

STAFF HEALTH

I. Staff Health Guidelines for the 2020-2021 School Year

In accordance with the Virginia Department of Education's (VDOE) phased reopening guidance for schools, ACPS will require enhanced health and safety protocols to be observed during the 2020-2021 school year. Regardless of the operational status of the division's buildings or the City of Alexandria's reopening phase, these provisions will remain in effect throughout the school year. These precautions are intended to:

- Adhere to mitigation strategies that minimize the spread of COVID-19 established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) and the Alexandria Health Department (AHD);
- Align with VDOE's return to school plan implementing the phased reopening of K-12 schools during the COVID-19 pandemic; and
- Prioritize safety precautions for the benefit of ACPS students and staff.

Unless modified in subsections A.-C. below, all other provisions of this policy remain in effect for the 2020-2021 school year.

A. Employees, students and visitors will be required to wear protective face coverings/masks while on ACPS property (to include the buildings, grounds, school buses and other ACPS-provided vehicles) during the school day and during any school-sponsored activity.

- **Face covering/mask:** An item normally made of cloth or various other materials (with elastic bands or cloth ties) that is secured over the wearer's nose and mouth in an effort to contain or reduce the spread of potentially infectious respiratory secretions at the source (i.e., the person's nose and mouth).

Protective face coverings/masks will be required for staff while in the presence of others unless the individual has been expressly granted an accommodation regarding face coverings by ACPS that is:

- Necessary to the performance of his/her duties (e.g., a teacher while instructing students with certain disabilities); or
- Due to a medical reason as evidenced by written documentation from the individual's health care provider. ACPS will support employees by providing information regarding additional health resources if needed.

If an employee does not have a protective face covering/mask that meets the standard above, one will be provided. ACPS will provide employees with training regarding physical distancing, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other measures to minimize COVID-19 transmission.

- B. ACPS will conduct employee temperature screenings upon arrival at designated school-division facilities/screening sites prior to any employee reporting in person to perform his/her assigned duties.

Employees will assess their health each day prior to reporting in person to an ACPS facility using the COVID-19 Health Screening Questionnaire developed in collaboration with the Alexandria Health Department. If the employee meets the screening criteria, he/she will not report in-person to work until cleared to do so through the Department of Human Resources. Employees are encouraged to get COVID-19 testing if they display the signs and symptoms of COVID-19.

Employees who are at higher risk for severe illness may contact the Department of Human Resources with any questions regarding COVID-related Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodation requests.

Employees are encouraged to maintain strict adherence to public health recommendations outside of schools (e.g. physical distancing, use of masks, hand hygiene, etc.).

- C. ACPS will continually monitor communications from the VDH, CDC, and AHD for the latest information on local public health conditions and related guidance.

II. Generally

As a condition of employment, every new employee of the School Board and student-teachers/ interns shall submit a certificate signed by a licensed physician, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, or registered nurse stating the employee appears free of communicable tuberculosis. Volunteers may also be required to provide such a certificate. Any employee who begins duty without having complied with this requirement will have violated the terms of employment and is not entitled to compensation. Any intern or student-teacher who begins his/her duties without having complied with this requirement may be removed from that assignment until the requirement is fulfilled. For the purposes of this policy, a new employee is designated as someone hired for the first time or rehired after a one-year absence.

After consulting with the local health director, the School Board may require tuberculosis re-screening of employees annually or at such intervals as it deems appropriate, as a condition of continued employment.

Employees who have the following symptoms should closely assess their own ability to work:

- Fever of 100.0 or higher in the last 24 hours without medication;
- Undiagnosed rash that is accompanied by fever or itching;
- Frequent coughing or difficulty breathing;

- Vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours;
- Sore throat, with fever or swollen glands in the neck;
- Symptoms of being sick such as being unusually tired, irritable, or weak;
- COVID-19 symptoms in accordance with CDC guidelines; or
- Any symptoms related to a mental health crisis.

While school nurses are not considered part of the employees' medical triage, and employees are encouraged to use good judgment in remaining at the work site when ill, if a medical emergency/ event requires assessment by the school nurse and/or school administration to prevent employee endangerment to self or others resulting in a 911 call, the employee may choose to refuse transport by EMS. However, if the employee refuses EMS transport, she/he will be required to either seek medical attention or return home via safe transportation. The employee may not remain at the school. A Return to Work letter may be required by the Department of Human Resources from the employee's health care provider before returning to school.

Physical Exams for School Bus Drivers

No person shall be employed as a bus driver unless he or she has an annual physical exam of the scope required by the Virginia Board of Education and provides the School Board the results of the exam on the form prescribed by the Virginia Board of Education. Such exam and report may be provided by a licensed nurse practitioner or physician assistant.

The School Board may also require alcohol and drug testing in accordance with Policy GDQ.

Adopted: November 17, 1998
Amended: November 21, 2002
Amended: April 20, 2006
Amended: December 20, 2012
Amended: June 11, 2015
Amended: June 20, 2019
Amended: September 10, 2020

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-178, 22.1-300, 22.1-301, 54.1-2952.2, 54.1-2957.02.

Recover, Redesign, Restart 2020, Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) (Revised July, 2020).

Guidance for Schools, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), (Updated May 2020), <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>.

Phase Guidance for Virginia Schools, Virginia Department of Health (VDH), (July 1, 2020),

<https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/governor-of-virginia/pdf/Final-Phase-Guidance-for-Virginia-Schools-6.9.20.pdf>.

Cross Refs.:	EBAB	Possible Exposure to Viral Infections
	EBBB	Personnel Training – Viral Infections
	GDQ	School Bus Drivers
	JHCC	Communicable Diseases
	JHCCA	Blood-Borne Contagious or Infectious Diseases