



Updated COVID-19 Recommendations for K-12 Schools, Childcare and Youth Camps

Date: July 8, 2022

Public Health Message Type: Alert Advisory Update Information

Intended Audience: All public health partners Healthcare providers Infection preventionists
 Local health departments Schools Childcare Centers
 Animal health professionals Youth Camps

The NJDOH Communicable Disease Service has updated the COVID-19 K-12, Childcare and Youth Camp Guidance which will be posted to the Communicable Disease Service [COVID-19 Information for Schools](#) website.

To support and prioritize uninterrupted, full-time, in-person learning and care, NJDOH has moved from an individual case-based response strategy to a transmission mitigation strategy, where the risk of the whole school community, including the risk of interruptions to learning, is considered.

Key Updates include:

- COVID-19 layered prevention strategies are based on CDC community levels (low, medium and high) rather than the CALI. Current recommendations align with CDC's [Operational Guidance for K-12 Schools and Early Care and Education Programs to Support Safe In-Person Learning](#) guidance issued May 27, 2011.
- Schools, childcare, and camp settings are combined into one guidance document. CDC has a supplemental FAQ for overnight camp administrators which is referenced in the DOH guidance.
- Schools/ECE may transition away from a case-investigation response model to a routine disease control model in schools/ECE. This model focuses more on the response to clusters of cases, outbreaks, and evidence of ongoing transmission in schools/ECE, and less on individual case investigation and contact tracing. This routine disease control model for COVID-19 more closely aligns NJDOH's COVID-19 mitigation efforts with public health response strategies used for other infectious diseases in schools/ECE.
- A template for broad based notification of potential exposure with recommendations for exclusion for quarantine or participation in Test to Stay (TTS) is included in the guidance document.
- Updated language in the Exclusion section for children under 2 who are recommended to quarantine. *If quarantining children under 2 years would pose a significant economic or other hardship for parents, programs may choose to implement alternative measures including daily symptom monitoring by parents and by the program and enforcing mask use for individuals who care for or come in contact with exposed children under 2 years.*
- Removal of the language which recommended that siblings of students with COVID-19 compatible symptoms be excluded while waiting for test results for the symptomatic student.

Recommendations for exclusion of household contacts who are not up to date with COVID-19 vaccination has **not** changed, they should continue to quarantine.

TTS Update

Childcare attendees (over 2 years) are now eligible to participate in TTS to help reduce exclusion for quarantine in this setting. Please see the highlighted section for guidance specific to childcare.

References and Resources:

- CDC [Operational Guidance for K-12 Schools and Early Care and Education Programs to Support Safe In-Person Learning](#)
- CDC [Frequently Asked Questions for Directors of Overnight Camps](#)
- NJDOH [COVID-19: Information for Schools](#)