



COVID-19 Guidance for Licking County
K-12 Schools
January 4, 2022

Introduction:

The Licking County Health Department (LCHD) has worked with local school administrators from the beginning of the 2021-22 school year to manage COVID-19 cases within schools in the county. LCHD has reviewed updated COVID-19 guidance and analyzed locally collected data. This information has been used to update COVID-19 guidance for schools in Licking County.

Vaccination:

LCHD urges all individuals that are eligible to be vaccinated against COVID-19 to receive the vaccine as soon as possible. Our department operates walk in clinics at our office, located at 675 Price Road in Newark, Monday through Friday from 8:00AM to 12:00PM and 2:00PM to 4:00PM. These times are subject to change. To view our updated schedule, please visit <https://lickingcohealth.org/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine-faqs/> To view a full list of approved COVID-19 vaccine providers please visit <https://gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov/>

Masks:

LCHD, along with the Ohio Department of Health and CDC, recommends that all individuals in schools wear masks. LCHD does not have the authority to require masks be worn in schools. Schools can require staff and students wear masks in their buildings, and this is done at the school district level or in each individual private school.

Isolation:

If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, they will be required to isolate for **5 days** from the date their symptoms started, or if they do not have symptoms, for **5 days** from the date of their positive test. This includes individuals that are vaccinated against COVID-19.

- If the individual has no symptoms or their symptoms are resolving **after 5 days**, their isolation period will end, and they can return to normal activities. However, these individuals should wear a mask for 5 additional days.
- If the individual has **a fever** after 5 days, they should continue to isolate until their fever resolves.

Quarantine:

Individuals that are exposed to COVID-19 and meet the definition of a close contact should follow the guidance listed below:

These individuals **do not need to quarantine**:

- Individuals that have received a COVID-19 vaccination booster.
- Individuals that have received both doses of the Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine within the past 6 months
- Individuals that have received a dose of Johnson and Johnson COVID-19 vaccine within the past 2 months
- Individuals that are not eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccination booster and it has been longer than 14 days since receiving their 2nd dose of Pfizer COVID-19
- Individuals that have been medically diagnosed with COVID-19 within the past 90 days.

All individuals that do not meet the parameters above will be considered a close contact and will be required to quarantine. The following three options exist for **school related COVID-19 exposures**:

1. The student can return to school immediately if they do not have COVID-19 symptoms, **and they wear a mask in school for the duration of their quarantine period as indicated above.**
2. The student can complete **5 days of quarantine at home and** return to school and extracurricular activities on day 6 of their quarantine period if they do not have COVID-19 symptoms and they wear a mask **for the duration of their quarantine period as indicated above.**
3. The student can complete their quarantine period at home and not attend school or participate in extracurricular activities **for the duration of their quarantine period as indicated above.**

Students choosing Option 1 above **can** return to extracurricular activities immediately following their exposure as long as they **do not have COVID-19 symptoms, wear a mask whenever possible during the activity, and are tested after their initial exposure.** Testing on day 5 after exposure is also recommended.

If an individual is unable to quarantine, they must wear a mask for **10 days** after their symptoms developed.

If an individual that has been exposed to an individual with COVID-19 develops symptoms during their quarantine period, they should speak to their medical provider and be tested for COVID-19.

Quarantine Process:

Parents will be notified via **email** by LCHD that their child has been identified as a close contact due to an exposure at school to an individual with a case of COVID-19. Parents are encouraged to check their **spam folder** to ensure they receive the quarantine notice. The notice will provide the name of the school where the student was exposed, the date on which the quarantine period ends, and information related to the quarantine options that are available. If parents have multiple children in a school building, they should email LCHD for clarification on the student(s) in quarantine at coronavirus@lickingcohealth.org.

Parents are encouraged to contact their school attendance line to notify the school of their child's absence due to being placed in quarantine.

Social Distancing:

Schools should continue to provide social distancing of at least 3 feet between desks whenever possible. Efforts should also be taken to maximize spacing during lunch periods. Additionally, distancing should be implemented to the extent possible in other settings such as, locker rooms, extracurricular activities, etc.

Hand Hygiene:

LCHD also continues to recommend frequent and proper hand washing for all individuals. Washing your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds can help reduce the spread of many diseases including COVID-19.

Enhanced Cleaning:

Schools should continue to implement the enhanced cleaning activities that were implemented during last school year. This should include high touch surfaces and other areas where COVID-19 can be spread.

COVID-19 School Data:

LCHD continues to review locally collected school COVID-19 data daily, and changes in this guidance document are based on this analysis. The data has also been used to recommend interventions in school buildings where an increase in COVID-19 cases has been identified. Increases in COVID-19 cases are evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and the recommendation of interventions is based on the data collection and discussions with school leaders to gain a true understanding of each specific situation. This process will continue during the 2021-22 school year, and LCHD will continue to communicate with school leaders on a regular basis regarding COVID-19.

Conclusion:

LCHD understands the importance of in person learning for students and staff members across the county. Our staff has worked extremely hard to assist county schools with holding in person classes since the school year began. We will continue to monitor the data and communicate with school leaders to make the 2021-2022 school year as safe and effective as possible.