



Guidance for Schools and Out-of-Home Child Care Centers: 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Background

- Cases of respiratory illness were first identified in Wuhan, China in December 2019, and the 2019 novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) was identified as the cause in January 2020.
- Since then, cases have been confirmed in multiple countries outside of China, including the United States (U.S.).
- Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more serious diseases such as pneumonia and acute respiratory distress syndrome.
- COVID-19 is a respiratory infection caused by a newly identified coronavirus that is responsible for the current outbreak and not previously known to cause human illness.
- Fourteen days is believed to be the longest time between when a person may have been exposed to novel coronavirus and when symptoms may begin (the incubation period).
- The chances of being infected are low unless a person traveled to China or had contact with a person under investigation (PUI) or a laboratory-confirmed case of the disease.
- Additional screening of all individuals traveling from China into the U.S. at major international airports seeks to further reduce the risk of transmission in the U.S. Most cases outside of China are travel-associated; however, person-to-person transmission can occur.
 - COVID-19 symptoms primarily include fever, cough, and shortness of breath.
 - Other less common symptoms may include sore throat, chills, muscle aches, headache, abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea.
- Currently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is the only place in the U.S. that can test for COVID-19, and testing must be coordinated through DHEC.
- Currently, there is no vaccine or specific treatment for COVID-19 infection; care to relieve symptoms is supportive only.

If a child or staff member is ill and did not travel to China or have known contact with a COVID-19 case, it is highly unlikely that he or she is at risk for COVID-19.

Recommendations for Students and Staff

1. Preventing the Transmission of Respiratory Viruses, including COVID-19 and the Flu

- Promote washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; alcohol-based hand sanitizer may be used except after changing diapers, using or assisting someone in using the toilet, and when hands are visibly soiled.
- Teach Respiratory Etiquette to include:
 - Avoiding frequent touching of eyes, nose and mouth.
 - Covering mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing; immediately discard used tissues in a waste basket.
 - If tissues are not readily available, the cough or sneeze may be caught by the sleeve at the elbow or shoulder. Remove mucus or debris with a tissue and then wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Change or cover clothing contaminated with mucus to prevent spreading.

**SC DHEC Guidance for Schools and Out-of-Home Child Care Centers:
2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

- Washing or sanitizing hands after using tissues and after contact with respiratory secretions.
- Encourage Respiratory Etiquette by making hand hygiene supplies, tissues, and trash receptacles easily accessible.
- Encourage parents to keep children at home if ill; staff should equally be encouraged to stay at home when ill.
- Sanitize commonly touched surfaces and objects frequently with an EPA-registered disinfectant.

2. Watching for Illness at School or the Child Care Center

- All incoming flights to the U.S. from China are being routed to designated airports for entry health screening.
- U.S. citizens returning to the U.S. who were in **Hubei Province** in the previous 14 days are subject to **mandatory quarantine** at designated quarantine centers for up to 14 days after arrival in the U.S.
- Returning U.S. citizens who were in any other part of **mainland China** (not Hong Kong or Macau) in the previous 14 days will undergo an entry health screening and be subject to **monitored self-quarantine** in their homes for up to 14 days with monitoring by state and local health departments.
- With few exceptions, **foreign nationals** who were in any part of mainland China (not Hong Kong or Macau) in the previous 14 days are **not permitted entry** into the U.S.
- If a **staff member** develops fever or other respiratory symptoms while at school or child care within 14 days of returning from another affected area other than China, the staff member should be sent home and told to call their health care provider to report their illness and recent travel. The principal, nurse, or director should also report the illness to the regional DHEC office.
- If a **student/child** develops fever or other respiratory symptoms while at school or child care within 14 days of returning from another affected area other than China, the student should be placed in a separate room with supervision while the child's parent or guardian is immediately contacted. Whoever is providing supervision should wear a mask and practice appropriate hand hygiene. If a school nurse is available, the nurse should see the student right away, using precautions recommended by the CDC. The parent or guardian should be encouraged to separate the child from others at home and to contact their child's healthcare provider to report their illness and recent travel. The principal, nurse, or director should also report the illness to the regional DHEC office.
- If a **student** or **staff member** who traveled within the prior 14 days develops fever or other respiratory symptoms while at school or child care, and the school or child care provider cannot identify whether the person traveled to an affected area, the above steps should be followed.
- Surfaces and objects within the classroom and isolation room should be cleaned and disinfected as soon as possible and upon the student's or staff member's exit to prevent transmission. DHEC can provide additional guidance about cleaning and/or reopening the room if necessary.

**SC DHEC Guidance for Schools and Out-of-Home Child Care Centers:
2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

Resources for More Information

- DHEC List of Reportable Conditions: <https://scdhec.gov/ReportableConditionsList>
- DHEC COVID-19 website: <http://scdhec.gov/COVID19>
- CDC COVID-19 website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

DHEC Regional Epidemiology Offices

Report to the office (listed below) in the region in which the patient resides.

Lowcountry	Midlands	Pee Dee	Upstate
Allendale, Bamberg, Beaufort, Berkeley, Calhoun, Charleston, Colleton, Dorchester, Hampton, Jasper, Orangeburg	Aiken, Barnwell, Chester, Edgefield, Fairfield, Lancaster, Lexington, Kershaw, Newberry, Richland, Saluda, York	Clarendon, Chesterfield, Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Georgetown, Horry, Lee, Marion, Marlboro, Sumter, Williamsburg	Abbeville, Anderson, Cherokee, Greenville, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Oconee, Pickens, Spartanburg, Union
4050 Bridge View Drive, Suite 600 N. Charleston, SC 29405	2000 Hampton Street Columbia, SC 29204	1931 Industrial Park Road Conway, SC 29526	200 University Ridge Greenville, SC 29602
Office: (843) 441-1091 Fax: (843) 953-0051	Office: (888) 801-1046 Fax: (803) 576-2993	Office: (843) 915-8886 Fax: (843) 915-6502 Fax2: (843) 915-6506	Office: (864) 372-3133 Fax: (864) 282-4373
Nights/Weekends: (843) 441-1091	Nights/Weekends: (888) 801-1046	Nights/Weekends: (843) 915-8845	Nights/Weekends: (864) 423-6648

What to Report

- Student's/Staff's name
- Patient's complete address, phone number, county, date of birth, race, sex
- Parent/Guardian name and phone number
- Disease or condition (suspect COVID-19)
- Name, institution, and phone number of person reporting
- Symptoms and date of onset
- Recent travel history (locales, arrival dates, departure dates, mode of transportation)

HIPAA: Federal HIPAA legislation allows disclosure of protected health information, without consent of the individual, to public health authorities for the purpose of preventing or controlling disease. (HIPAA 45 CFR §164.512)