



McHenry County Department of Health

Memo

To: McHenry County Schools

From: Susan Karras, MBA, BSN, RN
Director, Public Health Nursing

Ryan Sachs, MPH
Epidemiologist

Date: April 7, 2020

Re: **Updated COVID-19 Guidance**

The purpose of this memo is summarize the latest guidance for COVID-19 from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). This guidance is subject to change. Please feel free to share with your students and staff.

Case Definitions

Case definitions for confirmed and possible COVID-19 have *not* changed.

- A confirmed case of COVID-19 is defined as a person with *COVID-19-like illness* and a positive laboratory test. MCDH will notify schools and daycares of any staff or student that is a confirmed case of COVID-19.
- A possible case of COVID-19 is defined as a person with *COVID-19-like illness* for whom testing was not performed.
- *COVID-19-like illness* is described as new onset of subjective or measured ($\geq 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$ or 38.0°C) fever OR cough OR shortness of breath OR sore throat that cannot be attributed to an underlying or previously recognized condition. In children, fever with sore throat may be attributable to conditions other than COVID-19 (e.g., strep throat) and the parent/guardian should be instructed to consult a healthcare provider to rule out other etiologies.

Testing Guidance

Testing guidance for COVID-19 has *not* changed. IDPH recommends against testing persons with mild illness who can be safely managed at home. Advise students and staff with mild respiratory illness to STAY HOME; testing is not indicated for mildly ill or asymptomatic persons. Students and staff should consult with their health care provider if they have:

- Fever, cough, trouble breathing, or other flu-like symptoms that are not better or are worsening after 24-48 hours
- Mild symptoms and are pregnant or immunosuppressed or are an older adult with chronic health conditions

We ask that students and staff do not call the health department about getting testing. Health care providers will determine if someone should be tested, and will call the health department if needed.

Isolation and Quarantine Guidance

The guidance for isolation of confirmed and possible cases of COVID-19 has *not* changed. All confirmed and possible cases of COVID-19 should stay home and separate themselves from their family for at least 7 days after they first became ill, or 72 hours after their fever has resolved and symptoms are improving, **whichever is longer**.



The guidance for household contacts has *not* changed. All household contacts to a confirmed or possible case of COVID-19 should stay home and watch for symptoms for 7 days after the case has been afebrile and feeling well and for a minimum of 14 days (this means that household contacts may need to remain at home longer than the initial case).

The guidance for non-household close contacts has been updated. As a reminder, close contact is defined as being **within 6 feet of a symptomatic individual** – with either confirmed COVID-19 or symptoms consistent with COVID-19 – **for over 10 minutes**. All close contacts to a confirmed or possible case of COVID-19 should stay home and watch for symptoms for 14 days from the last exposure to the confirmed or possible case.

Household and close contacts are advised to self-monitor for symptoms by checking temperature twice a day and watching for fever, cough, shortness of breath, or sore throat. They are also advised to avoid contact with people at higher risk for severe illness (unless they live in the same home and had same exposure).

Please find attached an infographic that summarizes this information for releasing COVID-19 cases and contacts from isolation and quarantine.

General Guidance for the Public

With evidence of community spread of COVID-19 in McHenry County, the general public is advised to:

- Be alert for symptoms by watching for fever, cough, shortness of breath, or sore throat and take temperature if symptoms develop
- Follow the isolation and quarantine guidance above
- Frequently wash hands with either soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub
- Stay home and only leave for essential tasks such as grocery shopping (individuals on isolation or quarantine should not leave their home, even for essential tasks)
- When in public, practice social distancing by maintaining 6 feet of distance from others and staying out of crowded places
- Follow the IDPH guidance on the use of masks by the general public (please find attached the guidance on the use of masks)
- Please use the [MCDH Coronavirus Resource Guide](#) to find the latest guidance if...
 - You are a confirmed case of COVID-19
 - You are experiencing fever, cough, sore throat, or shortness of breath
 - You were exposed to someone who is ill
 - You are looking for recommendations on how to reduce the chances of contracting COVID-19
 - You are looking for specific information about COVID-19 in our community
 - You have general questions about COVID-19



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