



County of Sacramento

DATE: September 17, 2020
TO: Superintendents and School Leaders
FROM: Olivia Kasirye, MD, MS, Public Health Officer
RE: Partnership for Safe Reopening of Schools – COVID-19 Testing and Contact Tracing

This memo is to update you on the strategies we have been working on to support schools as we go through the re-opening for in-person services and/or instruction.

1. Surveillance Testing of Teachers

According to the [CDPH Reopening In-Person Learning Framework for K-12 Schools](#), once school staff have returned to the workplace, it is recommended that surveillance testing be implemented based on the local disease trends. If epidemiological data indicates concern for increasing community transmission, schools should increase testing of staff to detect potential cases as lab testing capacity allows. School staff are essential workers, and staff includes teachers, para-professionals, cafeteria workers, janitors, bus drivers, or any other school employee that may have contact with students or other staff. CDPH recommends that school districts and schools test staff periodically, as testing capacity permits and as practicable. Examples of recommended frequency include testing all staff over 2 months, where 25% of staff are tested every 2 weeks, or 50% every month to rotate testing of all staff over time.

Sacramento County DHS, through a contract with StemExpress, is making testing available free of charge to school staff at any of the 11 community sites listed on the **attached flyer**. This flyer was distributed to the testing contacts that you had provided to us earlier. The following items address some of the questions we have been asked:

- a) A district or school may choose to handle registration of staff or staff may self-register at any of the sites. We ask that if a person is doing testing for surveillance purposes that they register no more than once every two months.
- b) Staff that are tested can receive copies of their result from StemExpress and submit them to their district or school.
- c) We will continue to monitor and adjust or add days, times or locations as resources permit and according to need.

- d) A district or school may choose to supplement with additional testing of their own based on availability of testing.
- e) If additional testing methods are available such as antigen testing or saliva testing, we will provide that information.
- f) Currently, the CDPH guidelines only include recommendations for testing of staff, there are no guidelines surveillance testing of students

2. Response Testing (when a staff or student has symptoms or if there is a known exposure)

CDPH recommends testing if a staff or students is exhibiting symptoms consistent with COVID-19 and for contacts of a confirmed positive case. In order to expedite testing the individual can be tested either by their healthcare provider or through the Sacramento County Public Health Lab (especially for those that are exhibiting symptoms). Testing through the Public Health Lab is at no charge. Public Health has assembled a team dedicated to school investigation with a dedicated contact person. Testing through the Public Health Lab needs to be arranged by calling the Public Health contact person in order to arrange for testing.

3. Contact Tracing

School officials best know their community and school layout. If a positive case (staff/student with COVID-19) is identified within a school, a school contact tracer can help public health officials comprehensively trace potential contacts that may have been exposed. This will aid in educating exposed contacts regarding quarantine recommendations, thereby reducing transmission of COVID-19 in the community.

Contact Tracing Process for Districts and Schools

1. Identify a contact tracing point of contact (POC)
2. Contact Tracing POC recommended to complete John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health contact tracing on-line training:
<https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/contact-tracing>
3. If positive case in school, contact tracing POC should reach out to SCPH school team. Together the team and the contact tracer POC will identify potential exposed contacts to a case and determine what measures should be taken in accordance with the CDPH Reopening In-Person Learning Framework for K-12 Schools.
4. Later this month, we will host a Zoom meeting to introduce our nursing team, discuss the contact tracing process, and answer your questions.
5. We are developing training opportunities for school contact tracers who wish to learn to use California Connected, California's contact tracing database.

Attachments:

- A. COVID-19 Testing for School Staff flyer
- B. Protocol for COVID Exposure in Schools

References:

- CDPH Guidance for Schools and School-Based Programs
<https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-schools.pdf>
- CDPH Reopening In-Person Learning Framework for K-12 Schools
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/COVID-19/Schools%20Reopening%20Recommendations.pdf>
- Operating Schools During COVID-19: CDC Considerations
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-schools.html>