



Feb. 1, 2024

Superintendent's Message: COVID-19 Guidelines Update

Dear Parents, Guardians, Staff, Students and Community Members,

The Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District has aligned its COVID-19 guidelines with the following updates issued by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LAC DPH) effective immediately for all staff and students.

Health authorities have recently revised guidelines regarding isolation to better align with the evolving nature of COVID-19 and its transition from a pandemic to an endemic state, where there is broad immunity from vaccination and/or natural infection and readily available therapeutics. These new updates aim to optimize our response to the disease, while ensuring the continued health and safety of our community.

Individuals with COVID-19 Who *Have* Symptoms (Symptomatic)

Staff and students with COVID-19 *must stay home and away from others* if they are symptomatic and/or have a fever. Individuals with symptomatic COVID-19 are now advised to focus on clinical symptoms, rather than a fixed isolation period; therefore, isolation can end when *both* of the following criteria are met:

- the individual has not had a fever for 24 hours without taking medication that reduces fevers AND
- Other symptoms are not present or are mild and improving.

Additionally:

- An individual leaving isolation prior to 10 days from the date of a positive test and/or onset of symptoms is *required* to wear a mask when around others until the completion of the 10 days.
- Masking can end sooner if the individual obtains two sequential negative tests taken at least one day apart.
- It is *strongly recommended* that the person test for COVID-19 prior to ending isolation and extend isolation until day 10 if they continue to test positive.

People with COVID-19 Who *Do Not* Have Symptoms (Asymptomatic)

Staff and students with COVID-19 who do not have symptoms are not required to isolate, but are *required* to wear a well-fitting, high-quality mask, such as a N95 or a KN95, in all settings when around others for 10 days after first testing positive. Masking can end sooner if the individual obtains two sequential negative tests taken at least one day apart.

Inform Close Contacts

If an individual tests positive for COVID-19, they should inform any recent close contacts of the potential exposure to COVID-19, so those close contacts may take appropriate precautions. This includes monitoring for symptoms, getting tested, and following isolation guidelines, if necessary. Staff and students should tell their school site Health Office if they test positive for COVID-19.

The ongoing health and wellness of our students and staff are our top priorities. Together, we continue to move forward in a positive manner, in-person, with our full array of academic, extracurricular, social emotional and wellness programs, to ensure the success of our students.

Thank you for your continued cooperation and understanding.

Sincerely,

Dr. Antonio Shelton, Superintendent

Link to the full LACDPH guideline updates:

[Guidelines for COVID-19 Cases in Educational Settings](#)