

Communication Guidance Between Trumbull County School Districts and Trumbull County Combined Health District Pertaining to COVID-19 Cases

PREFACE: As schools prepare to restart and re-open for the 2020-2021 school year during the COVID-19 Pandemic, using the guidance documents released by the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) on June 20, 2020, it is imperative to establish an effective line of communication with their local public health district to appropriately deal with potential cases within the school setting. Therefore, this guidance is established to clarify the expected lines of communication between school districts and the Trumbull County Combined Health District (TCCHD).

These general principals will guide each school district as they move forward with re-opening schools throughout Trumbull County.

- Each school district will implement recommended safety protocols to the highest degree possible.
- Each school district will work closely with TCCHD to promote safety in each school building.
- Each school district will be transparent with all stakeholders that some level of risk will always be present when children and school district employees occupy school district facilities.
- School districts recognize the need for consistency in areas of operations while recognizing that individual differences in classroom sizes, school facilities, and building operations may lead to some inconsistencies.

Daily Self-Monitoring

Students and staff should self-monitor symptoms and temperature in the morning before arriving at school.



You may have COVID-19 if you:

Have one or both of these symptoms:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing

Have at least two of these symptoms:

- Fever
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat

**Symptoms may
be mild or severe and
may appear two to 14
days after
exposure
to the virus.**

If a student or staff member is experiencing any of these symptoms, they should be encouraged to stay home. Ill individuals should contact the school prior to arrival to be excused. We would encourage school districts to log absenteeism related to COVID-19.

Symptom screenings will identify only that a person may have an illness, not that the illness is COVID-19. Many of the symptoms of COVID-19 are also common in other childhood illness like the common cold, the flu, or seasonal allergies. The table below illustrates some of the overlap between the symptoms of COVID-19 and other common illnesses.

Symptoms of COVID-19	Strep Throat	Common Cold	Flu	Asthma	Seasonal Allergies
FEVER 	✓		✓		
COUGH 		✓	✓	✓	✓
SORE THROAT 	✓	✓	✓		✓
SHORTNESS OF BREATH 				✓	
FATIGUE 		✓	✓	✓	✓
DIARRHEA OR VOMITING 	✓		✓		
RUNNY NOSE 		✓	✓		✓
BODY/ MUSCLE ACHES 	✓	✓	✓		

✓ Symptom of illness



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When you learn of a positive case, or an exposed individual, please contact TCCHD at 330-675-2590, option 3, to discuss next steps with one of our public health nurses.

Daily Home Screening for Students

Parents: Please complete this short check each morning and report your child's information [INSERT YOUR SCHOOL REPORTING INSTRUCTIONS] in the morning before your child leaves for school.

SECTION 1: Symptoms

If your child has any of the following symptoms, that indicates a possible illness that may decrease the student's ability to learn and also put them at risk for spreading illness to others. Please check your child for these symptoms:

☐	Temperature 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher when taken by mouth
☐	Sore throat
☐	New uncontrolled cough that causes difficulty breathing (for students with chronic allergic/asthmatic cough, a change in their cough from baseline)
☐	Diarrhea, vomiting, or abdominal pain
☐	New onset of severe headache, especially with a fever

SECTION 2: Close Contact/Potential Exposure

☐	Had close contact (within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes) with a person with confirmed COVID-19
☐	Traveled to or lived in an area where the local, Tribal, territorial, or state health department is reporting large numbers of COVID-19 cases as described in the Community Mitigation Framework
☐	Live in areas of high community transmission (as described in the Community Mitigation Framework) while the school remains open



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If the student/parent/caregiver answers YES to any question in Section 1 of the table above, but NO to any questions in Section 2 above, the student would be excused from school in accordance with existing school illness management policy (e.g., until symptom-free for 24 hours without fever reducing medications).

If the student or parent or caregiver answers YES to any questions in Section 1 above and YES to any question in Section 2 above, the student should be referred for evaluation by their healthcare provider and possible testing. Schools should not require testing results as a part of their return to school policies. Students who have received a negative test result should be allowed to return to school once their symptoms have otherwise improved in accordance with existing school illness management policies.

Student diagnosed with COVID-19, or who answer YES to any question in Section 1 above and YES to any question in Section 2 without negative test results should stay home, isolate themselves from others, monitor their health, and follow directions from TCCHD. Students and their families should be advised that someone from TCCHD may contact the family for contact tracing. If contacted, families should notify the contact tracer that the student attended school.

Students diagnosed with COVID-19 or who answer YES to any component of Section 1 above AND YES to any component of Section 2 above without negative test results should be permitted to return to school per current CDC Recommendations in “When Can I Be Around Others”.

A negative test or doctor’s note should NOT be required for return. Questions regarding return to school should be jointly decided in consultation with parents or caregivers, school personnel, and the student’s healthcare provider.

Students who are excluded from school should be afforded the opportunity, as soon as feasible when they are well enough to participate in classwork, to make up any missed classwork without penalty in order to reduce mental or physical anxieties about missed academic opportunities.

Incorporating Guidelines for Family, Caregivers and Staff Exposed to COVID-19 (Quarantine)

Staff or Parents/Caregivers should notify the school if they have been exposed to COVID-19 or if they, or any member of their household have been diagnosed, or are presumed to have COVID-19. When this occurs:

- The staff or student must self-quarantine at home for 14 days from the day they were exposed to a positive case (consider other learning options for quarantined student).
- Contact TCCHD at (330) 675-2590, option 3.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/parents-caregivers.html>

Plan for a Suspected Case or Positive Case

Staff or student begins exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 during the school day:

- Place a mask on the individual and immediately isolate them (be placed in a separate room, monitored by personnel maintaining social distancing and wearing PPE. This should **not** be the nursing station, as there should be no cohorting of COVID-19 symptomatic individuals with non-COVID-19 ill individuals).
- Staff personnel, should question the symptomatic individual utilizing the CDC screening questionnaire shown above.
- We are recommending that you work with your local fire/EMS to assist in the identification of an adequate and appropriate isolation area.
- Suspect COVID-19 individuals should be reported to the health district at (330) 675-2590, option 3.

- Send the ill staff member home – request they contact their medical provider for further guidance.
- Call family to pick up sick student as quickly as possible.
- Establish procedure for safely transporting anyone with severe symptoms from COVID-19 to a healthcare facility.
- If calling an ambulance or taking someone to the hospital, call ahead to alert the hospital staff that the person may have COVID-19, and let the first responder know that they are responding to a possible COVID-19 case.

Districts Must Be Prepared for the Possibility that a Student or Staff Member Tests Positive for COVID-19

- Once the school is aware of staff or student that has tested positive for COVID-19, please contact TCCHD at (330) 675-2590, option 3, to report the case.
- A positive case will prompt a case investigation by TCCHD to identify potential close contacts.
- The school district will cooperate with TCCHD in contact tracing to identify close contacts of the case.
- TCCHD will assist in developing a letter for school districts to explain/define what is considered close contact to a COVID-19 case, and the need for a 14-day quarantine.
- Definition of close contact: Someone within 6 ft. of a case for at least 15 minutes during the contact window.
- Definition of contact window:
 - Symptomatic Case – 48 hours before symptom onset date until the date the case is isolated.
 - Asymptomatic Case – 48 hours before the specimen was collected until the case was isolated.
- To expedite contact tracing, plans should include updated attendance records, seating charts, and contact phone numbers.
- If a school has multiple COVID-19 positive cases, TCCHD will work with appropriate school personnel to determine if the cases are related and an outbreak is occurring. (An outbreak can be defined as 2 or more individuals that are positive within 14 days of each other, and are linked to a common exposure involving the school setting.)
- Once an outbreak has been determined, TCCHD will work with the superintendent to determine the most appropriate course of action, such as suspension of activities, and assist in developing a letter describing the mitigation steps being taken.

Returning to School After Illness

Student or staff diagnosed as having COVID-19 with symptoms must meet the following criteria to return to schools:

- 1 day (24 hours) with no fever (without using fever reducing medication), and
- Other symptoms improved, and
- 10 days since symptoms first appeared.

Student or staff diagnosed as having COVID-19 without symptoms (asymptomatic) must meet the following criteria to return to school:

- 10 days have passed since test without any symptoms developing.
- For any questions pertaining to return to school timeframes, please contact TCCHD at (330) 675-2590, option 3.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html>