

MIDLAND PARK PUBLIC SCHOOLS
HEALTH & SAFETY INFORMATION FOR
SCHOOL FAMILIES & DISTRICT STAFF
August 24, 2021



District Staff Vaccination Requirements

<https://www.nj.com/coronavirus/2021/08/all-nj-school-employees-must-be-vaccinated-for-covid-or-undergo-regular-testing-murphy-announces.html>

New Jersey teachers, as well as all state workers, must be fully vaccinated against the coronavirus by Oct. 18, Gov. Phil Murphy said Monday. Those who are not vaccinated will be tested for the coronavirus a minimum of one to two times per week. The mandate applies to staff in all public, private, and parochial schools in preschool through 12th grade, as well as employees of public colleges and universities.

In announcing this requirement at a news conference, Governor Murphy stated, *"As the school year rapidly approaches, we are doing all we can to support as safe a start as possible. Strong masking and vaccination protocols, in tandem with other safety measures, are our best consolidated tool for keeping our schools open."*

New Jersey Executive Order 251—Facemasks

<https://www.nj.gov/governor/news/news/562021/20210806b.shtml>

As you may already know, on August 6 New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy announced that all students, educators, staff, and visitors would be required to wear facemasks indoors for the start of the 2021-2022 school year. This requirement is Executive Order 251, which mandates masking in the indoor premises of all public, private, and parochial preschool, elementary, and secondary school buildings. This order became effective on Monday, August 9.

There are exceptions to this Order, which include, but are not limited to:

- *When doing so would inhibit the individual's health, such as when the individual is exposed to extreme heat indoors;*
- *When the individual has trouble breathing, is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a face covering without assistance;*
- *When a student's documented medical condition or disability, as reflected in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Educational Plan pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, precludes use of a face covering;*
- *When the individual is under two (2) years of age.*

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Contact Tracing & Quarantining

Per the CDC, close contact is defined as being within six feet of someone with suspected or known COVID-19 for 15 or more minutes during a 24-hour period. In certain situations, it may be difficult to determine whether individuals have met this criterion and an entire cohort, classroom, or other group may need to be considered exposed.

Exception: In the K–12 indoor classroom setting, the close contact definition excludes students who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student (laboratory-confirmed or a clinically compatible illness) where both the infected student and the exposed student(s) correctly and consistently wore well-fitting masks the entire time. This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting. (Updated 8/21) School staff should identify school-based close contacts of positive COVID-19 cases in the school.

Exposed close contacts who are fully vaccinated and have no COVID-like symptoms do not need to quarantine, be excluded from school, or be tested following an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19. There should still be monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days following an exposure. If the individual experiences symptoms, they should isolate themselves from others, be clinically evaluated for COVID-19, including SARS-CoV-2 testing and inform their health care provider of their vaccination status at the time of presentation to care.

As with any other communicable disease outbreak, schools will assist in identifying the close contacts within the school and communicating this information back to the local health department (LHD). With guidance from the LHD, schools will be responsible for notifying parents and staff of the close contact exposure and exclusion requirements while maintaining confidentiality. The LHD contact tracing team will notify and interview the close contacts identified by the school and reinforce the exclusion requirements.

The Road Forward—Health & Safety Guidelines

<https://www.nj.gov/education/roadforward/docs/HealthAndSafetyGuidanceSY2122.pdf>

The New Jersey Department of Health and the New Jersey Department of Education collaborated on the development of *The Road Forward—Health & Safety Guidelines*, a guidance document of recommendations for public schools, rather than mandatory standards.

Our district will use this informational necessary guidance to operationalize the goal of providing full-day, in-person instruction, including lunch, for the 2021-2022 school year. The document includes information on many topics, including:

- *Facemasks*
- *Physical Distancing & Cohosting*
- *Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette*
- *Cleaning & Disinfecting*
- *Response to Symptoms*
- *Contact Tracing*
- *Quarantining*

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Here are a few brief summaries from The Road Forward we hope you will find helpful:

Parental Screening

Parents/caregivers are strongly encouraged to monitor their children for signs of illness every day, as they are the front line for assessing illness in their children. Students who are sick should not attend school and administration will enforce exclusion criteria for both students and staff.

Definition of COVID-19 Compatible Symptoms

Parents should not send students to school when sick. For school settings, NJDOH recommends that students with the following symptoms be promptly isolated from others and excluded from school:

At least two of the following symptoms: fever (measure or subjective), chills, rigors (shivers), myalgia (muscle aches), headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion, or runny nose; OR at least one of the following symptoms: cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new olfactory disorder, or new taste disorder.

COVID-19 Exclusion Criteria

For persons who have COVID-19 compatible symptoms OR who test positive for COVID-19:

- *Ill individuals with COVID-19 compatible symptoms who have not been tested or individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 should stay home until at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset and at least 24 hours have passed after resolution of fever without fever reducing medications and improvement in symptoms.*
- *Persons who test positive for COVID-19, but who are asymptomatic should stay home for 10 days from the positive test result. An alternate diagnosis (including a positive strep test or influenza swab) without a negative COVID-19 test is not acceptable for individuals who meet COVID-19 exclusion criteria to return to school earlier than the timeframes above. (Exception: During periods of low community transmission, ill individuals excluded for COVID-19 compatible symptoms who are not tested and do not have a known COVID-19 exposure may follow NJDOH School Exclusion List to determine when they may return to school. Updated August 2021.)*

Response to Symptomatic Students and Staff

Our schools will ensure that procedures are in place to identify and respond to a student or staff member who becomes ill with COVID-19 symptoms. In these cases, administration will:

- *Designate an area or room away from others to isolate individuals who become ill with COVID-19 symptoms while at school.*
- *Ensure there is enough space for multiple people placed at least 6 feet apart.*
- *Ensure that hygiene supplies are available, including additional cloth masks, facial tissues, and alcohol-based hand sanitizer.*