



## Operational Guidelines for COVID-19

The Morgan County Charter School System will continue to monitor the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic as we prepare for the coming school year. Below are the administrative guidelines for ways to best support a safe learning environment.

### Promoting Behaviors that Reduce Spread

- School employees will teach and reinforce healthy hygiene practices. Hand sanitizer will be available throughout each building and in classrooms.
- Staff and students will be encouraged to practice social distancing to the extent possible.
- School administrators will educate staff and families about when they/their child(ren) should stay home and when they can return to school.
  - Building level administrators will actively encourage employees and students who are sick or who have recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19 to stay home.
  - Students who stay home sick or under quarantine will be provided with remote learning opportunities.

### Face Coverings

- Staff and students are strongly encouraged to wear cloth face coverings. Any operating procedure regarding face coverings must be sensitive to the needs of individuals with medical issues that make the wearing of a face covering inadvisable.
- In particular, staff and students may be expected to wear a face covering in times when physical distancing is difficult.
- Individuals should be frequently reminded not to touch the face covering and to wash their hands frequently.

### Maintaining Healthy Environments

- System and building level administrators will ensure that frequently touched surfaces (playground equipment, door handles, sink handles, drinking fountains) within the school and on school buses will be cleaned and disinfected at least daily or between use as much as possible. Use of shared objects (gym or physical education equipment, art supplies, toys, games) should be limited when possible, or cleaned between use.
- Drinking fountains should be cleaned and sanitized, but encourage staff and students to bring their own water to minimize use and touching of water fountains.

### Additional Information

- Each school will provide meals in the classroom, outside, or in the cafeteria with a reduced number of students.
- Non-essential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations will be limited.
- Buses will be cleaned and disinfected daily. Students and staff are required to wear a face covering on the bus.

**Note:** In addition to the guidelines above, principals may have additional information that applies specifically to their school.





### Dealing with Illness

- All students and employees who are sick are required to stay home.
- Employees and students who become sick or exhibit symptoms at school or work will be immediately isolated and not allowed to remain at school. All schools will have a room to isolate symptomatic individuals.
- For non-COVID-19 related illnesses (where a student is running a fever), the student must be fever free for 24 hours or provide a doctor's release to return to school.

### Dealing with Exposure

- All students and employees will be required to stay home if they have COVID-19 symptoms, test positive, or have been in close contact (within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes) in the last 14 days with someone diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Employees and students/guardians (on behalf of students) will be asked to self-report to the school nurse or principal if they have COVID-19 symptoms.
- Employees and students will be required to quarantine if a family member living in the same household is diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Quarantined students will have access to their education through Google Classroom. Teacher created work packets may be sent home for those without reliable internet.

*If a Morgan County Charter School System employee or student has a confirmed case of COVID-19, the system will follow the Georgia Department of Public Health's guidelines for returning to work/school safely. In accordance with state and local laws and regulations, school administrators will notify local health officials, staff, and families of those who may have been in close contact with the individual in a timely manner.*

### Returning to School

Decisions about returning to school for persons with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 will be made in the context of our local circumstances (school transmission, community transmission, resource needs, etc.).

#### **Symptomatic** persons with confirmed COVID-19 or suspected COVID-19

- Who had mild or moderate illness and are not severely *immunocompromised* can return to school or childcare after:
  - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared and
  - At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and
  - Symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved

#### **Asymptomatic** persons with confirmed COVID-19:

- At least 10 days have passed since the positive laboratory test and the person remains asymptomatic
  - Note, asymptomatic persons who test positive and later develop symptoms should follow the guidance for symptomatic persons above.
- Who are not severely *immunocompromised* can return to school or childcare after:
  - At least 10 days have passed since the positive laboratory test and the person remains asymptomatic
- Who are severely *immunocompromised* can return to school or childcare after:
  - At least 10 days have passed since the positive laboratory test and the person remains asymptomatic
  - Note, asymptomatic persons who test positive and later develop symptoms should follow the guidance for symptomatic persons above.





### **Quarantine of Contacts**

All close contacts in both private and public schools and childcare facilities MUST be quarantined and excluded from the school setting and all extracurricular activities, regardless of students, teachers, or staff wearing masks or the use of physical barriers (e.g. Plexiglas).

A 14-day quarantine period is still recommended; however, individuals may opt for a shorter quarantine period by following the below criteria.

**Asymptomatic** persons who have a known exposure to a person with COVID-19 can return to school or childcare:

**After 7 full days have passed, if:**

- Tested for COVID-19 (PCR/molecular or antigen test) AND
- Receive a negative result AND
- Do not experience any COVID-19 symptoms during the quarantine period

**After 10 full days have passed, if:**

- Not tested for COVID-19 AND
- Do not experience any COVID symptoms during the quarantine period

After stopping quarantine after day 7 or 10, individuals who do not have symptoms should:

- Closely monitor themselves for COVID-19 symptoms for an entire 14 days
- For at least the entire 14 days they should strictly adhere to mitigation measures including appropriate mask usage, staying at least 6 feet from others except for brief transitional movements (e.g. changing classes), washing their hands, avoiding crowds, and taking other steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19

If an individual, who is a close contact AND ended quarantine after day 7 or 10, develops symptoms they should be sent home immediately and follow the guidelines for symptomatic individuals and seek COVID-19 testing.

Student-athletes who end quarantine after day 7 or 10 can return to practice if they can adhere to mitigation measures, including appropriate mask usage and staying at least 6 feet from others while at practice.

Additional quarantine guidance can be found at <https://dph.georgia.gov/contact>

### **Quarantine for Vaccinated Individuals**

Quarantine of Vaccinated Contacts Fully vaccinated persons with an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 are not required to quarantine if they meet all of the following criteria:

- Are fully vaccinated for COVID-19 (i.e., it has been greater than 2 weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or it has been greater than 2 weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine),
- It has been less than 3 months since the person was fully vaccinated,
- Do not experience any symptoms since current COVID-19 exposure





Persons who do not meet ALL 3 of the above criteria should continue to follow quarantine guidance listed above. Fully vaccinated persons who do not quarantine should monitor themselves for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days following a suspect or confirmed exposure. In addition, vaccinated persons should continue to follow all other DPH guidance to protect themselves and others, including wearing a mask, social distancing, avoiding crowds, avoiding poorly ventilated spaces, covering coughs and sneezes, and washing hands often.

