

# KENT COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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## STATE OF MICHIGAN KENT COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

January 11, 2022

In the Matter of COVID-19 Prevention in Educational Settings within Kent County, Michigan:

**In light of altered guidance from the Center for Disease Control (“CDC”) and Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (“MDHHS”), the Administrative Health Officer of the Kent County Health Department makes the following factual determinations and issues this reconciliation to his August 6, 2021 Orders pursuant to the Michigan Public Health Code, MCL 333.2451 and 333.2453, as well as R. 325.175(4), which is an administrative rule promulgated by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services pursuant to MCL 333.2226(d). Factual findings include:**

1. The virus that causes COVID-19 spreads mainly from person-to-person, primarily through virus-containing respiratory droplets or aerosols produced when an infected person or carrier coughs, sneezes, or talks. These droplets or aerosols can enter the mouths or noses of people who are nearby and possibly be inhaled into the lungs. Spread is more likely to occur when people are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
2. Recent data show that the emerging omicron variant may be more transmissible than the highly transmissible delta variant. At this time, both delta and omicron are likely circulating in our region.
3. People infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 can be contagious for 1-2 days prior to developing symptoms and for several days after, posing a risk to others. Isolating infectious persons is essential for preventing COVID-19 transmission.
4. Although vaccinations help to prevent infection, slow community transmission, and greatly reduce the risk of severe outcomes due to COVID-19 disease, COVID-19 remains a public health issue that impacts local institutions, particularly in childcare settings where children

under 5 are ineligible for vaccination and in educational settings where Michigan law requires attendance of those 6 to 18 years of age and where the percentage of students vaccinated differs between districts.

5. CDC and MDHHS continue to recommend indoor masking in indoor educational settings for all individuals 2 years and older, regardless of vaccination status.
6. When layered prevention strategies are applied consistently, school-associated transmission of COVID-19 is reduced.
7. Area hospitals are currently overwhelmed, often resulting in long wait times for care and diversion of ambulances away from full emergency departments to other hospitals which may be greater distances away. Federal teams are assigned to area hospitals to provide additional staffing assistance during the current surge. With expected increases in COVID-19 cases due to the Omicron variant, as seen in other U.S. states, there is an imminent danger to the public health system, the health care system and the residents of Kent County.
8. It is evident that the number of cases of COVID-19 in all settings have exceeded the case investigation and contact tracing capacity of the public health system and its partners; however, household transmission of COVID-19 is common. Because risk of transmission is as high as 53% within households, household members who are not sick but have been exposed to COVID-19 pose a higher risk to the community if they return to public activities before a quarantine period has been completed. Therefore, this Order prioritizes quarantine for household close contacts.
9. Nationwide, COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations among children are rising. Children are at risk of hospitalization and death from acute COVID-19. While this risk is lower than among adults, children have died and had severe outcomes as a result of COVID-19 illness. Furthermore, COVID-19 can lead to long-term effects which range from subacute to severe, regardless of the severity of the initial disease.

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** that all Educational Institutions and Persons in Educational Settings must adhere to the following rules:

1. All persons, regardless of vaccination status, who test positive for COVID-19 or have been diagnosed with COVID-19 by a licensed health care provider are required to isolate at home. In Educational Settings that have a universal face mask policy, persons who are asymptomatic or fever-free without medication and with symptoms largely resolved may return to school wearing an appropriate well-fitting mask between days 6 and 10. In Educational Settings that do not have a universal face mask policy, persons must continue to isolate at home through day 10.
2. The following quarantine requirements and exemptions will apply for household close contacts of a COVID-19 case:

- a. Household close contacts required to quarantine must stay home during the household COVID-19 case's full isolation period of at least 5 days and for a minimum of 5 days following the end of the household case's isolation period. Household contacts may then return to the educational setting wearing an appropriate well-fitting face mask at all times on days 6 through 10 regardless of the educational setting's face mask policy, monitoring daily for symptoms. If they are unable or unwilling to wear a face mask from days 6 through 10, they must quarantine at home for the entire 10 days from the end of the case's isolation period. These quarantine requirements apply to the persons in the categories below:
    - i. If they are 18 and older and have not received all recommended vaccine doses, including boosters and additional shots for some immunocompromised people, or
    - ii. If they are ages 5-17 and have not completed the primary series of COVID-19 vaccines, or
    - iii. If they are persons of any age who have not had confirmed COVID-19 within the last 90 days (a positive viral test documented in MDSS at the time of the illness)
  - b. Household contacts not required to quarantine may attend educational settings during the household case's isolation period as long as they wear an appropriate well-fitting mask throughout the duration of the household case's isolation period plus an additional 10 days, regardless of the educational setting's face mask policy, monitoring daily for symptoms. If they are unable or unwilling to wear a face mask as directed above, they should quarantine at home for the case's isolation period and an additional 10 days. This applies to the persons in the categories below:
    - i. They are 18 and older and have received all recommended vaccine doses, including boosters and additional shots for some immunocompromised people, or
    - ii. They are ages 5-17 and have completed the primary series of COVID-19 vaccines, or
    - iii. They are persons of any age who have had confirmed COVID-19 within the last 90 days (a positive viral test documented in MDSS at the time of the illness)
3. Schools must provide public notice to the school community in a highly visible location on the school's website that outlines the school's COVID-19 prevention strategies for the 2021-2022 school year by completing the COVID-19 Prevention Strategy for Schools Form. Public notice must be published no later than January 21, 2022. The school must notify the school community and the KCHD of any subsequent changes in the school's COVID-19 prevention strategies by indicating revision date and revision history in the COVID-19 Prevention Strategy for Schools Form.

**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the following terms shall have the following definitions for purposes of this ORDER:**

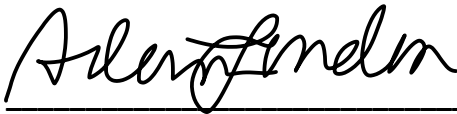
- a. "COVID-19 case" for the purposes of this order is a person who tests positive for COVID-19 or has been diagnosed with COVID-19 by a licensed health care provider.
- b. "Educational Institutions" or "Educational Settings" includes youth camps, youth programs, childcare centers, preschools, primary through secondary schools, vocational schools, colleges, and universities and other organized activities outside the home where coursework is taught. This definition includes educationally affiliated extracurricular activities such as athletics, performances, assemblies, outings, clubs, etc.
- c. "Persons in Educational Settings" means students, teachers, administrative staff, attendees, volunteers, visitors, coaches, camp leaders, and other employees or volunteers of Educational Institutions.
- d. "Household close contact" means a close contact that lives with a COVID-19 case in a shared dwelling with common kitchen or bathroom facilities. In dwellings with shared kitchen or bathroom facilities occupied by 20 or more unrelated persons, households are defined by individuals who share a bedroom.
- e. "Isolation" means separating people infected with COVID-19 from those who are not infected. People who are in isolation are contagious and should stay home until it's safe for them to be around others. At home, anyone sick or infected should separate from others, stay in a specific "sick room" or area, and use a separate bathroom (if available).
- f. "Quarantine" means separating people who have been exposed to a COVID-19 case while the case was contagious and may develop COVID-19 during the 10-day incubation period of the SARS-CoV-2 virus. If they become infected, they may be contagious for 1-2 days prior to having symptoms and may unknowingly infect others.
- g. The CDC defines an "Appropriate well-fitting face mask" as a mask that at minimum:
  - i. Closely fits over the nose and mouth to prevent leaks
  - ii. Has multiple (2+) layers of tightly woven, breathable fabric
  - iii. Has a nose wire
  - iv. Does not have any valves
  - v. Is washed daily if cloth or is changed daily if disposable

Ideally, persons will select one of the following that are known to be effective at reducing the spread of respiratory droplets and aerosols, listed in order of increasing effectiveness: disposable surgical mask consisting of 3 layers; disposable KN95 mask (respirator); or disposable N95 mask (respirator).

IT IS FURTHER REMINDED **that**:

1. On January 29, 2021, CDC issued an [ORDER](#) that required face masks to be worn by all people while on public transportation (which included all passengers and all personnel operating conveyances) traveling into, within, or out of the United States and U.S. territories. The CDC ORDER includes school buses, both public and private.
2. This order does not repeat or supersede current MDHHS or Federal Epidemic Orders.
3. This Order does not prohibit Educational Institutions from implementing rules or policies that exceed the requirements contained in this Order. We advise Educational Institutions and Settings to implement policies consistent with CDC and MDHHS guidance.

**THIS ORDER is effective immediately and remains in effect until the last day of class for the 2021-2022 school year or until further order of the health officer, whichever occurs first. This order replaces COVID-19 PREVENTION IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS dated August 6, 2021.**



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**Administrative Health Officer**  
**Kent County Department of Public Health**

**Dated: January 11, 2022**