

COVID-19 School Guidance

Preparing for if a Student / Teacher / Staff Member Gets Sick

Pre-Planning

Below are questions to consider before a student/teacher/staff member gets sick:

1. Where is your isolation room?
2. Would you be able to quarantine a class at a moment's notice?
3. Could you bring food to a class under quarantine?
4. Can parents or do parents sign a release that school and public health officials can question the students in the case of an emergency?
5. Can a bus be designated to take people home who are isolated or quarantined? What about the driver?

If DGHD is Alerted to a Case (flow chart provided in Appendix A)

1. Patient is reported to have COVID-19.
2. DGHD notifies school using School COVID-19 Contact List (provided by each school to DGHD).
3. DGHD calls patient (or patient's parents if <18 years old) and asks for close contacts and locations visited. As of 7/5/20, close contacts are considered anyone within 6 feet of an infectious patient for 15 minutes or more. Depending on the nature of the contact, the 6 feet for 15 minutes guideline may not apply (e.g. a person coughing/sneezing into the face of another person would not require 15 minutes of close contact).
4. DGHD places patient under isolation. Close contacts begin to be called and quarantined by DGHD.
5. If patient was at school while infectious, DGHD calls school and alerts school that patient cannot return to school until they receive clearance from DGHD.
6. DGHD will ask school for seating arrangement of classrooms visited by infectious patient, school flow (e.g. how do students travel throughout the building, how do staff travel throughout the building, are students cohorted, do staff interact with different groups of students, do students/staff share equipment, do students share a reading nook) and any known contacts of infectious patient.
7. Based on information provided by patient and information provided by school, DGHD will begin calling all students/staff that are close contacts. At this time, and at the school's discretion, the school may consider sending a letter to affected parents (see Communication & Messaging Section).

8. School should close areas where infectious patient visited for deep cleaning.
 - a. If the school is made aware and the student is already home (stayed home sick or weekend) and cleaning happened the previous night; the school's daily cleaning plan should have identified items that are commonly touched such as doorknobs, handrails, desks, and other commonly touched surfaces. If that student may have touched a surface that is not on the regular cleaning plan (e.g. their locker), then those specific items should be cleaned.
 - b. If the school is made aware and the student is in the building, a staff member should interview the student to establish where the student has been in the building and what items the student has touched. Maintenance staff should immediately clean commonly touched surfaces in the areas the student was including doorknobs, handrails, desks, and other commonly touched surfaces. Students that may have been in contact with the patient should wash their hands before the next class exchange.
 - c. The student or staff should retrieve the student's belongings from their locker and/or classroom. All materials should be cleaned before they leave the building with the student.
9. After patient is cleared from isolation/quarantine, DGHD issues a release letter that can be provided to school for re-entry to normal activities.
10. A laboratory-confirmed case who is a student will not be re-quarantined for a new exposure for 10 weeks following their release.

If a Patient is at School and Develops COVID-19 Symptoms

1. Trained school personnel (e.g. school nurse) should decide if there is a more likely diagnosis (e.g. does the student have a headache and sore throat, but usually has allergies resulting in the symptoms this time of year?). A list of COVID-19 symptoms is provided in Appendix B.
 - a. If an alternative, more likely diagnosis exists, proceed as normal.
 - b. If no alternative, more likely diagnosis exists, continue to step 2.
2. Isolate patient in isolation room and immediately call DGHD at 740-815-6518 (DGHD's emergency line).
3. If possible, quarantine staff/students in the room the symptomatic patient was in until receiving further instructions.
4. DGHD Epi Investigation Team will call school within 15 minutes. During the call, DGHD and school will begin to assess people in rooms for contacts, release people out of room who are not considered contacts, and quarantine contacts.

Communication & Messaging

1. School letter prepared and can be sent out from DGHD or jointly between DGHD and school (sample letter provided in Appendix C).
2. Press release prepared and can be sent, if needed (sample press release provided in Appendix D).
3. FERPA letter prepared and can be sent, if needed. This letter allows the schools to document that there was a clear risk to public health. Considering COVID-19 is a pandemic, it is unlikely that this documentation will be needed (sample letter provided in Appendix E).
4. Relevant laws and regulations are listed below:
 - a. **Ohio Revised Code §3707.06 states, in part:** *(A) Each physician or other person called to attend a person suffering from cholera, plague, yellow fever, typhus fever, diphtheria, typhoid fever, or any other disease dangerous to the public health, or required by the department of health to be reported, shall report to the health commissioner within whose jurisdiction the sick person is found the name, age, sex, and color of the patient, and the house and place in which the sick person may be found. In like manner, the owner or agent of the owner of a building in which a person resides who has any of the listed diseases, or in which are the remains of a person having died of any of the listed diseases, and the head of the family, immediately after becoming aware of the fact, shall give notice thereof to the health commissioner. (B) No person shall fail to comply with the reporting requirements of division (A) of this section.*
 - b. **Ohio Revised Code §3707.07 states:** *When complaint is made or a reasonable belief exists that an infectious or contagious disease prevails in a house or other locality which has not been reported as provided in section 3707.06 of the Revised Code, the board of health of a city or general health district shall cause such house or locality to be inspected by its health commissioner, and on discovering that such disease exists, the board may send the person diseased to a hospital or other place provided for such person, or may restrain him and others exposed within such house or locality from intercourse with other persons, and prohibit ingress and egress to or from such premises.*
 - c. **Ohio Revised Code §3709.22 states, in part:** *Each board of health of a city or general health district shall study and record the prevalence of disease within its district and provide for the prompt diagnosis and control of communicable diseases...*
 - d. **34 CFR 99.36 – Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Regulations (FERPA)** which states, in part: *(a) An educational agency or institution may disclose personally identifiable information from an education record to appropriate parties, including parents of an eligible student, in connection with an emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals...(c) In making a determination under paragraph (a) of this section, an educational agency or institution may take into account the totality of the circumstances pertaining to a threat to the health or safety of a student or other individuals. If the educational agency or institution determines that there is an articulable and significant threat to the health or safety of a student or other individuals, it may disclose information from education records to any person whose knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals. If, based on the information available at the time of the determination, there is a rational basis for the determination, the Department will not substitute its judgment for that of the educational agency or institution in evaluating the circumstances and making its determination*

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- There is currently no clear reasoning for a school to have any responsibility in caring for a COVID-19 probable or positive case, and therefore no clear reason for PPE to be allocated besides filling the mandate of staff wearing face coverings.
- The Emergency Management Agency (EMA) is currently prepared to be able to support with staff supply of cloth face coverings and can allocate a small percentage of face coverings that could be allocated for students, as well as face shields.

Tabletop Exercise Scenarios (reference COVID-19 Tabletop Exercise PowerPoint)

1. Isolating a student and/or a classroom

- a. Who gets quarantined?
 - Students – classroom, lunch buddies, friends, bus
 - Staff
- b. Sport teams/clubs?
- c. Distance learning options
- d. School-aged childcare?

2. Child develops symptoms at school

- a. Where will the child go?
- b. What if it is not one child ill that morning, but 5? 10?
- c. When can child return?
- d. What to do with possibly exposed contacts?

3. Communications with families of COVID-19 outbreak

- a. Main messages
- b. When to close school
- c. When to cancel sports – seasons, games
- d. Other extra-curricular – drama, dances, clubs, etc.
- e. What if a staff member has a serious illness or COVID death?

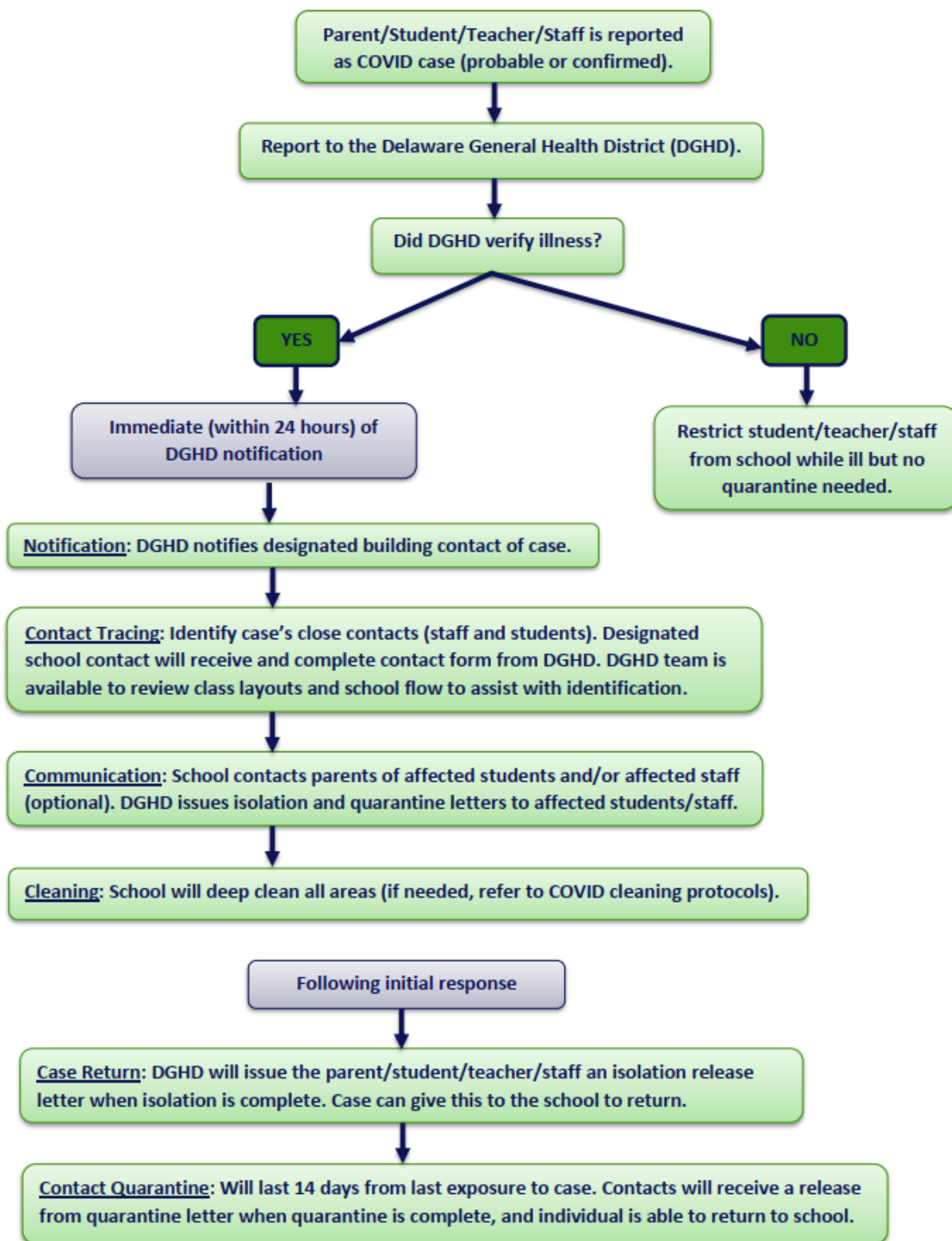
4. Tracing student movements

- a. Tracking MS and HS students, others who bounce class to class

5. Symptoms on school bus

- a. What does a bus driver do if a child is coughing – report this? To whom?

Appendix A: Facility Flowchart



Appendix B: COVID-19 Symptoms*



COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

- FEVER
- DRY COUGH
- DIFFICULTY BREATHING
- CHILLS
- REPEATED SHAKING WITH CHILLS
- MUSCLE PAIN
- HEADACHE
- SORE THROAT
- A LOSS OF TASTE OR SMELL
- CONGESTION OR RUNNY NOSE
- NAUSEA OR VOMITING
- DIARRHEA

STOP THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

WASH YOUR HANDS FOR 20 SECONDS

COVER YOUR COUGH & SNEEZE WITH YOUR ELBOW

WEAR A MASK IN PUBLIC SETTINGS IF MEDICALLY ABLE

PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING OF 6 FEET OR MORE

[DelawareHealth.org/covid-19](https://delawarehealth.org/covid-19)

Delaware General Health District
Dedicated to Your Health

6/4/2020

Source: <https://delawarehealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/COVID-Symptoms-8.5-x11.pdf>

**Symptoms are subject to change as new research becomes available.*

Appendix C: Exposed School Letter

[DATE]

Dear [FACILITY NAME] parents, students, and staff:

The Delaware General Health District is investigating a case of COVID-19 in [SCHOOL NAME]. During the time that the case was infectious, [DATES OF POTENTIAL EXPOSURE], the case reported to have visited [SCHOOL NAME AND ADDRESS].

COVID-19 is a contagious respiratory disease that is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person from people who are in close contact. Generally, close contact is defined as being within 6 feet for 15 minutes or more. Symptoms of COVID-19 typically appear 2-14 days after exposure and may include fever/chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea. For more information on COVID-19 visit: <https://delawarehealth.org/covid-19/>

The Delaware General Health District will be calling anyone who may be a close contact. If you have concerns, they can be reached at 740-368-1700.

The best way to prevent COVID-19 is to practice social distancing; wash your hands often; avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth; wear a facemask; cover cough and sneezes; don't leave your home when you are sick, clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces often, and monitor your health daily.

Sincerely,

NAME
TITLE

Appendix D: Press Release Sample

HEALTH DISTRICT INVESTIGATING COVID-19 CASE IN SCHOOL DISTRICT NAME

DELAWARE, Oh. – The Delaware General Health District is investigating a case of COVID-19 in [SCHOOL NAME]. The reported case was at [SCHOOL NAME AND ADDRESS] during the time that they were infectious, [DATES OF POTENTIAL EXPOSURE].

COVID-19 is a contagious respiratory disease that is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person from people who are in close contact. Generally, close contact is defined as being within 6 feet for 15 minutes or more. Symptoms of COVID-19 typically appear 2-14 days after exposure and may include fever/chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting and diarrhea.

The best prevention against COVID-19 includes:

- Practice social distancing of at least six feet
- Wear a face mask in public
- Wash your hands frequently
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Stay home if you are sick
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces
- Monitor your health daily for symptoms

The Health District will be calling anyone who may be a close contact, therefore it is highly important that contacts answer or return the Health District's call. For questions or concerns, please call at 740-368-1700 or visit DelawareHealth.org/covid-19.

Appendix E: FERPA Letter for Schools

[DATE]

[SCHOOL NAME]

[SCHOOL ADDRESS]

[CITY, STATE ZIP]

Re: **Public Health Investigation – Request for Information**

Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code §3707.06, §3707.07 & §3709.22, the Delaware General Health District requests information in response to a reported Class A disease, COVID-19. An Ohio Department of Health Director's Journal Entry dated March 14, 2020 made COVID-19 a Class A reportable disease under 3701-3-02(A). Any individual having knowledge of a person suffering from COVID-19 must report this to the local health district in which the person resides. Due to a case reporting visiting your facility, the Health District requests additional information to conduct a disease investigation, prevent any potential spread of illness, and determine the source of any existing illnesses.

Ohio Revised Code §3707.06 states, in part: *(A) Each physician or other person called to attend a person suffering from cholera, plague, yellow fever, typhus fever, diphtheria, typhoid fever, or any other disease dangerous to the public health, or required by the department of health to be reported, shall report to the health commissioner within whose jurisdiction the sick person is found the name, age, sex, and color of the patient, and the house and place in which the sick person may be found. In like manner, the owner or agent of the owner of a building in which a person resides who has any of the listed diseases, or in which are the remains of a person having died of any of the listed diseases, and the head of the family, immediately after becoming aware of the fact, shall give notice thereof to the health commissioner. (B) No person shall fail to comply with the reporting requirements of division (A) of this section.*

Ohio Revised Code §3707.07 states: *When complaint is made or a reasonable belief exists that an infectious or contagious disease prevails in a house or other locality which has not been reported as provided in section 3707.06 of the Revised Code, the board of health of a city or general health district shall cause such house or locality to be inspected by its health commissioner, and on discovering that such disease exists, the board may send the person diseased to a hospital or other place provided for such person, or may restrain him and others exposed within such house or locality from intercourse with other persons, and prohibit ingress and egress to or from such premises.*

Ohio Revised Code §3709.22 states, in part: *Each board of health of a city or general health district shall study and record the prevalence of disease within its district and provide for the prompt diagnosis and control of communicable diseases...*

This information may be released under 34 CFR 99.36 – Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Regulations (FERPA) which states, in part: *(a) An educational agency or institution may disclose personally identifiable information from an education record to appropriate parties, including parents of an eligible student, in connection with an emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals... (c) In making a determination under paragraph (a) of this section, an educational agency or institution may take into account the totality of the circumstances pertaining to a threat to the health or safety of a student or other individuals. If the educational agency or institution determines that there is an articulable and significant threat to the health or safety of a student or other individuals, it may disclose information from education records to any person whose knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals. If, based on the information available at the time of the determination, there is a rational basis for the determination, the Department will not substitute its judgment for that of the educational agency or institution in evaluating the circumstances and making its determination.*

It is the Delaware General Health District's opinion that the current situation, meets the definition of an "emergency" under FERPA. Please provide the information contained in the attached linelist to include [LINE LIST ITEMS] for all those reported, known, or suspected to have COVID-19 or close contact to the case from the time frame [DATE] through [DATE]. This information can be submitted by fax through our secure line 740-203-2044 or by secure email.

Thank you for your assistance in this public health investigation. Should you have any questions please call us at 740-203-2020.

Dedicated to your health,

Adam R. Howard, MPH, R.S.
Director of Preventative Health
Delaware General Health District

Delaware General Health District

COVID-19 Response