

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES – File 10.11.3

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL

Infectious diseases that can be spread from one individual to another are called contagious or communicable diseases. Some disease control activities are required by law or regulation. The Code of Massachusetts Regulations (CMR) establishes specific reporting and surveillance requirements. The regulations also outline the isolation and quarantine requirements for contacts of persons with certain communicable diseases in school settings. These requirements include attendance guidelines for non-immune students when cases of vaccine-preventable diseases are reported.

The following rules and regulations have been established by the Mass. Department of Public Health which concerns the more common communicable diseases:

Disease	Minimum Period of Isolation of patient	Minimum period of quarantine of contacts
Chicken Pox	Within 5 days of rash or until all vesicles have formed scabs.	susceptible contacts excluded for 10 -21 days from exposure.
Shingles	Unless rash can be completely covered, isolate patient until rash is crusted over.	
Pertussis	Exclude patient with confirmed pertussis until 3 weeks after onset of cough or after completion of 5 days of appropriate antibiotic therapy.	If contacts are symptomatic as for cases A symptomatic use same restrictions contacts receive treatment but not exclusion is necessary.
Streptococcal Pharyngitis	Exclude until at least 24 hrs. after beginning antibiotic therapy and resolution of fever.	

A comprehensive list of the current reportable diseases that are subject to control under general reporting isolation and quarantine regulations is made available to school nurses by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. See Procedures / Protocols for additional infectious disease control management within the schools in the QPS Health Services Manual.

In addition, the following situations involve specific reporting requirements:

- Illnesses due to food consumption must be reported immediately to the local board of health or the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.
- When vaccine preventable diseases occur they must be reported to the local board of health.
- Any cluster or outbreak of any unusual disease or illness must be reported to the local board of health.

School nurses are responsible for reporting communicable diseases to the City of Quincy Health Department.

Revised September 2020

Revised: May 2009

Current practice codified 1990

Adopted: Date of Manual Adoption

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:54B, Student Handbooks

FACE COVERINGS

The Quincy Public Schools is committed to providing a safe environment as schools reopen during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to public health experts, one of the best ways to stop the spread of coronavirus and to keep members of our school community safe is the use of face masks or face coverings. Therefore, in accordance with guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), the following requirements are in place until further notice.

A face covering must be worn by all individuals in school buildings, on school grounds and on school transportation, even when social distancing is observed. The face covering should fit snugly, but comfortably against the face and should completely cover the nose, mouth and chin. The face covering should be secured with ties or ear loops and should consist of tightly woven fabric or multiple layers of fabric that allows for breathing without restriction. The face covering should be laundered at least two times per week.

Exemptions to this face covering policy are listed below.

Individuals may be excused from the requirement for the following list of reasons, per CDC guidance:

The individual:

- has trouble breathing;
- is unconscious;
- is incapacitated;
- cannot remove the mask or face covering without assistance.

In addition, masks or face coverings will not be required for anyone who has a medical, behavioral or other challenge making it unsafe to wear a face mask or face covering. A

written note from a physician is required for a requested exemption. Parents may not excuse their child from the face mask requirement by signing a waiver.

Additionally, face masks or face coverings will not be required when appropriate social distancing is enforced:

- during mask breaks;
- while eating or drinking;
- during physical education classes when held outside;
- as directed by school personnel

Exceptions to this policy under certain circumstances, such as for students with medical, behavioral or other challenges who are unable to wear masks, must be approved by the building principal in consultation with the school nurse or local Board of Health.

A student's mask or face covering is to be provided by the student's family and must be free from any statements or images that result in substantial disruption or materially interfere with school activities or administration. Staff members are responsible for providing their own face coverings. However, the district will supply disposable face covering for individuals who arrive at a building, or board school transportation, without one.

If students are in violation of this policy, the building principal will consult with the parent/guardians to determine whether an exception is appropriate, or the student may be removed from the school building until such time as they can comply with the requirement or the requirement is lifted.

Violations of this policy by staff will be handled in the same manner as other violations of School Committee policy.

Visitors in violation of this policy will be denied entry to the school/district facility.

This policy will remain in place until rescinded by the School Committee.

LEGAL REF.: Commonwealth of Massachusetts, COVID-19 Order No. 31 - <https://www.mass.gov/doc/may-1-2020-masks-and-face-coverings/download>

REFS.: Center for Disease Control and Prevention – Considerations for Wearing Masks - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html>

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education – Reopening Guidelines -

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/>

Commonwealth of Massachusetts – Mask Up MA! –

<https://www.mass.gov/news/mask-up-ma>