

209 COMMUNICABLE DISEASES CONTRACTED BY STUDENTS, SCHOOL EMPLOYEES, CONTRACTORS, INTERNS, AND VOLUNTEERS

209.1 Each school shall encourage its students to adhere to the following preventive measures designed to minimize the transmission of communicable diseases:

(a) Use tissues for coughs and sneezes, or cough and sneeze into the elbow;

(a-1) COVID-19:

- (1) A student exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 may return to school after a negative COVID-19 test or upon submitting a licensed practitioner's note stating the student's symptoms are due to an alternate diagnosis; or
- (2) A student diagnosed with asymptomatic (no symptoms) COVID-19 may return to school after five (5) full days (with the first full day being the day after the positive COVID-19 test was administered) provided that the student does not develop symptoms of COVID-19 and wears a well-fitting mask through the tenth (10th) day (unless two (2) negative COVID-19 antigen tests are obtained at least forty-eight (48) hours apart); or
- (3) A student diagnosed with symptomatic COVID-19 who had mild illness (without shortness of breath or the need for prescription medications) may return to school after five (5) full days (with the first full day being the day after symptom onset) provided that the student has been fever-free for at least twenty-four (24) hours without use of fever-lowering medications, other symptoms have improved, and the student wears a well-fitting mask through the tenth (10th) day (unless two (2) negative COVID-19 antigen tests are obtained at least forty-eight (48) hours apart); or
- (4) A student diagnosed with symptomatic COVID-19 who had worse than mild illness may return to school after ten (10) full days (with the first full day being the day after symptom onset) provided that the student has been fever-free for at least twenty-four (24) hours without use of fever-lowering medications and other symptoms have improved; or
- (5) A student diagnosed with symptomatic COVID-19 who is immunocompromised may return to school after ten (10) full days (with the first full day being the day after symptom onset) provided that the student has been fever-free for at least twenty-four (24)

hours without use of fever-lowering medications, and other symptoms have improved; or

(6) A student who has returned to school after exclusion but whose symptoms of COVID-19 recur or worsen shall begin the exclusion period again per subsections 209.4(a-1)(2) through (5).

(b) Wash hands with soap and water before eating and after using the toilet; and

(c) Do not share combs, brushes, hair accessories, and hats.

209.2 Each school shall provide students with developmentally appropriate information regarding communicable diseases including Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, Human Papillomavirus (HPV), Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), and other sexually transmitted infections. This information shall include instruction in measures designed to prevent the spread of communicable diseases.

209.3 Each school shall contact the parent or guardian of a minor student who exhibits any of the following symptoms, which may indicate the beginning of a communicable disease, for possible referral for medical examination:

(a) Sore throat;

(b) Runny eyes;

(c) Headache;

(d) Nausea;

(e) Vomiting;

(f) Diarrhea;

(g) Fever;

(h) Chills;

(i) Severe or chronic cough;

(j) Rash;

(k) Jaundice; and

(l) Weeping or draining sores that cannot be covered.

209.4 A school official who suspects that a student has one of the following communicable diseases shall refer the student to the school nurse [or contact a parent or guardian if the school nurse is unavailable]. A school shall exclude a student diagnosed with a communicable disease and re-admit the student as follows:

- (a) Conjunctivitis (“pink eye”):
 - (1) A student diagnosed with a viral infection may return to school after any redness and discharge have disappeared;
 - (2) A student diagnosed with a bacterial infection may return to school twenty-four (24) hours after commencing antibiotic treatment if a licensed practitioner provides a note attesting to the diagnosis, the onset of treatment, and that the child is cleared to return to school; or
 - (3) A student diagnosed with allergic conjunctivitis may return to school upon submitting a licensed practitioner’s note stating the diagnosis;
- (b) Acute diarrhea:
 - (1) A student with infectious diarrhea (*e.g.*, Salmonella, Shigella, *E. coli*) may return to school when diarrhea ends or upon submitting a health care provider’s note providing medical clearance to return to school;
 - (2) A student with non-infectious diarrhea (*e.g.*, inflammatory bowel disease, food allergy, reaction to medication) may return to school when diarrhea ends and with instruction to thoroughly wash hands with soap and water after using the toilet and before handling food;
- (c) A student with a clinical syndrome such as meningitis or pneumonia resulting from Haemophilus influenza type B (Hib) may return to school twenty-four (24) hours after completing [antibiotic] treatment and submitting a licensed practitioner’s note attesting to the diagnosis and completion of treatment;
- (d) Hepatitis:
 - (1) A student with Hepatitis A may return to school one (1) week after onset of illness or jaundice and upon submitting a licensed practitioner’s note providing medical clearance to return to school;
 - (2) A student with Hepatitis B or C may return to school upon

submitting a licensed practitioner's note providing medical clearance to return to school;

- (e) A student diagnosed with Impetigo (bacterial infection of the skin) may return to school twenty-four (24) hours after beginning antibiotic therapy, provided all lesions are covered, and upon submitting a licensed practitioner's note stating that the student is undergoing treatment;
- (f) A student diagnosed with Measles may return to school four (4) days after the appearance of rash and upon submitting a licensed practitioner's note providing medical clearance to return to school;
- (g) A student diagnosed with Meningitis may return to school upon submitting a licensed practitioner's note providing medical clearance to return to school;
- (h) A student diagnosed with Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) may return to school provided that all wound drainage ("pus") is covered and contained;
- (i) A student diagnosed with Mumps may return to school five (5) days after the onset of swelling and upon submitting a licensed practitioner's note providing medical clearance to return to school;
- (j) A student diagnosed with Pediculosis (infestation by live head lice) may remain in class that day; however parents or guardians should commence treatment at the conclusion of the school day. The child may return to school upon submitting to the school nurse a parent's or guardian's note attesting to the fact that the student is undergoing treatment. A student with only Nits (eggs) shall not be excluded from school; however the school nurse, principal or designee shall send a note to the parents or guardians advising them to monitor the child for re-infestation.
- (k) A student diagnosed with Pertussis ("whooping cough") may return to school three (3) weeks after the onset of symptoms, if untreated, or five (5) days after beginning antibiotic therapy and submitting a licensed practitioner's note attesting to the beginning of therapy;
- (l) A student diagnosed with Pinworms may return to school twenty-four (24) hours after the first treatment and upon submitting a licensed practitioner's note stating that the student is under treatment;
- (m) A student diagnosed with Ringworm may return to school upon submitting a licensed practitioner's note stating that the student is under treatment;
- (n) A student diagnosed with Rubella (German measles) may return to school

seven (7) days after the rash appears;

- (o) A student diagnosed with Scabies (“itch mite”) may return to school upon submitting a licensed practitioner’s note stating that the student’s treatment for scabies with a prescription lotion has been completed;
- (p) A student diagnosed with Strep infection (scarlet fever, strep throat) may return to school twenty-four (24) hours after beginning antibiotic treatment, provided the student is without fever for twenty-four (24) hours, and upon submitting a licensed practitioner’s note affirming the start of treatment, and providing medical clearance for the student to return to school;
- (q) Tuberculosis:
 - (1) A student diagnosed with active Tuberculosis may return to school upon providing a written recommendation to return to school from the Tuberculosis Control Program of the Department of Health; and
 - (2) A student diagnosed with latent Tuberculosis may return to school after initiating treatment and upon submission of a licensed practitioner’s note giving medical clearance to return; or
- (r) A student diagnosed with Varicella (chickenpox), even if previously vaccinated, may return to school after lesions have crusted and upon submission of a licensed practitioner’s note giving medical clearance to return.

209.5 A person shall not disclose a student’s individually identifiable health information without written authorization from the parent or guardian of a minor student or from a student eighteen (18) years of age or older to anyone other than:

- (a) The Department of Health;
- (b) A school nurse;
- (c) A school physician;
- (d) The student’s primary health care provider; or
- (e) A school principal or designee.

209.6 A school shall inform the Director of the Department of Health within two (2) hours when any student has contracted any of the following diseases:

- (a) Measles;
- (b) Meningococcal meningitis;
- (c) Mumps;
- (d) Pertussis;
- (e) Rubella;
- (f) Tuberculosis; or
- (g) Hepatitis A or any other food-borne illness.

209.7 To the extent permitted by law or regulation, a school shall report cases of Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, HIV, and other communicable diseases contracted by students to the Director of the Department of Health.

209.8 A school shall exclude a school employee, contractor, intern, or volunteer and re-admit as follows:

- (a) A school employee, contractor, intern, or volunteer exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 may return to school after a negative COVID-19 test or upon submitting a licensed practitioner's note stating symptoms are due to an alternate diagnosis; or
- (b) A school employee, contractor, intern, or volunteer diagnosed with an asymptomatic (no symptoms) COVID-19 may return to school after five (5) full days (with the first day being the day after the positive COVID-19 test was administered) provided that the individual does not develop symptoms of COVID-19 and wears a well-fitting mask through the tenth (10th) day (unless two (2) negative COVID-19 antigen tests are obtained at least forty-eight (48) hours apart); or
- (c) A school employee, contractor, intern, or volunteer diagnosed with symptomatic COVID-19 who had mild illness (without shortness of breath or the need for prescription medications) may return to school after five (5) full days (with the first day being the day after symptom onset) provided that the individual has been fever-free for at least twenty-four (24) hours without use of fever-lowering medications, other symptoms have improved, and the individual wears a well-fitting mask through the tenth (10th) day (unless two (2) negative COVID-19 antigen tests are obtained at least forty-eight (48) hours apart); or
- (d) A school employee, contractor, intern, or volunteer diagnosed with symptomatic COVID-19 who had worse than mild illness may return to

school after ten (10) full days (with the first day being the day after symptom onset) provided that the individual has been fever-free for at least twenty-four (24) hours without use of fever-lowering medications and other symptoms have improved; or

- (e) A school employee, contractor, intern, or volunteer diagnosed with symptomatic COVID-19 who is immunocompromised may return to school after ten (10) full days (with the first day being the day after symptom onset) provided that the individual has been fever-free for at least twenty-four (24) hours without use of fever-lowering medications, and other symptoms have improved; or
- (f) A school employee, contractor, intern, or volunteer who has returned to school after exclusion but whose symptoms of COVID-19 recur or worsen shall begin the exclusion period again per subsections 209.8(b) through (e).

SOURCE: Final Rulemaking published at 61 DCR 12274 (November 28, 2014); as amended by Final Rulemaking published at 69 DCR 014826 (December 2, 2022).