

**Health & Safety**

**Employee Protocols**

# **2021-2022**

**PROTOCOLS: EMPLOYEES**

Protocols are established based on CDC Guidelines along with any federal, state or local orders. These practices are put in place as part of a general scale-up of operations.

Employees of LISD, like employees of any organization just continue to meet the work expectations set forth by the district, subject to any applicable employment contract terms.

### Face Coverings

The District will strongly recommend universal masking. Employees will be recommended to wear a cloth or surgical face mask and/or a face shield. Staff members are recommended to universally mask during interaction with students or other staff unless they cannot do so for health reasons.

Employees may bring their own cloth or surgical face mask to and from school. All district staff will be provided with a mask and/or face shield upon request. Schools and sites will have a supply of face masks for employees who arrive without a face mask or whose face mask becomes damaged during the day.

Note: Wearing cloth and surgical face coverings does not replace the need to maintain physical distancing of at least 3 feet whenever possible. Accordingly, the greater number of employees wearing face masks, the greater the overall transmission mitigation that will be achieved. Plastic face shields in combination with face masks, which provide additional protection for the wearer are suggested. Staff wishing to use additional protective equipment may do so.

### Daily Screening

Prior to employees returning to campus, they will be sent a copy of this plan. As part of this process, the District will send communication to all employees that outlines the symptoms for which employees must screen each morning, as well as the expectation that employees will not report to work if they are exhibiting symptoms.

The CDC provides a “self-check” to help individuals make a decision and seek appropriate medical care. The self-checker can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

Employees will not be allowed to work onsite if they exhibit any of the following symptoms:

* + fever of 100.4 and higher or chills,
	+ shortness of breath or difficulty breathing,
	+ muscle aches,
	+ sore throat,
	+ headache,
	+ fatigue,
	+ change in congestion or runny nose not related to allergies,
	+ cough,
	+ vomiting,
	+ diarrhea, or
	+ new loss of taste or smell.

Additionally:

All employee’s temperatures will be assessed on a daily basis whether or not she/he is experiencing any of the stated COVID-19 symptoms and will be required to complete the COVID-19 survey prior to arriving at work. These records will be confidential.

Employees are required to report to their supervisor if they or a person who resides with them, have tested positive for COVID-19. If an employee believes that they have been exposed to COVID-19 but have not been tested or experienced any symptoms, they must seek guidance from their supervisor.

### Handwashing

Employees are required to wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol at the following times, at minimum:

* + upon arrival at school or district facility;
	+ before and after putting on and taking off a face mask;
	+ when entering and exiting the classroom;
	+ before and after lunch;
	+ after sneezing, coughing, or blowing nose; and
	+ after physical contact with other staff or students.

### Physical Distancing

Employees are required to maintain a distance of at least 3 feet between individuals at all times, unless this is not physically possible or, for a student’s or other person’s safety. If a situation arises that requires a staff member to touch a student or another staff member (for instance, if a student requires toileting help or is having a physical emergency), the staff member will resume physical distancing as soon as safely possible, wash their hands, and disinfect any surfaces they touched.

## **REPORTING PROCEDURES FOR COVID-19 SYMPTOMS OR A POSITIVE TEST**

The CDC’s, State and County Health Departments’ procedures for reporting COVID-19 symptoms or COVID-19 positive tests change periodically. The following procedures may be updated and employees, parents and families will be notified of major changes to reporting procedures.

If a student or employee becomes sick with COVID-19 symptoms or reports a positive COVID-19 test, the procedures listed below should be followed:

1. If a student: The student will immediately report the situation ONLY to the School Principal or Campus Administrator
2. If an employee: The employee will immediately report the situation ONLY to the School Principal or Superintendent

#### **Confidentiality must be maintained to the greatest extent possible.**

1. If an employee develops COVID-19 symptoms at work, the employee will be separated from all other students and staff and sent home in a safe manner. If the employee is able to self-transport, the employee will leave the site. If the employee is not able to safely self-transport, a family member, friend, or other method of transport to get the employee home or to a health care provider will be arranged by the supervisor. If the employee appears to be in medical distress, 911 will be called.
2. If a student develops COVID-19 symptoms at school, the student will be separated from all other students and staff, with the exception of one staff member to supervise the student. This staff member will wear additional PPE (a face shield, gloves, etc.) and maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from the student at all times, unless there is an emergency. The school will immediately notify a parent or emergency contact to pick up the student, and call 911 if the student appears to be in medical distress.
3. Areas that were exposed to the symptomatic employee or student will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected per CDC guidelines. Depending on the situation, the areas of exposure may need to be closed for a 24-hour period.
4. The campus administrator will determine whether other employees or students may have been exposed to the symptomatic individual (within 6 feet and for a prolonged period of time, typically longer than 15 minutes). If so, the school administrator will notify the Superintendent. If it is determined that those who were potentially exposed should be notified, the notification will recommend that exposed individuals monitor their health closely, contact their health care provider if possible, and if symptoms develop, self-quarantine.

Employees or students who have developed COVID-19 symptoms or had a positive COVID-19 test may not return to the site until they have met the CDC or State/County Health department’s guidelines at that moment in time.

**GUIDELINES FOR INDIVIDUALS CONFIRMED OR SUSPECTED WITH COVID-19**

Any individuals who themselves either: (a) are lab-confirmed to have COVID-19; or (b) experience the symptoms of COVID-19 must stay at home throughout the infection period and cannot return to work until the individual has determined that any of the below conditions for work re-entry have been met:

* In the case of an individual who was diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual may return to school when all three of the following criteria are met:

i. at least three days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use

 fever-reducing medications);

 ii. the individual has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and

 iii. at-least ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

* In the case of an individual who has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and who is not evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19, such individual is assumed to have COVID-19, and the individual may not return to the campus/department until the individual has completed the same three-step set of criteria listed above.
* If the individual has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to school before completing the above stay at home period, the individual must either (a) obtain a medical professional’s note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis or (b) receive two separate confirmations at least 24 hours apart that they are free of COVID via acute infection tests at an approved COVID-19 testing location found at https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/.

**RETURN TO WORK CRITERIA AFTER COVID-19 DIAGNOSIS OR EXPOSURE**

a. In the case of an employee who was diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual may return to school when all three of the following criteria are met:

* at least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; and
* improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath): and
* at least 10 days have passes since symptoms first appeared.

In the case of an employee who has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and who is not evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19, the employee is assumed to have COVID-19, and the individual may not return to the district until the employee has completed the same three-step set of criteria listed above.

If the employee has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to school before completing the above stay at home period, the employee must either (a) obtain a medical professional’s note clearing the employee for return based on an alternative diagnosis or (b) receive two separate confirmations at least 24 hours apart that they are free of COVID via acute infection tests at an approved COVID-19 testing location found at <https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/>.

b. For those employees who have had close contact to a positive COVID-19 individual (Spouse, child, co-worker, aunt. student etc.):

* 1. Close contact is defined as:
		1. Being unvaccinated and directly exposed to infectious secretions (i.e., being coughed on while not wearing a mask or face shield); or
		2. Being unvaccinated and within six (6) feet for a cumulative duration of 15 minutes, while not wearing a mask or face shield.
	2. If either of the above occurred at any time within the last 14 days at the same time the infected person was infectious, individuals are presumed infectious at least two (2) days prior to symptom onset or, in the case of asymptomatic individuals who are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, two (2) days prior to the confirming lab test.
	3. Employees with close contact to a person confirmed to have COVID-19 must immediately notify their Principal. The employee will not be allowed to return to work until after the 14-day self-quarantine period from the last date of exposure or if medically released to work earlier.

c. Employees unable to return to work due to a COVID-19 related reason must coordinate with the Superintendent to discuss leave options (paid/unpaid leave, Emergency Paid Sick Leave, Expanded Family and Medical Leave, or Family Medical Leave) that may be available.

**VULNERABLE EMPLOYEES**

Some employees may be at a higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. These vulnerable employees may include individuals over 65 and/or those with documented underlying medical conditions as noted by the CDC. Vulnerable employees are encouraged to contact the Principal so the District can explore reasonable accommodations (under the Americans with Disability Act or Family Medical Leave Act) to minimize their risk of exposure to COVID-19.)

Please note the following:

* ***Changes to the public health situation may necessitate changes to this guidance.***

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## **Communicating and Consulting with Local Health Authorities**

The Superintendent will be the point of contact for the school district with the Willacy County Public Health Department and/or Texas Department of State Health Services if there are verified cases in the facility or an increase in cases in the local area. The District will follow any additional guidance required by these departments.

### Potential School Closures

At this time and depending on state government and/or heath departments’ criteria for closing an individual school, it is not known what would cause a school to close as a result of a COVID-19 outbreak at a particular campus. Once and if the District obtains that information, it will be communicated to Lasara employees, parents and families. In addition, the District will prepare to close the entire district, as was done in March 2020, if ordered by the State.

*Note: In order to continue to receive funding, only the State, County, and local health directors have authority to close schools, not the local Board of Trustees.*

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

### The Centers for Disease Control

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

### Texas Education Agency

<http://www.tea.texas.gov/coronavirus>