



## COVID-19 Interim Guidance for School Operations

### Screening

- Screening testing of all incoming students and staff is not recommended because the tests available at this time cannot provide assurance that someone will not become sick after the test is performed.
  - The best available test, called a PCR, is a snapshot in time that only tells whether the individual is infected at that exact time. Antibody tests currently available have variable accuracy and positive results cannot guarantee protection from becoming infected again.
  - DHEC does recommend that individuals with even mild symptoms consistent with COVID-19 be tested for the disease.
- Educate students and their parents on the [symptoms](#) of COVID-19 and the importance of the student staying home if they have any of the symptoms or if anyone in the household tests positive for the disease.
  - Require sick students and staff to stay home as per the [School and Child Care Exclusion List](#). Establish procedures for those who are sick at school to be sent home as soon as possible and kept separate from others until they can leave.
- Place signs such as [this one](#) on the exterior of entrances to the building to ask individuals entering to not enter if they have symptoms of COVID-19.
- Perform daily morning screenings by asking students if they have any symptoms of COVID-19. This could be done on an individual basis by asking each student as they enter their first classroom or on a group basis via morning announcements reminding students that they should alert their teacher if they feel sick.
  - Routine temperature screening of all persons entering the school is not recommended, except for in classrooms or schools dedicated to medically fragile students.
  - There is currently no method to screen daily for asymptomatic infected people, so proper social distancing must be performed.

### Social Distancing Practices

- To the extent possible, maintain at least six feet of distance between each person.
  - If desks are used, increase the space between them. Rearrange them to maximize the space between students. Make desks face in the same direction (rather than facing each other).
- Stagger arrival and dismissal times.
- Avoid students congregating in common areas. For example, have students eat meals in their classrooms rather than mixing in the cafeteria or other common area.
  - If it is not possible to suspend use of common areas, try to limit the extent to which students mix with each other, and particularly with students from other classes.
  - Restrict hallway use through staggered release of classes.
- Limit people present to only students and essential faculty and staff.
- Avoid assemblies or other congregate events.



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- Encourage frequent handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
  - Ensure adequate supplies (e.g., soap, paper towels, hand sanitizer).
  - Put up [posters](#) in key locations (e.g., bathrooms) encouraging hand hygiene.
- Strongly encourage faculty and staff to wear masks or cloth face coverings as much as possible. Consideration may be given to recommending them for students. Cloth face coverings should not be used on children under two years old, anyone who has trouble breathing, or anyone unable to remove the face covering without assistance. The CDC has a [pattern](#) and a [video](#) available demonstrating how to make a cloth one.

### Cleaning and Disinfection

- Routinely clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that are frequently touched (e.g., doorknobs, light switches, classroom sink handles, countertops). Using an appropriate disinfectant, wipe down items (e.g., desks, chairs) and equipment before each use.
  - Clean with soap and water or a cleaner typically used. Use all cleaning products according to the directions on the label.
  - After cleaning, disinfect with a product that is EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 (a list of these is available [here](#)) or with diluted bleach solution (5 tablespoons, or 1/3 cup, bleach per gallon of water or 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water).
- For electronics such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards, and remote controls, remove visible contamination if present.
  - Consider use of wipeable covers for electronics.
  - Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products.
  - If no manufacturer guidance is available, consider the use of alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol to disinfect touch screens. Dry surfaces thoroughly to avoid pooling of liquids.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time).
- Ensure adequate supplies to support frequent cleaning and disinfection practices.
- The CDC provides additional information on [Cleaning and Disinfecting a Facility](#), including guidance on appropriate personal protective equipment to wear while cleaning and disinfecting.
- Increase the ventilation (air exchange) rate and the percent outdoor air in ventilation.

### References

- DHEC COVID-19 webpage: [cdhec.gov/covid19](https://cdhec.gov/covid19)
- CDC COVID-19 webpage: [cdc.gov/covid19](https://cdc.gov/covid19)

This is consistent with guidance available as of May 18, 2020 and may be updated as new information on this novel virus and evolving situation become available.