

# GreatHearts®

## Health Policy for Students and Staff in Texas

A scholar or staff member who is sick will not be able to perform well in school or after-school activities and is likely to spread the illness to other students and staff. We suggest making a plan for childcare ahead of time so you will not be without a comforting place for your child to stay if they are ill.

- We respectfully ask that you or your designee pick your child up **as soon as possible** or within **one hour** of being notified that your child is sick and needs to go home.
- We ask this to prevent the spread of illness to our faculty, staff, and other students.
- Parents may be required to pick up their student more than normal as the threshold for illness will be low.

Call your health care provider for advice if you are unsure about your child's illness. You can always bring your child to school a little late if your child's health care provider states it is safe to attend school. When it comes to your child's health and the health of all the other children, faculty, and staff at school, it is better to be safe.

**Please see the below symptom guidelines for keeping students/staff home and when to return to school**

### COVID-19 (8/27/2020)

**\*Notify the Health Office for suspected or positive COVID-19 cases\***

#### **Individuals Confirmed or Suspected with COVID-19**

Any individuals who themselves either: (a) are lab-confirmed to have COVID-19; or (b) experience the symptoms of COVID-19 (listed below) must stay at home throughout the infection period, and cannot return to campus until the school system screens the individual to determine any of the below conditions for campus re-entry have been met:

1. In the case of an individual who was diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual may return to school when all three of the following criteria are met:
  - i. at least one day (24 hours) has passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications).
  - ii. the individual has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and
  - iii. at least ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

2. In the case of an individual who has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and who is not evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19, such individual is assumed to have COVID-19, and the individual may not return to the campus until the individual has completed the same three-step set of criteria listed above.

3. If the individual has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to school before completing the above stay at home period, the individual must either (a) obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis or (b) obtain an acute infection test at an approved testing location (<https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/>) that comes back negative for COVID-19.

In evaluating whether an individual has symptoms consistent with COVID-19, consider the following question: Have they recently begun experiencing any of the following in a way that is not normal for them?

**Symptoms:**

1. Feeling feverish or a measured temp  $>$  or  $=$  to 100.0 degrees
2. Loss of taste or smell
3. Cough
4. Difficulty breathing
5. Fatigue
6. Headache
7. Chills
8. Sore throat
9. Congestion or runny nose
10. Shaking or exaggerated shivering
11. Significant muscle pain or ache
12. Nausea or vomiting
13. Diarrhea

This list is not all possible symptoms. Visit the CDC website for most updated symptoms list.

According to the CDC, common COVID-19 symptoms among children include fever, headache, sore throat, cough, fatigue, nausea/vomiting, and diarrhea. However, many children and adults infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 are asymptomatic (meaning they have no signs or symptoms of illness)

You can check your symptoms using the [CDC Coronavirus Self-Checker tool](#).

**Close Contact with Someone Who Tested Positive for Covid-19**

This document refers to “close contact” with an individual who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19. The definition of close contact is evolving with our understanding of COVID-19, and individual scenarios should be determined by an appropriate public health agency. In general, close contact is defined as:

- Being directly exposed to infectious secretions (e.g., being coughed on): or
- Being within **6 feet** for a cumulative duration of **15 minutes**; however, additional factors like case/contact masking (i.e. both the infectious individual and the potential close contact have been consistently and properly masked), presence of dividers, and case symptomology may affect this determination.
- Must remain off campus until the **14 day** incubation period has passed.
- Symptom monitoring: Symptoms are listed at top of this document

## **International Travel**

Stay at home for **14 days** from the time you returned home from international travel.

During this 14-day period, take these steps to monitor your health and practice social distancing:

1. Take your temperature with a thermometer two times a day and monitor for fever. Also watch for cough or trouble breathing.
2. Stay home and avoid contact with others. Do not go to work or school.
3. Do not take public transportation, taxis, or ride-shares.
4. Keep your distance from others (about 6 feet or 2 meters)

\*Many authorities use either 100.0 (37.8 degrees Celsius) or 100.4 F (38.0 degrees Celsius) as a cut-off for fever, but this number can vary depending on factors such as the method of measurement and the age of the person (CDC 4/2020).

COVID-19 information is rapidly changing, for up-to-the-date information on COVID-19 visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Students who develop any of the symptoms of COVID-19 will be separated from others until a parent/guardian can pick them up. We ask that you make every effort to pick your student up immediately after receiving notification. Health offices have designated a “sick area/room” for students/staff who become ill while at school. This area will be monitored while occupied and cleaned thoroughly between students.

### **Communicable Disease Reporting- State Mandated**

The state requires that certain communicable diseases are to be reported by the school to the State Health Department who will provide community assistance if necessary. Please notify the

health office if your child has been diagnosed with any of the following common communicable diseases: COVID-19, strep throat, pink eye (conjunctivitis), flu, measles, and chicken pox. Refer to the full list of Reportable Communicable Diseases at this website:

<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/idcu/investigation/conditions/>

### **Calling in Your Child Sick or Absent:**

Please provide specific symptoms your child is experiencing such as fever, cough, nausea, etc. Please let us know if the child has seen a doctor or will be seeing a doctor.

### **What Can I Do to Help Prevent Illness?**

- **Stay home when you are sick.** You will help prevent others from catching your illness.
- **Avoid close contact with people who are sick.**
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.** Germs spread this way.
- **Cover coughs and sneezes.** Use a tissue to cover coughs and sneezes, then dispose of the tissue. When a tissue is not available, cough or sneeze into your elbow. Wash hands or use hand sanitizer after coughing/sneezing.
- **Clean and disinfect surfaces or objects.** Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, especially when someone is ill.
- **Wash hands for 20 seconds.** Washing hands often under clean, running water can help prevent the spread of germs. For more guidance see the [CDC: When and How to Wash Your Hands](#). If you cannot wash your hands, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- **Masks.** The state of Texas's [mask mandate](#) remains in effect for those age 10 and over. CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies), especially in areas of significant community-based transmission. The cloth face cover is meant to protect other people in case you are infected. Cloth face coverings may be fashioned from household items or made at home from common materials. Visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) for more information about cloth face coverings.
- **Get a seasonal flu vaccine**