



# IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & WELFARE

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## **Recommendations for Idaho School Staffs and Administrations PROCEDURES and PRACTICES** *Specific to Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)*

- Contact your public health district if you are aware of a student or staff member who has traveled from China in the previous 14 days who has not had communication with the public health district. Public health officials can determine what should be recommended and will make those recommendations to the traveler.
- Students or staff who have traveled from China in the past 14 days should have been contacted by their public health district, which will complete an individualized risk assessment and monitoring recommendations.
- In general, travelers from mainland China outside Hubei Province who are determined to be of medium risk of exposure will be instructed by the public health district to not enter school or engage in after-school activities until 14 days have passed since departure from China without becoming ill.
- Students who are requested to stay out of school as the result of a public health risk assessment should be supported by schools in completing their educational requirements by alternative means (e.g., online classes, workplans sent home). They should not be penalized for absenteeism from classes and extra-curricular activities because those penalties could mean they ignore public health guidance and potentially expose others.
- Social stigmatization and prejudice against someone from another country occur when a disease outbreak is linked to a geographic area. This can make students feel unsafe in school and at school activities and adversely affect their self-esteem. Schools can help by providing clear information about the reasons for control measures, giving students reliable information, and training students to analyze media messages critically to differentiate between evidence and speculation.

## **PROCEDURES and PRACTICES** *General Contagion Containment*

Good containment practices are effective regardless of the specific infectious agent. It is still the season when influenza and other respiratory germs are circulating. Proper hand hygiene, cough etiquette, and staying home when sick are important ways to control spread of these germs. Use common sense and everyday preventive measures to protect students, staff, and volunteers from all respiratory diseases.

- Students, staff, and volunteers should:
  - Stay home when sick until at least 24 hours after fever is gone without the use of fever-reducing medicine.
  - Cover coughs or sneezes with a bent arm or tissue and wash hands afterwards.

- Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, dry hand with a paper towel, and use the paper towel to turn off the faucet.
  - Try to keep hands away from nose, mouth, and eyes.
  - Avoid sharing food, drinks, cosmetics or personal care items (lip balm, eye drops, etc.)
- School officials should:
  - Review any practices that may encourage an ill person to come to school, and change those practices if possible.
  - Have trash receptacles readily available for used tissues; make tissues available in classrooms and other areas if possible.
  - Provide adequate hand washing supplies and easily available hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
  - Follow your school's standard procedures for routine cleaning and disinfecting. Typically this means daily sanitizing surfaces and objects that are touched often (e.g., desks, countertops, doorknobs, computer keyboards, hands-on learning items, faucet handles, wall or desk phones, and toys. Always follow label directions on cleaning products and disinfectants, including time the product needs to remain on the surface for proper disinfection.
  - Provide adequate supplies (EPA-registered cleaning products, gloves, disinfecting wipes, no-touch trashcans) for surface cleaning.
  - Separate ill students and staff from others until they can go home.
  - Teach students, parents, staff, and volunteers about signs and symptoms of respiratory illness
- Contact your public health district if you have any questions.

## INFORMATION POINTS

When questioned School Staff and Administration should consider the following:

- No cases of disease and or infection with novel coronavirus have been detected in Idaho to date. The first case in Idaho will be announced by public health officials after it has been confirmed.
- When Idaho public health districts are notified of people who traveled from China, public health officials are contacting the travelers, conducting a risk assessment according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines, and implementing appropriate monitoring.
- The risk of infection in the United States is considered low, but people who have close contact (e.g., household members and caregivers) with someone who has the disease caused by novel coronavirus (COVID-19) are at higher risk of becoming ill.
- Currently, it appears that healthy children are not at high risk of severe illness from this virus.
- Because there is no vaccine available or known effective treatment for COVID-19, prevention and control of this outbreak rely upon detection and isolation of ill people, and identification and monitoring of people who have come in close contact with people who have COVID-19.
- Protect yourself against other respiratory diseases by getting your influenza vaccine – it's not too late – and make sure you are up to date on vaccination against pertussis. Practice good hand hygiene, cover your coughs and sneezes, avoid sick people, and stay home if you are sick.
- Seasonal human coronaviruses can cause respiratory disease; they are circulating and some people who get tested for a respiratory illness might have a positive coronavirus test result. This is not the same as this novel coronavirus.

- The school is working with the public health district and is monitoring this rapidly changing situation.
- Recommendations could change as the situation continues to develop.

### RESOURCES

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, COVID-19 website, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, COVID-19: Interim Guidance for Childcare Programs and K-12 Schools, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-for-schools.html>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Common Human Coronaviruses <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/general-information.html>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Handwashing: Clean Hands Save Lives <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/index.html>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Coughing & Sneezing [https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/etiquette/coughing\\_sneezing.html](https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/etiquette/coughing_sneezing.html)
- Coronavirus fears can trigger anti-Chinese prejudice. Here's how schools can help. <https://theconversation.com/coronavirus-fears-can-trigger-anti-chinese-prejudice-heres-how-schools-can-help-130945>
- Idaho Public Health  
Districts: <https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/Health/HealthDistricts/tabid/97/Default.aspx>