



NEWS RELEASE

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Updated FAQ for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools

SPRINGFIELD – On July 9, 2021, the State of Illinois adopted the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) updated guidance regarding [COVID-19 prevention in K-12 schools](#) for all public and nonpublic schools in Illinois. The updated federal guidance is currently in effect.

The CDC’s guidance is meant to help K-12 school administrators and local health officials select appropriate, layered prevention strategies in order to keep in-person learning environments safe for students and staff during times of fluctuating transmission. Answers to the following frequently asked questions (FAQs) build on the CDC’s guidance with recommendations about how to best implement the federal health authority’s recommendations.

In addition to the health and safety reasons for following the CDC’s guidance, school districts that decide not to follow the CDC’s guidance should consult with their insurers regarding risk assumption and liability coverage. Insurers may be unwilling to cover liabilities created as a result of failure to adhere to public health guidance.

Major changes to guidance for the 2021-22 school year include the following:

- Promotion of vaccination as the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Alignment of masking recommendations for schools with CDC guidance for individuals who are fully vaccinated.
- Additional emphasis on the importance of offering in-person learning, regardless of whether all of the prevention strategies can be implemented in a school.
- Revised definition of close contacts to guide quarantine procedure.
- Introduction of a Test-to-Stay alternative to quarantine.

Updated FAQs regarding the CDC’s guidance can be found at [Dph.illinois.gov/covid19/schoolFAQs](https://dph.illinois.gov/covid19/schoolFAQs).

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