

HALDANE COVID-19 Q&A

*Highlights from Dr. Benante's April 2
COVID-19 Webinar for the Haldane Community*

[View the Webinar
on the COVID-19 tab of the Haldane website.](#)



Putnam County Department of Health Q&A with Erin Pascaretti and Shanna Siegel

Question:

A lot of guidance has been provided about the spread of COVID-19. As community members, what steps should we be taking right now to stop the spread of this virus?

Answer:

We recommend a continuation of these practices: washing hands, being very deliberate in the times you do leave the house for groceries and other essential items. Cleaning kitchen counters and other areas when you bring items into the home.

Question:

I have read that it's possible to be carrying the virus but not be symptomatic. Is that true, and what are the implications of this?

Answer:

Individuals should behave as though they might be exposing someone else to the virus who could get very sick in a life-threatening way. While we don't believe that it is the main form of transmission, we can transmit the virus even without experiencing symptoms. People are most contagious when they are symptomatic.

The best thing you can do is to stay home, and to go out as infrequently as possible. Everyone is a piece of the solution.

Question:

Should I get tested, even if I am healthy?

Answer:

The testing supplies are limited. Right now, if you are not symptomatic, chances are you will not be able to get a test. Testing without symptoms is a waste of resources. Healthcare workers are moving to the top of the testing list. The rapid test is not yet available and the timing is unknown.

For clarification: Quarantine means staying home when you may have been exposed, even if you have not tested positive. Isolation means you have been positively diagnosed and are isolating from everyone else in your home and community.

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Question:

Will the Department of Health notify me if someone I have come into contact with has COVID-19?
How does “contact tracing” work?

Answer:

There is a shift across the country where health departments cannot pursue the full breadth of contact tracing. Public health nurses are contacting individuals with their positive or negative test results to provide detailed instructions. Individuals who receive positive results from a healthcare provider can also reach out to the Putnam County Department of Health (PCDOH) for further instructions on isolating themselves.

Question:

Are there plans for a testing center in Putnam County?

Answer:

We are trying, and are contacting senators and congressmen to increase access to testing. Putnam County residents are currently being tested in Danbury and at Bear Mountain. Don't wait if you have been exposed or if you have symptoms. Residents can call 211 for information about testing centers. New York also has an [online assessment tool](#) to request a call for a testing appointment.

Question:

Are confirmed cases being reported based on an individual's county of residence or the county in which they were tested?

Answer:

The information is working its way from testing centers back to the PCDOH, but in some cases only a name is being collected, not contact information. We are doing our best to identify individuals and call them.

Question:

Should we be wearing masks in public? Will this be mandated at any point?

Answer:

There has been some talk of this from the CDC, but there is not yet an official recommendation. We are urging people to not take medical supplies that are essential to healthcare workers and first responders – N95s, respirator masks, and surgical masks.

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Haldane Q&A with Dr. Benante

Question:

Now that school will be in session remotely during the planned Spring Break, will classwork be optional? How can families observe religious days?

Answer:

Teachers and families are both asked to be flexible and to be aware of the fact that individuals may take time to observe the religious holidays. Next week, school assignments should be given with flexible due dates; however, any assignment that is given is required to be completed. Faculty and staff should communicate with students and families regarding their availability during the week.

Question:

Will classes begin to meet on a daily basis in more of a synchronous way?

Answer:

As of now, we are focused on an asynchronous model of instruction, though some college-level courses may be meeting in a more synchronous way. Asynchronous activities afford families the most flexibility for facilitating instruction. We are trying to be mindful of the readiness of adult family members to support their children in online learning. As detailed in [Haldane's Continuity of Learning Plan](#), the asynchronous platform provides recorded videos for students to access when most convenient. This also gives our staff flexibility in managing classes and their own children's online learning. Teachers should be communicating, at least a few times a week, the times that they are available to talk with students synchronously for additional support.

Question:

Will Haldane move to a pass/fail grading system?

Answer:

We have not made any determinations on that yet. If the closure moves in to May, we will be more definitive about the grading process then. Right now, we are prioritizing instruction and learning. Decisions regarding a uniform policy for the District will be made collaboratively with faculty.

[The Continuity of Learning Plan](#) is a living document and we realize some areas will need further definition if there is an extension into the closure.

Question:

What is the likelihood that the closure will be extended?

Answer:

I anticipate that the closure will be extended, since the virus is expected to peak in the next few weeks. I don't think we will know the peak until we are well on the other side of it. I continue to advocate for as much notice as possible if or when the closure is extended. Often, we find out the information at the same time as families.

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Question:

Have school trips in May and June been cancelled?

Answer:

May events are still on the calendar, but I would consider that most events will be postponed. When we do return to school, I envision that it will look and feel similar to the two weeks prior to school closure, where we are monitoring individual cases. We want our kids to have as much routine and normalcy as possible with the traditions they have come to enjoy. We will have to reevaluate each planned activity against the guidance provided to us at that time.

Question:

Is there any discussion about summer school in July and August?

Answer:

There has been no talk about extending the school year. If anything, there has been some discussion about shortening the school year. There is also the potential for the cancelling of NYS Regents Exams.

Question:

Are campus fields and the track strictly off-limits or can they be used in a reasonable way?

Answer:

The issue comes down to groups congregating and not using the fields in a reasonable, socially-distanced way. It is difficult for us to monitor individuals who are not using the spaces appropriately so, at this time, we must ask people to refrain from using campus spaces. I see this as our social responsibility.

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Putnam County Resources

Haldane Central School District COVID-19 Webpage

United Way Putnam County Non-Emergency COVID-19 Questions: Call 211

Putnam County Department of Health Website

Email: covid19@putnamcountyny.gov
Website: www.putnamcountyny.gov/coronavirus
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/putnamhealthny>
Twitter: <https://twitter.com/putnamhealthny>
Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/putnamhealthny/>

Putnam County Crisis Hotline – open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
845-225-1222

Philipstown Behavioral Health Hub COVID-19 Resources

New York State Resources

NYS COVID-19 Information
888-364-3065

NYS COVID-19 Emotional Support Helpline – staffed 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week
844-863-9314

Testing Information

NYSDOH: 888-364-3065 or [complete an online assessment](#)

Nuvance Health Testing Center Information or 888-667-9262 for an appointment in Dutchess, Ulster, or Danbury

Questions regarding lab results for Putnam County Residents: 845-808-1390