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Team CMS,

As we prepare to reopen our schools for 2020-2021, I want to share with you my sincere appreciation for your patience as we have put our plans together to make our schools a safe environment for students to learn, and for you to work.

Education as we know it has changed significantly since we were last in classrooms in March. But our mission remains: to safely provide an effective and equitable education for all students.

Our employees are critical to the success of CMS, and that is why we have tried to think through everything that must be done to keep our teammates safe when we return to facilities in the coming weeks.

We know that you’re concerned about your health and well-being. We are, too. Our leadership teams have spent many hours evaluating data from health officials to create a plan that will help keep you safe. We are thankful for your commitment to our students. Our commitment is to establish procedures and protocols that will help you feel safe, healthy and comfortable at work.

This Return-to-Work guide outlines our district’s plan to keep you safe. You will find information about:

- How instruction will work
- Health screenings
- Preventative measures such as face coverings and handwashing
- Cleaning and sanitizing practices
- Social distancing
- Transportation
- Meals

This guide provides details about all that we are doing, and what we need you to do, to create a safe and healthy work environment for everyone. Please take some time to review this guide and raise any questions you might have that aren’t answered by this information to your supervisor or principal. We will provide answers and make sure you feel safe, engaged, and supported. Please share your suggestions for improving health and safety in the workplace, also.

Our commitment to keeping you safe is something that will be at the forefront of every decision we make this year. I have no doubts that our team can rise to meet any challenges we’re faced with. I know that we can make these new guidelines work through cooperation, flexibility and grace. Thank you so much for everything you do every day.

Let’s have a great year.

Earnest Winston
Superintendent
Overview

This guide presents protocols developed to reduce the spread of the novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19 for the safety of our students, employees, and school communities. It is based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS), and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI).

Our top priority in all decisions is the health, safety, and well-being of our students, employees and school communities. This document is subject to updates. If and when the circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic change, this guidance may also change.

To combat the spread of this virus as a community, the expectation is that all employees comply with the procedures, protocols, and requirements outlined in this document and in any linked documents and websites. In addition, we are all expected to comply with state and local regulations. If state or local requirements differ from the guidance provided below, school communities will follow the stricter requirements.

StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit (K-12) provides additional details related to all the guidance included in this document.
Social Distancing

Social distancing is a key tool to decrease the spread of COVID-19. Social distancing ("physical distancing") means keeping space between yourself and other people outside of your home.

CMS Will:

» Provide social distancing floor / seating markings in waiting and reception areas
» Mark 6 feet of spacing to remind students and staff to always stay 6 feet apart in lines and at other times when they may congregate
» Provide proper social distancing signage in a variety of areas of the school building to include front entrance areas, hallways, cafeteria, and restrooms
» Limit nonessential visitors and activities involving external groups or organizations
» Have staff monitor arrival and dismissal to discourage congregating and ensure students go straight from a vehicle to their classrooms and vice-versa

» Discontinue the use of any self-service food or beverage distribution in the cafeteria (e.g. meals and / or snacks served at school should be individually packaged and served directly to students; milk or juice may be available separately and should also be served directly to students). As always, CMS teachers and staff will ensure the safety of children with food allergies.
» Use plexiglas in the front offices
Cloth Face Coverings

There is growing evidence that wearing face coverings help reduce the spread of COVID-19, especially for those who are sick but may not know it. Cloth face coverings are not surgical masks, respirators (“N-95s”), or other medical personal protective equipment (PPE). Individuals should be reminded frequently not to touch the face covering and to wash their hands.

**Cloth face coverings should not be placed on:**
- Anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious
- Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance
- Anyone who cannot tolerate a cloth face covering due to developmental, medical or behavioral health needs

**CMS Will:**
- Ensure staff, visitors and students wear face coverings, unless the person or family member states that an exception applies. Cloth face coverings must be worn by students and staff on buses or other transportation vehicles, inside school buildings, and anywhere on school grounds, including outside.
- Share guidance and information with staff, students, and families on the proper use, wearing, removal, and cleaning of cloth face coverings, such as [CDC’s guidance on wearing and removing cloth face masks](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/summary.html) and [CDC’s use of cloth face coverings](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/summary.html)
- Provide 5 reusable cloth face coverings to all employees and students
Cleaning Tasks and Expectations

Maintaining clean classrooms is a shared responsibility between teachers and custodial staff.

Maintaining clean and healthy schools is one of our most important tools in the fight against COVID-19. Changes to the daily tasks of custodial personnel when schools reopen include more frequent cleaning and disinfecting. Greater visibility and presence of custodial staff will be required during the school day to implement these efforts. Our custodial teams will be following Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines for:

- **Cleaning** removes germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces or objects. Cleaning works by using soap (or detergent) and water to physically remove germs from surfaces. This process does not necessarily kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and risk of spreading infection.

- **Disinfecting** kills germs on surfaces or objects. Disinfecting works by using chemicals to kill germs on surfaces or objects. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface, after cleaning it, can further lower the risk of spreading infection.

- **Sanitizing** lowers the number of germs on surfaces or objects to a safe level, as judged by the public health standards requirements. This process works by either cleaning or disinfecting surfaces or objects to lower the risk of spreading infection.
Our staff’s top priority will be to frequently clean, sanitize and disinfect often-touched surfaces and also maintain adequate supplies of products such as soap, hand sanitizer and paper towels to assist in proper hygiene.

At the end of each school day, our team will disinfect surfaces inside classrooms, restrooms and throughout the building. Here are some changes that you can expect to see:

- Custodial staff frequently wiping down touched surfaces (front office doors, countertops, tables, doors, light switches, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets and sinks, soap dispensers, etc.) throughout the school day.

- Frequent cleaning of restrooms throughout the day to include regular checking of restroom supplies like hand soap, paper towels and toilet tissue.

- Daily disinfection of all restrooms and frequently touched surfaces and areas – after such areas have been cleaned.

- Additional custodial assistance during breakfast and lunch. These tasks will include proper placement and frequent emptying of trash cans, wiping down frequently touched surfaces in the cafeteria before and after meals are served.

- More thorough daily cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces within the classrooms to include desks, doors, and table tops as well as damp/wet mopping classroom floors and daily changing of classroom trashcan liners.

- Weekly reporting of on-hand inventory/supplies (paper towels, hand soap, toilet tissue, gloves, cleaning products, etc.)

Maintaining clean classrooms is a shared responsibility between teachers and custodial staff. Teachers will be provided cleaning supplies to clean classrooms throughout the day as needed. Custodians will clean the classrooms before and after school.
Water and Ventilation Systems

When reopening a building after it has been closed for a long period of time, it is important to keep in mind that reduced use of water and ventilation systems can pose their own health hazards. There is an increased risk for Legionella and other bacteria that come from stagnant or standing water.

**CMS Will:**

- Flush all water systems
- Increase frequency of cleaning water fountains
- Explore how many more schools can be outfitted with water bottle filling stations so that students can bring reusable / personal water bottles
- Discontinue use of drinking directly from water fountains, post signs requesting water fountains be used for bottle filling stations only.
- Provide cups or alternative procedures to minimize use of water fountains.
- Replace air filters while ensuring no cross-contamination of old filters
- Increase outside air flow in schools by 10-15% via the HVAC automation system
- Conduct HVAC air system optimizations in certain schools – major cleaning and restoration to air flow systems (phased work for 5 years)
- Ensure all exhaust fans operate properly to maximize movement of air flow
Transportation

Local education leaders and schools should follow the guidelines below for their transportation vehicles (e.g., buses, vans).

**CMS Will:**

» Ensure that individuals wear face coverings when they are or may be within 6 feet of another person on a bus or other transportation vehicle, unless the person (or family member, for a student) states that an exception applies.

» Clean and disinfect transportation vehicles regularly. Children must not be present when a vehicle is being cleaned.

» Ensure safe and correct use and storage of cleaning and disinfection products, including storing products securely away from children and use adequate ventilation when staff use such products.

» Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces in the vehicle (e.g., surfaces in the driver’s cockpit, hard seats, arm rests, door handles, seat belt buckles, light and air controls, doors and windows, and grab handles) prior to morning routes and prior to afternoon routes.

» Keep doors and windows open when cleaning the vehicle and between trips to let the vehicle thoroughly air out.

» Clean, sanitize and disinfect equipment including items such as car seats and seat belts, wheelchairs, walkers, and adaptive equipment being transported to schools.

» Enforce that if an individual becomes sick during the day, they must not use group transportation to return home and must follow protocols outlined above.

  — If a driver becomes sick during the day, they must follow protocols outlined above and must not return to drive students.

» Provide hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol) to support healthy hygiene behaviors on all school transportation vehicles for safe use by staff and older children.

  — Hand sanitizer should only remain on school transportation vehicles while they are in use.

  — Systematically and frequently check and refill hand sanitizers.
Guidance for Specific Workplace Scenarios

Many employees at CMS serve in positions that must be done on-site in order to serve students and families who experience their learning in classrooms and who visit our campuses. We have taken steps to ensure the safety of our on-site staff, including enforcing social distancing, providing face coverings to all staff, and implementing enhanced cleaning protocols.

Working in a School Environment

All employees working in a school environment will have access to hand-sanitizing stations placed in strategic and common locations throughout the school buildings. Custodial employees will work with school employees to ensure hand-sanitizing dispensers are regularly checked and refilled.

Employees conducting temperature checks and employees who are assigned to assist students who are not feeling well will be provided the required personal protective equipment (PPE), including face coverings and gloves, when needed.

Every school will identify an administrator or staff member to serve as the school’s COVID-19 coordinator to serve as the liaison between CMS School Systems, the school nurse, employees, and families on COVID-19 matters. The School COVID-19 Coordinator will help ensure schools have the supplies they need and are following health guidelines.

Working on a School Bus

To keep bus drivers safe on the job, we will provide personal protective equipment (PPE), including face coverings, hand sanitizer on every bus, and cleaning products, as required by the NCDHHS and NCDPI guidelines.

Touch points, including doors and windows, grab handles, arm rests, hard seats, door handles, and seat belt buckles, will be cleaned and disinfected between each bus run with an EPA-approved disinfectant for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. Every bus will be cleaned between morning and afternoon runs and at the end of each day.

To promote social distancing, no more than one student will be seated on a school bus seat at a time. No more than two students at a time will be seated in a vendor transportation vehicle. Exceptions can be made for family members.

All students riding a bus or vendor transportation must wear a face covering unless they cannot tolerate a face covering due to developmental, medical, or behavioral health needs or due to a religious belief. If a student cannot wear a face covering, they will be required to complete a form to notify transportation services. Students who do not wear a face covering on a bus must remain socially distanced six feet from other people on the bus, which will reduce the bus capacity and require adjustments to bus routes.
Itinerant Employees and Daily Health Screening Pass
Employees working at multiple locations should go through the health screening process at their base work facility and obtain a dated health screening pass before going to schools or remote work sites.

School-based employees working at multiple locations should go through the health screening process at their first work location of the day and obtain a dated health screening pass if they intend to also work at another school location.

If a vendor or employee arrives at a work location and has the dated health screening pass, he or she will be permitted to enter the facility without additional health screening.

Central Office / Non-School Based Staff
Our core business of educating students requires that certain positions must be designated to work on-site in order to serve students and families who experience their learning in classrooms and who visit our campuses. In contrast, many other positions throughout the district do not require in-person interaction with students or the public, while others require only limited or periodic on-site work.

In the wake of COVID-19, CMS like many other school districts and employers across the globe shifted to remote work models for positions that can be successfully performed in a remote capacity. Since March, many of our teams, including but not limited to payroll, finance, HR, business systems, student placement, and professional development have demonstrated that they can successfully collaborate and perform their work remotely through the effective use of technology and thoughtful change management. At the same time, health officials continue to advise employers to incorporate remote work where possible. Therefore, CMS will continue this model indefinitely and until further notice.

While many employees have effectively transitioned to remote work, we understand that remote work is not for everyone. Some employees have expressed that they prefer to work in the office for various reasons. Therefore, CMS will provide the flexibility for employees to opt-in to working on-site, subject to any and all important health and safety measures, such as mandatory face coverings and social distancing requirements. As mentioned above, some positions may require periodic on-site work to fulfill specific job functions. Employees in these positions are expected to report on-site as required for the purpose of fulfilling all of their job duties. Also be aware that schools may have an increased need for staff to perform additional duties once schools re-open, and certain central office staff may be called upon to work on-site at schools to assist with these duties as needed. Supervisors are responsible for coordinating, communicating, and setting expectations regarding their staff schedules in a manner that best supports each department’s needs.

Please keep in mind that while remote work is a viable working arrangement for certain positions, CMS will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the model and may in its sole discretion transition staff back into the office.

Meetings and Meeting Spaces
Where possible, meetings and training should be held in whole or part using technology (telephone, Google Meet, etc.). In-person meetings should adhere to the social-distancing guidelines. Remove or rearrange furniture to support social distancing. All participants of meetings and trainings will be required to undergo daily health screenings on site.

As a reminder, North Carolina is currently under “Phase 2: Safer at Home” restrictions through at least Friday, August 7. Under Phase 2, gatherings are limited to no more than 10 people indoors or 25 people outdoors, with a few exceptions. Additional information about Phase 2 can be found on the NCDHHS website.
Break Rooms and Meals
Employees are expected to adhere to social-distancing guidelines while using break rooms or other shared spaces in our schools and office buildings.

Before and after eating, employees should wash their hands thoroughly to reduce the potential transmission of the virus.

If dining in a break room, employees should wear a face covering until they are ready to eat and then should replace it afterward. Employees are encouraged to eat outside if possible.

Sharing food is discouraged. If food or drink is provided, it should be commercially bought and pre-packaged in individual containers with separate, disposable utensils for each person.

Athletic and Co-Curricular Activities
At this time, no decisions have been made on resuming athletic and co-curricular activities.

There are currently extensive requirements for resuming athletic and co-curricular activities, including daily temperature checks and symptom screenings of every student-athlete and band member prior to allowing them to begin a workout or practice.

Student-athletes and band members are encouraged to work out and practice at home if they can do so safely.

Field Trips
For the upcoming school year, in-person field trips have been suspended to ensure the safety of our students and our employees.

Instructional Information
We are committed to challenging and engaging students in relevant, rigorous, and meaningful learning. The COVID-19 pandemic has introduced many uncertainties, including how we will return to school in August, and how that learning environment could change over the course of the year.

Learning Environments
State officials have requested that school districts develop three plans (A, B, and C) for different learning environments to operate in the 2020-21 school year. The learning environment in which we operate will be based on state and local offices, NCDPI guidance and NCDHHS guidance regarding safely reopening schools.

To accommodate a variety of needs, all students will have the option of attending our Full Remote Academy if they are not ready or able to return to a school campus.
Monitoring for Symptoms

Conducting regular screening for symptoms and ongoing self-monitoring throughout the school day can help reduce exposure. Staff and students should be encouraged to self-monitor for symptoms such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath. If a student develops symptoms throughout the day, they must notify an adult immediately. More information on how to monitor for symptoms is available from the CDC.

CMS Will:

» Enforce that staff and students stay home if:
  — They have tested positive for or are showing COVID-19 symptoms, until they meet criteria for return.
  — They have recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19, until they meet the criteria for return.

» Conduct symptom screening of any person entering the building, including students, staff, family members, and other visitors. Parent attestation will be allowed for boarding the bus.

As a required component of symptom screenings, conduct daily temperature screenings for all people entering the school facility.

— Fever is determined by a measured temperature of 100.4 °F or greater.

— Individuals waiting to be screened must stand six feet apart from each other. CMS will use tape or other markers on the floor for spacing.

— The staff person taking temperatures must wear a cloth face covering, and must stay six feet apart unless taking temperature.

— Staff person must wash hands or use hand sanitizer before touching the thermometer.

— Staff person must wear gloves if available and change them between direct contact with individuals, and must wash hands or use hand sanitizer after removing gloves.

— Staff person must clean and sanitize the thermometer using manufacturer’s instructions between each use.
Handling Suspected, Presumptive, or Confirmed Positive COVID-19 Cases

What should a teacher do if they encounter a symptomatic child? How should a school administrator respond if a staff member reports they tested positive for COVID-19? This Reference Guide walks through a step-by-step set of flow charts and resources.

CMS Will:

» Post signage at the main entrance requesting that people who have been symptomatic with fever and/or cough do not enter.

» Educate staff, students, and families about the signs and symptoms of COVID-19, when they should stay home and when they can return to school.

» Establish a dedicated space for symptomatic individuals that will not be used for other purposes.

» Immediately isolate symptomatic individuals to the designated area at the school, and send them home to isolate.

» Ensure symptomatic student remains under visual supervision of a staff member who is at least 6 feet away. The supervising adult should wear cloth face covering or a surgical mask.

» Require the symptomatic person to wear a cloth face covering or a surgical mask while waiting to leave the facility.

» Cloth face coverings should not be placed on:

— Anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious.

— Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance.

— Anyone who cannot tolerate a cloth face covering due to developmental, medical or behavioral health needs.

» Require school nurses or delegated school staff who provide direct patient care to wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and perform hand hygiene after removing PPE.

» Have a plan for how to transport an ill student or staff member home or to medical care.
Adhere to the following process for allowing a student or staff member to return to school:

- If a person has had a negative COVID-19 test, they can return to school once there is no fever without the use of fever-reducing medicines and have felt well for 24 hours.

- If a person is diagnosed with COVID-19 by a medical professional based on a test or their symptoms or does not get a COVID-19 test but has had symptoms, they should not be at school and should stay home until they (or a family member) can answer yes to the following three questions:
  1. Has it been at least 10 days since the individual first had symptoms?
  2. Has it been at least 24 hours since the individual had a fever (without fever-reducing medicines)?
  3. Has the individual’s symptoms improved, including cough and shortness of breath?

- A person can return to school, following normal school policies, if they receive confirmation of an alternative diagnosis from a health care provider that would explain the COVID-19 like symptom(s), once there is no fever without the use of fever-reducing medicines and they have felt well for 24 hours.

- Notify local health authorities of confirmed COVID-19 cases among children and staff.

- Ensure that if a person with COVID-19 was in the school setting while infectious, school administrators will coordinate with local health officials to notify staff and families immediately while maintaining confidentiality of all state and federal laws.

- If a student / employee has been diagnosed with COVID-19 but does not have symptoms, they must remain out of school until 10 days have passed since the first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test, assuming they have not subsequently developed symptoms since their positive test.

- If a student / employee that has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or has been presumed positive by a medical professional due to symptoms, they are not required to have documentation of a negative test in order to return to school.

- If a student / employee has been determined to have been in close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19, they must remain out of school for 14 days since the last date of exposure, unless they test positive, in which case, exclusion criteria above would apply. They must complete the full 14 days of quarantine, even if they test negative.

- Provide remote learning options for students unable to be at school due to illness or exposure.
Individuals who are considered high-risk for severe illness due to COVID-19 include people who:

- Are 65 years of age or older
- Have underlying medical conditions. Such underlying conditions include, but are not limited to:
  - Chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
  - Hypertension
  - Severe heart conditions
  - Compromised immune system
  - Severe obesity – body mass index of 40 or higher
  - Other underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, such as diabetes, liver disease, chronic kidney disease that requires dialysis

More information on who is at higher risk for severe illness due to COVID-19 is available from the [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov) and [NCDHHS](https://ncdhhs.gov).

**CMS Will:**

- Systematically review all current plans (e.g., Individual Healthcare Plans, Individualized Education Plans or 504 plans) for accommodating students with special healthcare needs and update their care plans as needed to decrease their risk for exposure to COVID-19.
- Create a process for students / families and staff to self-identify as high-risk for severe illness due to COVID-19 and have a plan in place to address requests for alternative learning arrangements or work re-assignments.
- Teachers of students with disabilities will follow the district’s health and safety requirements. In addition, other PPE such as face shields will be provided to certain EC staff for instructional and safety purposes.
- School-based Student Services Teams will support students identified as high-risk for severe illness due to COVID-19 to ensure that alternative learning environments are available to include remote learning and / or alternative assignments.
High Risk Self-Identification

High Risk Employees
At this time, alternative work arrangements, including the option for remote work where feasible, are being considered for employees who are considered high-risk for contracting COVID-19 when their position does not allow for effective social distancing. High risk categories include individuals over age 65 and those with underlying medical conditions. Such underlying conditions include, but are not limited to, chronic lung disease, moderate to severe asthma, hypertension, severe heart conditions, compromised immune system, severe obesity, diabetes, liver disease, chronic kidney disease that requires dialysis.

Self-Identification
If you are considered high risk as defined and are in need of an alternative work option / work re-assignments, please submit your request to leavedept@cms.k12.nc.us and provide supporting medical documentation from your medical provider. Documentation must include a start and end date for the request. There may also be leave options available to employees who are unable to report to work. Employees requesting leave for personal reasons should follow the normal leave procedures (submitting a completed request for leave form to their supervisor). To apply for extended leave options and leave options related to COVID-19, please click on this link Leave of absence options. Also, for more information about COVID-19 related leave options, please click here. If you have any questions, contact the Benefits department at 980-343-1754 or leavedept@cms.k12.nc.us.
Special Education

EC Service Providers serve in a wide variety of roles. In many cases, the work requirement and the work context for special education employees is no different than any other employee. In other cases, the work context is very different. The EC Department has worked with HR, Facilities, Operations, and School Health to make sure we are meeting safety guidelines no matter the employee’s work context. Personal protective equipment and cleaning/sanitation supplies will be provided and must be utilized by employees, including EC Service Providers.

At times, recommended social distancing procedures may not be maintained due to complex student needs (ex. restroom, mealtime, transitions, instruction/behavior support). Specialized personal protective equipment will be provided for such situations.

Additional details and resources for EC Service Providers can be found in the EC Playbook. EC Service Providers should familiarize themselves with the EC Playbook prior to returning to work.
Arrival and Screening Process for Students with Special Needs:

Regular monitoring for symptoms can help reduce risk of exposure to COVID-19. Employees and students who are feeling unwell or have a temperature of 100.4°F or higher should stay home. Prior to entering any CMS building, all individuals must complete a health screening process to verify they do not have any COVID-like symptoms. When arriving at the school building, everyone will be instructed to use designated entrances to undergo these health screenings a symptom screening checklist and an on-site temperature check. Individuals waiting to be screened must stand six feet apart from each other.

Schools may have a separate health screening entrance designated for students with special needs who may not be able to use one of the established health screening entrances. Schools may make these modifications for students with special needs:

- Assigning a known employee to conduct the screening
- Encouraging families of nonverbal students to complete the daily Attestation Form if an adult will not be available to answer the questions at drop-off.

The staff person taking temperatures must wear a mask or face covering, and must stay six feet apart unless taking temperature. There will be an option to complete the symptom screening checklist electronically, prior to arriving at the building. Everyone is encouraged to monitor their own temperature but will also be temperature checked at the door. If an individual has completed the self-screening prior to reporting to the school, only a temperature check is needed upon arrival. If the pre-screening checklist has not completed, electronic devices and/or paper copies of the screening checklist will be available while conducting temperature checks. If anyone is screened to have symptoms, an exposure or positive test, they will be instructed not to enter the building or isolate in a designated area until they can return home. Information on requirements for when to return to work will be provided.
CMS is currently seeking options for an online application to be used for symptom screening for staff and students. More information outlining this process will be coming soon. Regular monitoring for symptoms can help reduce risk of exposure to COVID-19. Employees who are feeling unwell or have a temperature of 100.4°F or higher should stay home and notify their supervisor. Prior to entering any CMS building, all individuals must complete a health screening process to verify they do not have any COVID-like symptoms. When arriving at the workplace, all employees will be instructed to use designated entrances to undergo these health screenings a symptom screening checklist and an on-site temperature check. Individuals waiting to be screened must stand six feet apart from each other. The staff person taking temperatures must wear a mask or face covering, and must stay six feet apart unless taking temperature. Employees will have the option to complete the symptom screening checklist electronically, prior to arriving at work. Employees are encouraged to monitor their own temperature but will also be temperature checked at the door. If the employee has completed the self-screening prior to reporting to work, verification will be sent to the supervisor or principal and only a temperature check is needed upon arrival. If the employee has not completed the pre-screening, electronic devices and/or paper copies of the screening checklist will be available while conducting temperature checks. If anyone is screened to have symptoms, an exposure or positive test, they will be instructed not to enter the building, notify supervisor and return home. Information on requirements for when to return to work will be provided.
Work and Leave Guidance

Employees who self-identify as high risk for severe illness from COVID-19 per CDC and NCDHHS guidelines may request an accommodation.

Accommodations may include enhanced personal protective equipment (PPE), modified job responsibilities, adjustments to work schedules or alternate work locations.

**Employee Leave**

There are a number of leave options available to employees who are unable to report to work. In most cases, employees requesting leave should follow the normal leave procedures (submitting a completed leave form and supporting documentation). Paid leave and non-paid leave will be assigned when appropriate and in accordance with policy.

Some changes have been made to leave policies and processes due to COVID-19. These changes, including the addition of the federal Families First Corona Relief Act (FFCRA) or the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) if you meet federal qualifications. Click here for more information on Employee Leave Options as well as the Request for Leave application.
Communication and Combating Misinformation

Help ensure that the information staff, students and their families are getting is coming directly from reliable resources. Use resources from a trusted source like the CDC and NCDHHS to promote behaviors that prevent the spread of COVID-19.

**CMS Will:**

- Disseminate COVID-19 information and combat misinformation through multiple channels to staff, students and families. Ensure that families are able to access communication channels to appropriate staff at the school with questions and concerns.
- Put up signs, posters, and flyers at main entrances and in key areas throughout school buildings and facilities to remind students and staff to use face coverings, wash hands, and stay six feet apart whenever possible (Wear, Wait, Wash).
- Teach students who cannot yet read what the signs’ language and symbols mean.

**CMS will continue to make available the following information to all staff:**

- Information about the benefits of face coverings
- Social distancing guidelines
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) resources
- What to do if diagnosed with COVID-19
- Information on where to obtain testing
- What to do if in a high-risk category
Coping and Resilience

The outbreak of COVID-19 can be stressful for many. Fear and anxiety about a disease can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children. Schools can play an important role in helping students and staff cope and build resilience to support the well-being of the school community.

**CMS Will:**

» Provide staff, families, and students (if age appropriate) with information on how to access resources for mental health and wellness (e.g., 211 and Hope4NC Helpline 1-855-587-3463).

» Ensure School Counselors, Psychologists and Social Workers will provide comprehensive services to students at all levels.

» Ensure social and emotional skills screening for all students, k-12.

» Ensure school-based Mental Health and CMS Mobile Crisis services will be available.

» Provide family resources and support, which will be curated and located on the school websites as well as the overall district website.

» Ensure Student Services Teams will support and connect families to school and community resources.

» Provide access to the LifeCare Employee Assistance Program available to all employees

» For more information call 1-866-592-7240. Or log in now at [http://member.lifecare.com](http://member.lifecare.com) (Registration Code: CHARMECK).
Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What are the district guidelines for management of other viral diseases?**
   We follow communicable disease guidelines related to reporting and monitoring of illnesses and take guidance from the medical director at the health department. See attached section from our health services manual.

2. **When would we consider a school closure as a result of an outbreak in a community?**
   There are many factors to consider in relation to disease outbreak: when the person began experiencing symptoms and when they were last in a school building. NC DHHS defines an outbreak as 2 or more cases linked in congregate living settings. They also monitor clusters: 5 or more cases linked to a related setting. We would work directly with the medical director and communicable diseases division of the health department to determine whether a classroom would need to be quarantined or a whole school needs to be closed.

3. **Are we using the same guidelines previously established or a different set of thresholds?**
   Because COVID-19 is a new illness, we use similar communicable diseases guidelines but continue to adapt our guidance as we learn and understand more about the modes of transmission and risks associated with this illness.
Resources


> For information about North Carolina’s response, visit the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Resources website at covid19.ncdhhs.gov.

> For federal guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, visit cdc.gov/coronavirus.

> The Public Health Hotline can be reached at 980-314-9400

> For information on how NCDHHS is responding to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak visit https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/guidance#schools

> US Department of Labor Families First Coronavirus Response Act: Questions and Answers

> StrongSchools NC (K-12)

> CMS EAP Services with Life Care

This document is subject to updates. If and when the circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic change, this guidance may also change.