Environmental Charter Schools Covid-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for In-Person Instruction

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2024-2025 School Year
(revised July 2024)

This document incorporates health and safety protocols for students and staff, and may be amended as necessary with guidance from LADPH.
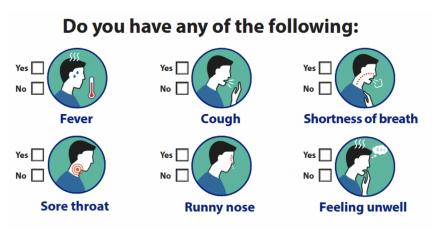
Welcome Back

Dear ECS Families,

We are so happy to have all of our students back on campus after summer break. Since the pandemic, we dedicated a great deal of time and resources to ensure the health and safety of our entire community. Additionally, we have regularly communicated with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LADPH) in order to implement necessary protocols to keep our campuses open and in-person instruction thriving.

We hope that you will find this guide useful, as it outlines everything that you need to know in preparation for a wonderful 2024-25 academic year. If ECS makes any changes or updates to these guidelines, we will let you know immediately.

On behalf of the ECS Board of Directors and our leadership team, I welcome you back to school and thank you for your commitment to Environmental Charter Schools.

With respect and appreciation,
Farnaz Golshani-Flechner

Health Assessment

Prior to arrival on campus each morning, please assess your student's health. Individuals with symptoms, including but not limited to fever (100.4°F or higher), new cough, sore throat, diarrhea, vomiting, or shortness of breath, should not come to school.
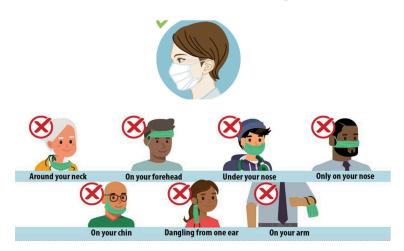
If in doubt, please stay home!

Remember to let the front office know about your student's absence as soon as possible.

If your student stays home, it is our expectation that they will return to school as soon as they are feeling better. Daily attendance is crucial for learning.

On-Campus Safety Measures

Since the pandemic, the following on-campus measures have been implemented to ensure that our students and staff remain healthy and safe:

Safety Measures:	Health Measures:
[Safe Gun Storage Resolution](#) - Resolution passed by the ECS Board of Directors in June 2022 that strongly encourages all families to lock guns/firearms when not in use and store ammunition separately. - Safety Drills - Throughout the year, Principals schedule practice drills (fire, lockdown and earthquake) on each campus to prepare students and staff for an emergency. - Updated PA and Intercom Systems - Campus PA systems can page all classrooms simultaneously and 2-way intercom systems allow classrooms to listen and speak through the PA system. - ECS Network Safety Plan - Plan that contains protocols, procedures and communication templates for staff to meet the ongoing needs of emergency situations. - Door Bloks - Durable neoprene rubber devices in all classrooms that allows staff to quickly secure and lock the door without needing a key.	- Ventilation - In addition to measuring air quality in all classrooms, HVAC systems have been upgraded and filters are changed regularly. - Surface Cleaning - All campuses are cleaned daily, including high touched surfaces. - Hand Hygiene - Frequent hand washing is encouraged and sanitizer is available in various locations throughout each campus. - Covid Supplies - Face masks and Rapid tests are available in the front office. - Signage - On each campus, signs are posted to remind students and staff about safety protocols.

Masks / Face Coverings

ECS continues to follow the protocols outlined in the [LADPH Covid-19 & Acute Respiratory Illness Guidelines for Education Settings](#).

However, in response to community positivity rates, students and staff _may_ be asked to use face covering while indoors or around others. ECS will communicate with families any time our policy changes as a result of public health conditions.

Remember, when selecting a face mask for your student, choose one that covers their nose and chin, with no large gaps around the side of their face, and has multiple layers of tightly woven material. The mask should also have an adjustable nose wire for a snug fit.

A limited supply of face coverings are available in the front office if your student needs one.

Covid Testing

Rapid-Antigen testing may be used in response to Covid-19 outbreaks, periods of high transmission, contact tracing, pre-entry for return to school after holidays/breaks, or when an individual is symptomatic.

Throughout the year, students may also be sent home with an over-the-counter Rapid-Antigen test. Carefully review the instructions prior to administering the test on your student.

Quarantine Guidelines

Regardless of vaccination status or previous infection, per [LADPH guidelines](#), **if someone tests positive for Covid-19, they are only required to quarantine if exhibiting symptoms:**

5-Day Minimum Isolation ➡ Symptom-Based Isolation

People with COVID-19 Who HAVE Symptoms:
- Stay home and isolate from others while having symptoms and/or fever, as instructed below. If around others at home and in public, wear a well-fitting, high-quality respiratory mask.
- May leave isolation if fever-free for 24 hours without taking medicine that lowers fevers AND either have no symptoms or symptoms are mild and improving **only if** wearing a well-fitting mask when around others.
- LAC DPH strongly recommends that persons test negative prior to leaving isolation.
- If leaving isolation before day 10, must wear a well-fitting, high-quality respiratory mask around others for 10 days after symptoms began or the date of initial positive test.

People with COVID-19 Who DO NOT HAVE Symptoms:
- Are not required to isolate **only if** wearing a well-fitting, high-quality mask in all settings when around others, for 10 days after first testing positive.

Remember, persons with COVID-19, whether or not they have symptoms, may transmit the virus to others for up to 10 days.

ph.lacounty.gov/communityguidelines

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Students and staff may return to campus (without a negative Rapid test), so long as they are symptom-free.

Masks MUST be worn for 10 days after testing positive.

If your child has symptoms and is required to quarantine, they should continue to complete their assignments and log into google classroom. We don't want students to fall behind during this time.

Independent Study Program (ISP)

Any student who must miss 5 or more consecutive days of school due to major illness, serious family emergency or required extended travel *may* qualify for independent study. Please reach out to your site's social worker for more information.

Students with Symptoms at School

If a student becomes unwell at school, they will be placed in an isolation area (physically distanced from others) until they can be picked up by a parent or guardian.

Close Contacts

Per [LADPH guidelines](#), anyone indoors within 6 feet of an infected person, for 15 minutes or longer over a 24 hour period, is considered a close contact. Note: if a student is exposed to an infected person outdoors (i.e.: lunchtime or recess), they are <u>not</u> a close contact.

Close contacts <u>*may*</u> continue attending school, so long as they:

- Remain asymptomatic and continue to monitor for symptoms.
- Note: It is recommended that a mask be worn around others (except while eating and drinking) for 10 days and that a Rapid test be taken 3-5 days after exposure.

Protocols and Notifications

Should a positive Covid-19 case occur at a school site, designated staff will follow protocols outlined by LADPH while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with the Families Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Close contact may be notified via TalkingPoints, email, or phone call, and will be provided with necessary instructions.

Covid-19 Vaccine

The Covid-19 vaccine and booster prevents illness by working with the body's natural defenses to help safely develop immunity to the virus. In addition to providing individual protection, the vaccine also reduces the burden of Covid in our surrounding communities and helps to ensure that schools remain open.

Anyone who is 6 months and older is eligible to receive the Covid-19 vaccine. For more information about the safety and effectiveness of the Covid-19 vaccine, please visit the [CA.gov Vaccine](#) site.

ECS urges all students, family members sharing homes with individuals in our school community, and staff to get vaccinated against the virus.