



## COVID-19 Public Health GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS

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**Issued: January 6, 2023**

**Expiration: Upon Issuance of Illinois Department  
of Public Health and/or Illinois State Board of Education  
Additional Guidance for Schools**

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Pursuant to Section 20-1-6(BB) of the Oak Park Village Code, which was adopted by the Village Board on November 22, 2021, by Ordinance 21-92, the Village’s Public Health Director has the authority to make “reasonable rules, regulations, and orders . . . as may from time to time be deemed necessary . . . due to the outbreak of COVID-19 disease in the State of Illinois as long as there is a disaster proclamation in place by the Governor of the State of Illinois due to the outbreak of COVID-19 disease,” and such a disaster proclamation continues to remain in place. In addition, authority is delegated to the Village of Oak Park Public Health Department as an Illinois certified local health department by the Illinois Public Health Act, 20 ILCS 2305/1.1 *et seq.*, Section 15 of the Illinois Department of Public Health Powers and Duties Law, 20 ILCS 2310/2310-15, and 77 Ill. Adm. Code Sections 690.1305(a) and 690.1310(c).

### GUIDANCE

1. The Illinois Department of Public Health (“IDPH”) and the Illinois State Board of Education’s (“ISBE”) issued COVID-19 joint guidance on September 15, 2022 for schools which can be found at the following link: [School-Guidance\\_9.15.22.pdf \(illinois.gov\)](#). The September 15, 2022 Joint Guidance is adopted herein in its entirety.
2. Classes within schools that are in outbreak status should not mix with other classes. All joint instruction and activities should cease for the duration of an outbreak. For purposes of this Guidance, an “outbreak” is defined as at least 20% of a defined population OR at least five cases in a core group. Schools should respond to an outbreak by increasing prevention strategy (e.g., masking, screening, testing, or decreasing events where crowding exists) to reduce transmission even when community levels are low.
3. Classes in outbreak status that have implemented mitigations as recommended by the Oak Park Public Health Department should notify workers/students/parents/caregivers of an

outbreak. During outbreaks, using a test-to-stay approach (either Shield and/or home testing) can assist in mitigating the outbreak.

4. Consistent with the CDC school guidance that aligns with community levels, the IDPH and ISBE also recommend masking and screening for high-risk activities (e.g., close contact sports or band activities) or during key times in the school year (e.g., prom or return from breaks). Community levels can help schools and local health departments, as well as individuals, make decisions based on their local context and their unique needs. When communities are at a “high” level, the CDC recommends universal indoor masking as masks are critical to keeping classrooms open for in-person learning.

5. In all community levels, staff and students with COVID-19-like symptoms or who test positive for COVID-19 should wear a mask around others. Schools should also consider implementation of screening testing for high-risk activities, such as indoor sports and extracurricular activities, when students return from breaks, and for those serving students who are at high risk for getting very sick with COVID-19. The following chart summarizes masking and testing recommendations for the three community levels:

COVID-19 Community Level	Prevention Strategy for Masking	Prevention Strategy for Testing
Low	Support those who choose to continue to mask.	Ensure access to diagnostic testing for symptomatic persons and those exposed, and screening testing during outbreaks.
Medium	Persons who are immunocompromised, at high risk for severe disease, or have household or social contacts at high risk for severe disease, should be encouraged to talk to their health care providers about whether they need to wear a mask.	Ensure access to diagnostic testing for close contacts and those exposed, and screening testing during outbreaks.
High	Universal masking indoors in public, regardless of vaccination status, should be promoted. Persons who are immunocompromised should be encouraged to wear a mask or respirator that provides greater protection.	Ensure access to diagnostic testing for close contacts and those exposed, and screening during outbreaks and for high-risk activities or before/after large events

6. Schools should continue to manage ill (COVID-19 confirmed positive or symptomatic) persons per the [COVID-19 Interim Guidance For Schools Decision Tree for Evaluating Symptomatic Individuals from Pre-K-12 Schools](#). For those exposed, **a quarantine is no longer recommended by the CDC**. Staff, volunteers, and students who have been exposed to COVID-19 should follow the CDC’s recommendations by wearing a well-fitted mask and being tested for

COVID-19. Administrators of schools and early care and education (ECE) programs should work with the Oak Park Public Health Department to consider other local conditions—such as rates of absenteeism among students/staff or staff who are at risk of getting very sick with COVID-19—to help with decision making and implementation of prevention strategies.

7. Schools serving students who are at risk for getting very sick with COVID-19, such as those who are moderately or severely immunocompromised or who have complex medical conditions, can implement screening testing at a medium or high COVID-19 community level. The type of viral test used can vary and includes over the counter or at-home testing (self-testing), point-of-care rapid testing, or laboratory testing. Schools and ECE programs that choose to rely on at-home test kits for screening testing should ensure equal access and availability of the tests and ensure that accessible systems are in place for timely reporting of positive test results to the school or ECE.