



# LA PORTE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

Guidance included in this and other La Porte ISD guidance documents is based on the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Texas Education Agency (TEA) guidelines. Links are provided:

CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>

TEA Guidance: SY 20-21 Public Health Planning Guidance (updated August 27, 2020):

<https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/covid/SY-20-21-Public-Health-Guidance.pdf>

#### **Are employees required to wear masks?**

Yes; masks are required for all staff while at work. Masks are not required while you are working independently without other staff members in your private office or classroom, or while you are eating or drinking. Social distancing must be practiced during eating and drinking. Face shields may be worn in addition to a mask or whenever a mask is not feasible (must be evaluated and approved by your supervisor and Human Resources) or whenever the educational context may benefit from the ability to see an individual's full face. These instances will be evaluated and approved by your supervisor.

#### **Will the District provide masks?**

We recommend using whatever face covering you are already utilizing when out in public. The District will also provide each campus with personal protective equipment (PPE) that has been provided by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). These masks will be used as back up or replacement for students and staff who may misplace/forget a mask for the day.

#### **How does social distancing affect the campus/department?**

To help slow the spread of COVID-19, social distancing is a priority. Staff may have staggered arrival, dismissal or lunch times. Employees should NOT congregate in any space such as a teachers' lounge, classroom, meeting room, breakroom or office.

#### **What do I do if I have COVID-19 symptoms, and I am unable to pass the daily staff self-assessment?**

The LPISD Employee Self-Screening is to be performed by EACH employee each day prior to coming to work. If you cannot pass all the criteria on the self-assessment, do not come to the workplace. Notify your immediate supervisor PRIOR to coming to work so arrangements can be made to cover your duties AND call Human Resources at (281) 604-7112. The LPISD self-assessment acknowledgement form is posted on the Human Resources webpage.

#### **As a supervisor, what do I do if I turn a staff member away for responding "YES" to the Employee Self-Assessment Tool or if a staff member notifies that they are not feeling well?**

Supervisors are to tell the employee not to access the building and immediately report the employee's name to Human Resources. The supervisor will also tell the employee to contact Human Resources. Human Resources will utilize the COVID-19 flow chart to determine appropriate action.



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## **Are supervisors taking employee temperatures?**

Staff are required to self-assess for signs and symptoms, including fever, that are new and not normal for them. This is to be done prior to arriving at work EACH day. The supervisor will then advise the employee that they are not allowed to enter the building until the re-entry criteria is met and to call Human Resources (HR). For the self-assessment details, please refer to the Employee Self-Assessment Acknowledgement Form located on the HR website.

## **What safety measures should we use when dealing with paper products, such as money or paperwork?**

Appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for handling money or other paper products such as enrollment and withdrawal forms, transcripts, and other records, etc. could include gloves. After properly removing and disposing gloves, employees must wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

## **How often are the work areas cleaned, and who is designated to clean?**

At this time, it is designated that the teacher or students (age appropriate) will utilize district-approved wipes or disinfecting spray to clean their immediate area before changing classes or leaving for the day. Campuses will be equipped with district-approved materials for the day-to-day, routine cleaning. If there is notification of symptomatic individuals or confirmed positive test, trained custodial staff will provide additional deep cleaning or sanitizing of the specified area. Classrooms, offices and large group areas, such as the library and cafeteria will be cleaned nightly. The maintenance department will provide additional guidance for deep cleaning and sanitizing practices.

## **If an employee's family member gets COVID-19 and the employee is advised to quarantine, will the employee have to use their accrued leave?**

The need for an employee to be out due to reasons related to COVID-19 is evaluated on an individual basis and in accordance with District guidelines and procedures. The District may require the employee to use accrued leave until the HR department receives appropriate documentation. Documentation may include medical documentation, state/local quarantine orders, and/or HR forms completed. The District will follow Board Policy DEC (local) and other requirements under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). If it is determined an employee is eligible for leave under the FFCRA, an employee's accrued leave, if initially used, may be returned to the employee. HR will determine if the employee's essential job functions will allow for the employee to temporarily work from home (telework). Any employee approved for short-term telecommuting due to COVID-19 related reasons will work with HR and the supervisor to perform assigned job functions during assigned work hours. If the employee is teleworking as assigned and performing essential job duties, no leave is needed and the employee continues this short-term work assignment until re-entry criteria is met. See Guidelines for FFCRA above.

Every employee's circumstance is different and will be taken into consideration when it comes to evaluating leave.



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## Guidelines on Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)

- Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL) – Two weeks (up to 80 hours) of paid sick leave at the employee’s regular rate of pay (some limitations apply) where the employee is unable to work or tele-work because the employee is quarantined (pursuant to federal, state, or local government order or advice of a health care provider), and/or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms AND seeking a medical diagnosis or;
- Two weeks (up to 80 hours) of paid sick leave at 2/3 of the employee’s regular rate of pay (some limitations apply) because the employee is unable to work or tele-work because of a bona fide need to care for an individual subject to quarantine (pursuant to federal, state, or local government order or advice of a health care provider), or to care for a child (under 18 years of age) whose school or childcare provider is closed or unavailable for reasons related to COVID-19, and
- Up to an additional 10 weeks of paid expanded family and medical leave at 2/3 the employee’s regular rate of pay where an employee, who has been employed for at least 30 calendar days, is unable to work and for which tele-work is not available due to a bona fide need for leave to care for a child whose school or childcare provider is closed or unavailable for reasons related to COVID-19.

### **If an employee is exposed to COVID-19 while at work, will the employee have to use their accrued leave?**

The need for an employee to be out due to reasons related to COVID-19 is evaluated on an individual basis and in accordance with District guidelines and procedures. The District may require the employee to use accrued leave until the HR department receives appropriate documentation. Documentation may include medical documentation, state/local quarantine orders, and/or HR forms completed. The District will follow Board Policy DEC (local) and other requirements under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). If it is determined an employee is eligible for leave under the FFCRA, an employee’s accrued leave, if initially used, may be returned to the employee. Every employee’s circumstance is different and will be taken into consideration when it comes to evaluating leave. HR will determine if the employee’s essential job functions will allow for the employee to temporarily work from home (tele-work). Any employee approved for short-term telecommuting due to COVID-19 related reasons will work with HR and the supervisor to perform assigned job functions during assigned work hours. If the employee is teleworking as assigned and performing essential job duties, no leave is needed and the employee continues this short-term work assignment until re-entry criteria is met. See Guidelines for FFCRA above.

### **Will employees who report underlying health conditions be required to physically report to work?**

Employees will be required to be physically present unless district, state, or local officials declare otherwise. Any question regarding a health condition should be directed to the HR Department. Employees must be able to perform their essential job functions.



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## **Will employees be required to show a negative result for COVID-19 prior to return to work?**

No; LPISD is following CDC guidelines for return to work criteria. If an employee received a positive COVID-19 test result from their care provider or is experiencing symptoms related to COVID-19, the employee should call the HR Department to discuss the LPISD return to work criteria. Generally, if the employee experienced symptoms or received a positive test result, the employee may not return to work until the following re-entry criteria have been met:

1. at least ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared;
2. at least one day (24 hours) has passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications) and
3. the individual has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath).

For this and other COVID-19 related scenarios, please refer to the Employee Process Map for COVID-19.

*Please note, public health guidance is subject to change and guidance provided cannot anticipate every unique situation. La Porte ISD is committed to staying informed and will notify employees if guidance is updated. Questions not answered in this section should be directed to your immediate supervisor and/or Human Resources.*