Coronavirus). Until recently, this particular strain of coronavirus circulated among animals only. Now it appears to have spread to humans, and can be spread between humans. The abbreviated term for this virus is: *COVID-19*

### Current Understanding of Virus

- Symptoms most commonly include: fever with cough or shortness of breath; Some people have fewer or no symptoms at all. Headache, sore throat, and runny nose also occur with this virus.
- Children may also present with no fever, mild diarrhea and vomiting. They have fewer symptoms and problems
- Spread is most likely from droplets (cough and sneezing)
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) considers this a serious public health threat, but with health risk from this virus to be low at this time in most locations.
- It is not yet known whether people carrying the virus, but have no symptoms, can spread the virus to others.
- Symptoms of *COVID-19* may appear in as few as 2 days, or as long as 14 days, after exposure.
- Most people with this infection will recover on their own. There is no specific treatment for *COVID-19* yet.
- For patients who are more severely ill, hospitals can provide supportive care.

### What are Schools Doing?

School Districts follow CDC guidance, as well the guidance from public health departments at the State and County levels to keep our student and staff populations safe and healthy.

#### Current District Policy

1. All children and staff members with respiratory symptoms or fever (>100 F / >37.8 C) should remain home (from school and other activities) until they had no fever for 24 hours, without fever medication and respiratory symptoms are gone. **If respiratory symptoms are not completely gone but they are improving and one week has passed since onset of illness, the student can return to school.**
2. Students and staff members who present at school with fever and/or symptoms of a respiratory infection should be sent home.
  - **Students who typically have coughs from underlying, known diseases (like asthma, allergies) may remain if there is no new symptom.**
  - Until the person leaves school, you may place a surgical mask on that student or staff member if available and if tolerated.
  - If possible, keep that person isolated (students must still be visible and supervised by a staff member); otherwise try to keep a 3 to 6 foot distance between that student (or staff member) and others.
  - **Persons excluded from school or work for fever may return to school when; (a) they have been free of fever for at least 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medications). In addition, (b) all respiratory symptoms must be fully resolved OR seven days have passed since the onset of symptoms and the individual's symptoms have been improving (whichever is earlier).**
  - **Persons excluded from school or work for respiratory symptoms and who have not developed a fever may return to school when (a) all respiratory symptoms are fully resolved or (b) seven days have**

passed since the onset of symptoms and the individual's symptoms have been improving (whichever is earlier).

3. Exclude students and staff members who have a travel history over the course of the last 14 days to an area identified by the CDC as Level 3 Travel Health Notice. This list can be found at: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>
  - As of date of this version, these countries are: China, Iran, Italy, South Korea. (Japan is Level 2, and although travel to Japan is discouraged, travelers from Japan are not included in this restriction, at this time.) Check CDC website for most up to date information. <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>
  - Exclude these people from school for 14 days, beginning the day they departed that country.
  - Schools are advised to find methods to provide educational support for students who are at home for these weeks, so that they do not fall behind. These students or staff members should stay at home and limit contact with anyone outside the home.
4. Healthy members of a household who did not travel, but where someone else from that household returned from CDC Level 3 country (<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>) are not required to stay away from school as long as all members of that household are healthy (i.e., no new respiratory symptoms and no fever).
5. Students and staff members who have visited one of these countries within the past two weeks should be advised to call their doctors for instructions *if they have fever or symptoms of respiratory infection*.
6. Students should not be excluded from school or any school activities based on race or country of origin.
7. A student or staff member who has been in close contact with a person with a laboratory-confirmed case of 2019 novel coronavirus over past two weeks will be excluded from school until cleared by the local public health department.
8. If any student or staff member at school is suspected to have the virus (i.e., becomes a County Health Department "patient under investigation"; or "PUI") for COVID-19, the school district will work with public health authorities who will collaborate with that student's or staff member's own physician to guide further restrictions and public notifications.
9. As a reminder, all student and staff health information is confidential and cannot be shared with other students or with school site staff. Confidential health information can be shared only with School District health team leaders and with the County Public Health Department.
10. When confirmed COVID-19 cases are reported to school officials (confirmed cases of students, school employees or their household contacts), the school site should assign one person to notify central nursing office.
11. Any disease notification letters sent from school to the general school community and to schools' parent community will always be cleared first with the District's health leaders, and be done in consultation with the Public Health Department.

### **Basic Prevention of Virus Spread**

1. Make sure all family members are up-to-date with their flu shots.
2. Promote basic hygiene:
  - a. Any coughing or sneezing should be directed into ones sleeve (**inside elbow**), rather than into hands or the air.
  - b. Wash hands after using and handling used tissues, after blowing nose, before/after eating, and after toilet use.

- c. Wash for 20 seconds with soap, rub between fingers and under nails; and then rinse and dry. (May use alcohol (60%+) hand gel if sinks are not readily available.)
  - d. Schools should encourage hand washing (by students and staff) through education, scheduled time for handwashing, and the provision of adequate supplies
  - e. Avoid rubbing your own eyes, nose and mouth.
  - f. Do not share utensils, cups etc.
  - g. Stay home when sick.
  - h. Avoid contact with those who are sick.
3. *Wearing of face masks by students and staff members.* Wearing of masks in public is not currently being recommended for Americans by the CDC nor by our local public health department. It will be discouraged in schools. Handwashing is considered the best protection from infectious diseases.

### **School District Plans if Coronavirus is Spreading Locally**

School district health team and administration already work collaboratively with the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (i.e. local public health department). School district will follow all directives to reduce exposure in school. It is the public health department that decides on: quarantines, school closures, and exclusion policy, not the School District.

### **Travel**

Many students may travel with their families during the Spring Break. The following website should be checked before traveling: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>

### **Resources**

Information on this virus and how to control its spread may change in the following days and weeks. This District will update the information, as it becomes available. Follow the District website as well as the following resources for up-to-date, accurate information:

#### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/index.html>

#### **California Department of Public Health:**

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/nCOV2019.aspx>

#### **San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (Public Health)**

[https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/phs/community\\_epidemiology/dc/2019-nCoV.html](https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/phs/community_epidemiology/dc/2019-nCoV.html)