



COVID-19 Communicable Disease Response Plan

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, COVID-19 affects people in different ways and may have a wide variety of symptoms ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus and may include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Emergency medical care should be sought immediately for those showing severe symptoms, such as:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Pale, gray or blue-colored skin, lips or nail beds, depending on skin tone
- Any other symptoms that are severe or causing concern

Guidelines for 2022-23 School Year

Students and staff are encouraged to immunize against COVID-19 and stay current on any recommended boosters. All students and staff are now eligible for immunization against COVID-19. Anyone needing information on where to obtain COVID immunization should contact the school nurse.

Masks are not mandatory for students and staff, at this time, with the exception of those returning early from COVID-19 infection or those who develop symptoms of illness while at school and are waiting for parent pick up.

Students and staff should stay home and are encouraged to test for COVID-19 if they develop any possible symptoms. This is a recommendation regardless of COVID immunization status. FWCS has COVID-19 home tests we can supply to staff and student families upon request. School nurses are able to administer a COVID test if symptoms develop at school as long as free tests remain available to schools.

The district is no longer required to notify the local and state health departments for cases of COVID-19 reported to the district by staff or parents. FWCS school nurses are still required to report positive results of tests performed by the nurse at school.

If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, they should follow these guidelines for returning to school/work:

- Stay home a minimum of 5 days from the start of your symptoms. The day symptoms start should be counted as day 0.

- Return to school/work on day 6 if fever free without the use of fever-reducing medications *and* symptoms are improving for 24 hours. Individuals who meet these criteria should wear a mask at school/work at all times (except while eating) during days 6-10. A negative test is not required for return.
- CDC no longer recommends quarantine for those who have family members or close contacts that are positive for COVID-19. Therefore, absences due to infection of a close contact will *not* be excused. Students and staff who have no signs of illness *do not* need to stay home if a family member is ill or positive with COVID-19. Individuals should monitor closely for signs of illness and if they develop, stay home and seek testing. *(The Present Virtual COVID (PVC) attendance code is no longer to be used.)*
- For children, most cases of COVID-19 are mild. Absences due to mild cases of COVID-19 should be excused up to 5 consecutive days for all students without documentation from a licensed healthcare provider. Infections that last beyond 5 days and those with severe symptoms should be evaluated by a medical professional and documentation will be needed to excuse the absence. *(For attendance purposed, use the absence code ILC*
- Adult staff absences due to COVID-19 can be excused up to 10 consecutive days without documentation from a licensed healthcare provider. If a staff member is not able to return on the sixth day, contact Human Resources to discuss the situation. Infections lasting beyond 10 days should be evaluated by a medical professional and must contact HR for FMLA paperwork. Infections that last beyond 10 days should be evaluated by a medical professional. Staff missing more than 10 consecutive days due to COVID infection can contact HR for FMLA consideration. Reinfection with COVID-19 is possible but rare. A student or staff member with subsequent COVID infection within the same school year should be evaluated by a healthcare provider and verification from the provider will be necessary to excuse the absence.

Student Athletes

Student athletes should follow the same procedures listed above. They are required to mask at all times during practice and play if returning post infection on day 6. If they are unable to do this, they should refrain from practice and play until a full 10 days have passed since the start of symptoms. They may return to play without masking on day 11 as long as they are fever free and their symptoms are improving 24 hours before they return.

Student athletes do not need to have a new physical or physician release to play after COVID-19 infection if symptoms are mild. It is strongly recommended that any student admitted to the hospital with severe symptoms or complications of COVID-19 have a comprehensive medical evaluation and medical release to return to practice and play.

Guidelines for School Outbreaks

The FWCS Communicable Disease Response plan will be implemented for any suspected outbreak of illness. FWCS School nurses will notify the principal and FWCS Nurse Coordinator or Health and Wellness Director if more than 20% of a class is absent due to illness. Health and Wellness will contact the Allen County Health Department and implement any appropriate recommendations and communications necessary for the specific situation.