

August 10, 2021

RESPONSE LEVELS FOR ON-SITE LEARNING

Helping school districts determine health risks in
relation to community spread of COVID-19

ARKANSAS

READY **FOR** LEARNING



DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY
& SECONDARY EDUCATION

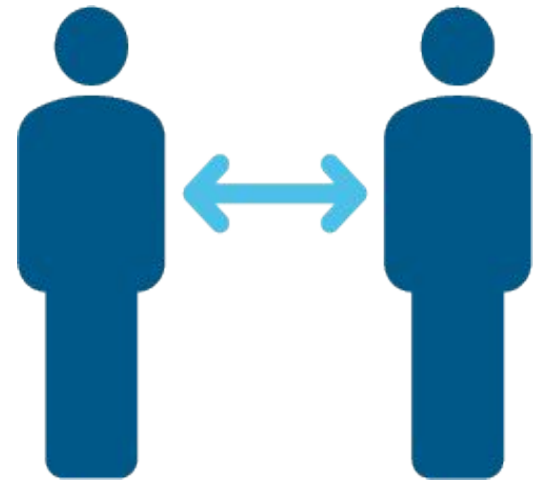


SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

COVID-19 vaccines are the most effective strategy to protect people from getting sick and to reduce the risk of people spreading COVID-19. Students who are ages 12 and older are eligible to receive the Pfizer vaccination. Schools are encouraged to help students ages 12 and older, their families, and all school staff with getting vaccinated. Actions districts can take include:

- **initiating vaccination campaigns,**
- **hosting informational sessions with local medical professionals,**
- **sponsoring vaccination clinics at local school sites**

ADDITIONAL SAFETY PRECAUTIONS



**Physical
Distancing**



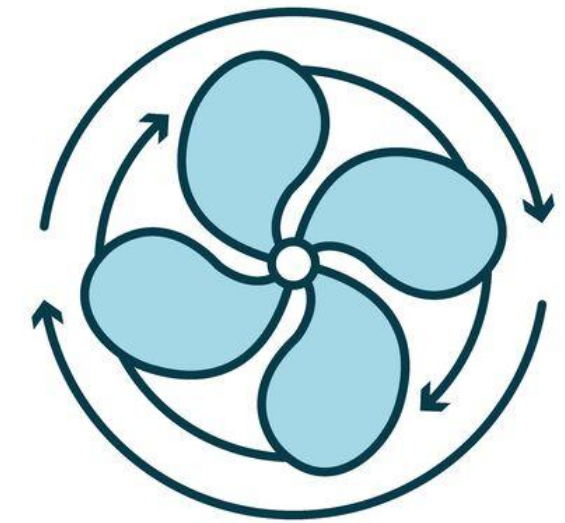
Disinfecting



**Face
Covering**



**Good Hand
Hygiene**



Ventilation

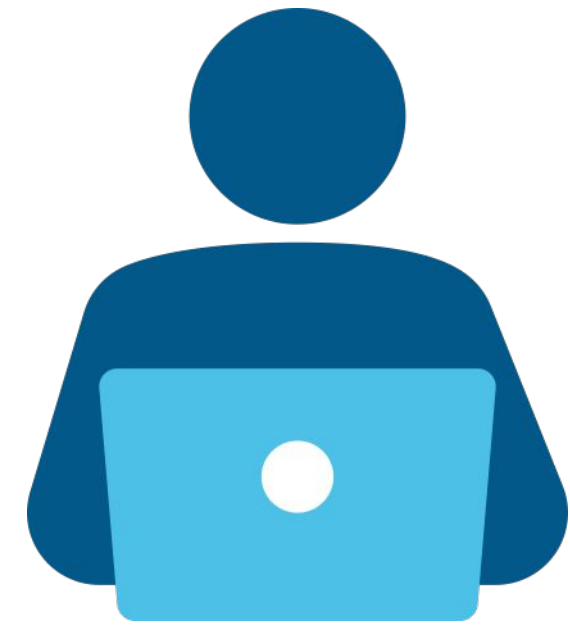
GENERAL AUTHORITY

The Secretary of Health, in consultation with the Governor, has authority over all instances of quarantine and isolation throughout Arkansas, as necessary and appropriate to control disease in the state of Arkansas, as authorized by Ark. Code Ann. §§ 20-7-109 and 20-7-110. See also ADH Rules Pertaining to the Control of Reportable Diseases, which provide for the prevention and control of communicable diseases to protect the public health, welfare, and safety of the citizens of Arkansas.

HEALTH UPDATE

NOTE: On August 6, 2021, Judge Tim Fox issued a temporary restraining order that prohibits the enforcement of Act 1002 of 2021 pending continuing court proceedings. Under the order, there can be no enforcement action taken against any school district or charter school that adopts or implements a requirement to use masks/face coverings. It is recommended that districts and charter schools consult district legal counsel when considering the adoption or implementation of mask/face covering requirements and the applicability of current local policies.

UNDERSTANDING THE TERMINOLOGY



Point of Contact

Appointed by the superintendent, a point of contact is a district employee who is responsible for reporting positive COVID-19 cases to the Arkansas Department of Health School Hotline. This person will work with other school personnel to identify probable close contacts within the district and serve as the liaison between the school district and ADH.

UNDERSTANDING THE TERMINOLOGY



Isolation

Isolation is required for someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. This person must attempt to completely separate from others for a minimum of 10 days.

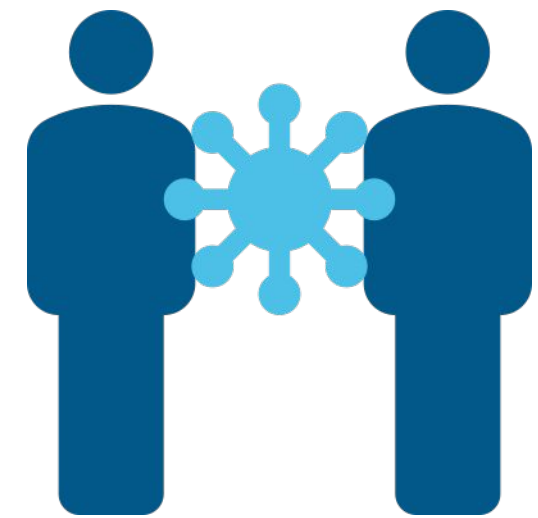
UNDERSTANDING THE TERMINOLOGY



Probable Close Contact

Identified by the district point of contact, a probable close contact is an individual who has likely been within 6 feet for 15 cumulative minutes or longer within a 24-hour period to a person who has tested positive for COVID-19. This person is expected to self-quarantine immediately per back-to-school guidelines from the last date of contact with the positive case and await his/her close contact status to be confirmed by ADH contact tracing.

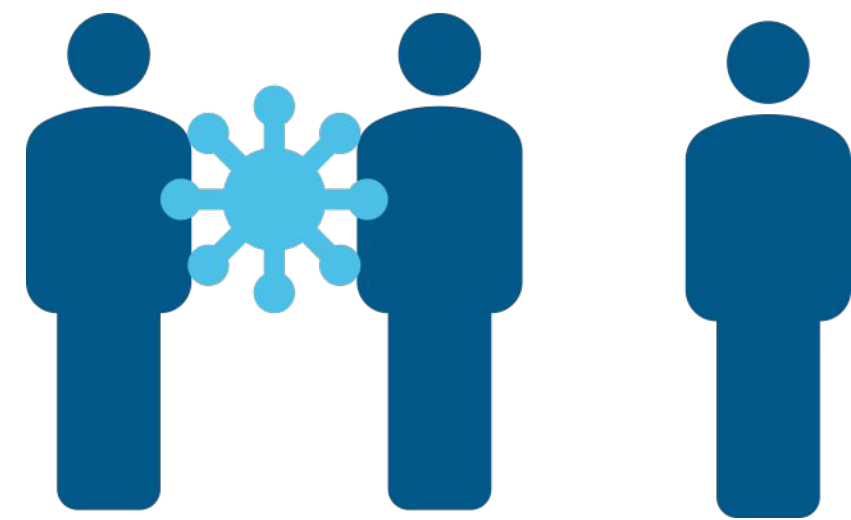
UNDERSTANDING THE TERMINOLOGY



Close Contact

A close contact is an individual confirmed by ADH contact tracing who was within 6 feet for 15 cumulative minutes or longer within a 24-hour period of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19. The close contact will be required to self-quarantine per back-to-school guidelines from the last date of contact with the infected person.

UNDERSTANDING THE TERMINOLOGY



Secondary Contact

A secondary contact is an individual who has had contact with someone identified as a close contact to a person who has tested positive for COVID-19. In most instances, a secondary contact will not need to quarantine but is encouraged to monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19.

UNDERSTANDING THE TERMINOLOGY



Quarantine

Quarantine is required for someone identified as a close contact to a person who has tested positive for COVID-19. The close contact must remain at home and avoid all public activities per back-to-school guidelines from the last date of contact with the positive case.

UNDERSTANDING THE TERMINOLOGY

Possible Exceptions to Quarantine Requirements:

1. Individuals who have previously tested positive for COVID-19 and recovered within 90 days do not have to quarantine, as long as they do not develop new symptoms.
2. Individuals exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19 will not need to quarantine if the exposed individual has no symptoms and both the infected and exposed individual consistently and correctly were wearing a mask.
3. Individuals who are fully vaccinated will not have to quarantine, provided they do not have symptoms.
 - i. School nurses can help verify the vaccination status of a potential close contact through WebIZ to help POCs and school officials determine responses. Parents and students should not be required to provide documentation of vaccination status if nurses are unable to verify through WebIZ.

Ready for Learning

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READY FOR LEARNING

- Per the American Rescue Plan, districts are required to update their Ready for Learning Plan at least every 6 months.
- Districts should re-engage community partners and update plans to reflect the safe reopening and continuity of educational services for the 2021-2022 school year.
- Plans should reflect the recently-issued [back-to-school guidance](#).

REMINDERS

- **178 six-hour instructional days of teacher-student interaction required (unless otherwise allowed by law/rule)**
- **On-site instruction required**
 - **Schools must be open daily for in-person learning according to schedules that meet minimum requirements of Standards for Accreditation.**
 - **School start date: A.C.A. § 6-10-106**

REMINDERS

Per Ark. Code Ann. § 6-10-127, a district may apply for up to 10 days of Alternative Methods of Instruction, including without limitation virtual learning, on days when the district is closed due to exceptional or emergency circumstances such as a contagious disease outbreak, inclement weather or other acts of God, or a utility outage. **Plans must be submitted by Monday, August 16.**

COM-21-145

- The district's AMI plan must demonstrate how teaching and learning will not be negatively impacted by the use of alternative methods of instruction.

IMPORTANT NOTE

Due to the emergency order that allowed for additional flexibility, last school year, districts could pivot to virtual/remote learning instead of using AMI days. For the 2021-2022 school year, however, the use of AMI days will be required when a school or district cannot deliver in-person school-wide or district-wide instruction in order to meet the 178 day requirement and “pivots”.

For calculation of AMI days, each campus, as defined by the school LEA, may have up to 10 AMI days per the approved plan submitted by the district.

AMI DAYS/CLOSURES

- There will be instances when the district will need to decide whether to close and make up the school day or utilize an AMI day. If a district cannot ensure *meaningful instruction*, the district should *not* use an AMI day.
- DESE will monitor the rate at which AMI days are necessary and communicate with superintendents in affected districts. If a district (or a school within a district) exceeds the 10 approved AMI days, the district will consult with DESE.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION

A district must adopt an academic calendar that includes five make-up days, in addition to the number of student-teacher interaction days required by the Standards for Accreditation. (Ark. Code Ann. § 6-10-106(f)). These make-up days can be used to replace instructional days lost due to exceptional or emergency circumstances resulting from a contagious disease outbreak, inclement weather, or other acts of God.

DETERMINING LEVEL OF RESPONSE

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RESPONDING to COVID-19 OUTBREAKS



STEP 1: District P.O.C. contacts ADH School Hotline with questions, if needed.



STEP 2: P.O.C. compiles information regarding the positive case and probable close contacts and reports to ADH School Hotline via Redcap Survey Link



STEP 3: District notifies probable close contacts to self-quarantine per back-to-school guidelines from the last date of contact with the positive case

Responses to COVID-19 should be as targeted as possible. Quarantines and isolations will require schools to implement flexible attendance policies for students and staff in order to lessen the interruption to teaching and learning.

RESPONDING to COVID-19 OUTBREAKS

School districts will use multiple sources of data to make decisions about onsite operations for the upcoming school year. **Level of responses will vary depending on the following:**

- Time of day school personnel receives notification of positive case(s)
- Time required to identify and notify probable close contacts
- Time needed to clean and disinfect affected areas
- Time to secure substitutes/availability of personnel to continue onsite operations
- Extent of affected area(s) (i.e. a classroom, lab, school bus, multiple confirmed cases)
- Evidence of spread within a school

RESPONSE LEVELS

LIMITED RESPONSE: *Classroom or Grade-Level*
Modification is Necessary

MODERATE RESPONSE: *School-Level*
Modification is Necessary

CRITICAL RESPONSE: *District-wide*
Modification is Necessary

LIMITED RESPONSE: *Classroom or Grade-Level* Modification is Necessary

- Positive COVID-19 cases are confirmed in a school building but limited spread allows onsite operations to continue.
 - Students and staff quarantines may require classroom or grade-level pivots to remote learning using a blended learning approach.
- The percentage of staff and students affected will not alter the delivery of school-wide or district-wide on-site instruction and special services. *AMI day/closure not needed.*
- The school will make adjustments for teachers and students to stay connected and to provide meaningful instruction.

LIMITED RESPONSE

Recommendations for Continued On-site School Operations:

- Utilize blended learning for affected students and staff.
- Eliminate the use of lockers, cubbies, or any space that promotes congregating.
- Encourage the use of available safe outdoor spaces during instructional time when weather permits.
- Repurpose unused spaces or modify existing spaces to allow for maximum distancing of students/staff.
- Modify schedules to further decrease transitions.
- Encourage alternative modes of transportation for students who have options other than riding a bus.
- Use of masks/cloth face coverings.

LIMITED RESPONSE: *Classroom or Grade-Level* Modification is Necessary



STEP 1: Superintendent supports P.O.C. and school staff to communicate with parents of affected students



STEP 2: Superintendent reports limited response modification in *Insights* reporting system



STEP 3: Superintendent does *not* have to consult with DESE/ADH; however, the superintendent may wish to talk to the assigned DESE P.O.C.

MODERATE RESPONSE: *School-Level* Modification is Necessary

- **Positive COVID-19 cases are confirmed within the district with moderate spread that extends beyond a specific group of students or classroom. Within-school spread may be occurring.**
- **The percentage of staff and students affected within a school building may alter the delivery of on-site instruction and special services to the extent that a school closure to on-site instruction is warranted for in-person learning for a period of time.**
 - **AMI plans may be implemented if all students and staff pivot to remote learning.**
 - **The extent of school closure will be determined in collaboration with DESE/ADH.**
 - **Buildings may remain open for staff to continue teaching.**
 - **Limited on-site services may still be provided to smaller student groups.**

MODERATE RESPONSE

Recommendations for Continued School Operations:

- Enact AMI plans for the students and teachers within the building.
 - *The district must determine how to continue to provide options for **meaningful instruction** and continued services for students in the affected school, using on-site and remote learning options if implementing AMI.*
- Provide options for appropriate services onsite with smaller groupings of students and staff
- Utilize staff from other schools within the district to provide support, if applicable
- Reschedule or cancel affected extracurricular events, if applicable

MODERATE RESPONSE: *School-Level* Modification is Necessary



STEP 1: Superintendent supports P.O.C. and school staff to communicate with parents of affected students.



STEP 2: Superintendent determines if AMI plans will be implemented for the school. Superintendent reports moderate response modification in *Insights* reporting system.



STEP 3: Superintendent *must* consult with DESE/ADH for closures that extend beyond the time needed for contract tracing, securing substitutes, and/or cleaning and disinfecting facilities.

CRITICAL RESPONSE: *District-wide* Modification is Necessary

- Multiple COVID-19 cases are confirmed within the district due to active transmission within schools throughout the district (linked cases).
- The percentage of staff and students affected substantially disrupts the delivery of on-site instruction and special services to the extent a district-wide closure may be expected for a short or an extended period of time, *to be determined in consultation and collaboration with DESE and ADH.*
- Greater restrictions must be imposed.

CRITICAL RESPONSE: *District-wide* Modification is Necessary

- AMI/school closure implemented
 - *AMI*: Pivot to remote learning for all students district-wide with AMI plans implemented for the delivery of *meaningful instruction*.
 - District-wide *closure*: May be required with make-up days scheduled for a later date if *meaningful instruction* cannot occur.
- Special services may still be provided on-site with limited numbers of students; however, it is anticipated that services may have to be provided remotely due to limited school personnel available.
- Postpone/cancel school-sanctioned events.

CRITICAL RESPONSE: *District-wide* Modification is Necessary



STEP 1: Superintendent supports P.O.C. and staff to communicate with parents of affected students.



STEP 2: Superintendent determines if AMI plans/closure will be implemented for the district. Superintendent reports critical response modification in *Insights* reporting system.



STEP 3: Superintendent *must* consult with DESE/ADH for closures that extend beyond the time needed for contract tracing, securing substitutes, and/or cleaning and disinfecting facilities.

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