

Winona Area Public Schools (WAPS) COVID-19 Health Protocols

Effective Date: January 20, 2023

Though this guidance is written for COVID-19 prevention, many of the layered prevention strategies described in this guidance can help prevent the spread of other infectious diseases, such as influenza (flu), respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), and norovirus, and support healthy learning environments for all.

The following guidelines and recommendations are based on the guidance from the

- Centers for Disease Control (CDC): [Operational Guidance for K-12 Schools and Early Care and Education Programs to Support Safe In-Person Learning](#) - (updated 10/05/2022)
- [MDH COVID-19 Isolation Guide for Schools, Child Care, and Youth Programming \(PDF\)](#) - (updated 03/15/2022)
- [Minnesota State High School League 2021-2022 COVID-19 Guidance](#) - (updated 05/03/2022)
- [MDH COVID-19 Testing Recommendations](#) - (updated 10/24/2022)

Federal Government and Minnesota Rule Requirements:

- Handling a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19: Minnesota Rule 4605.7070 requires any person in charge of any institution, school, child care facility, or camp to report cases of COVID-19 to the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). See [MDH: Reportable Disease Rule](#)

Prevention Layers	Protocols
Face Coverings	<p>Wearing a well-fitting mask consistently and correctly reduces the risk of spreading the virus that causes COVID-19. Universal indoor mask use is strongly recommended when Winona County is at a high COVID-19 Community Level as reported by the CDC COVID-19 Data Tracker.</p> <p>Anyone who chooses to wear a mask will be supported in their decision to do so at any COVID-19 Community Level, including low. Masks will be available at the main office of each school building.</p> <p>Situations Where Face Coverings are Required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● People who test positive and return after a 5 day-isolation are required to wear a well-fitting face covering for days 6-10. ● Exceptions can be made for the following categories of people: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A person who cannot wear a mask, or cannot safely wear a mask, because of a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) ○ Children under 2 years of age should not wear a mask.
Isolation (if you tested positive)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All people who have a positive test for COVID-19 — regardless of vaccination status, or whether or not they have symptoms — will be required to isolate for at least five full days (day zero is the first day of symptoms or for asymptomatic persons the date the person was tested). Isolation should never be shorter than five full days. ● People must stay home until all three of these things are true:

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It has been at least five days (10 days if they are under 2 or unable to wear a mask)* since they first felt sick or since the day they took the viral test that gave them a positive result. Day zero is the day symptoms started or the day they got tested. 2. They have had no fever (their temperature is 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or lower) for at least 24 hours, without using medicine that lowers fevers. 3. They feel better. Symptoms such as cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms are better. People who are moderately to severely ill with COVID-19 should isolate for at least 10 days. <p>*People who are unable to wear a well-fitting mask, including children under age 2, people with certain disabilities, and others who cannot consistently wear a mask, must stay home for a full 10-day isolation period.</p>
<p>Close Contact Tracing and Quarantine</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● WAPS will not be conducting contact tracing at this time. Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 will be required to stay home per MDH guidance for isolation. Individuals who have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 are encouraged to follow the CDC's recommendations for What to Do If You Were Exposed to COVID-19.
<p>Cohorting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cohorting is the practice of keeping people together in a small group and having each group stay together throughout the day, while minimizing contact between cohorts. At a high COVID-19 Community Level, as reported by the CDC COVID-19 Data Tracker, cohorting will be encouraged in elementary buildings when possible to limit the number of people who come in contact with each other.
<p>Health Screening and Staying Home When Sick</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students, staff, and visitors are recommended to complete a daily health screening. ● People with symptoms of infectious diseases, including COVID-19, influenza, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), and gastrointestinal infections should stay home and are encouraged to get tested for COVID-19 and follow the pathways outlined in the: COVID-19 Isolation Guide for Schools, Child Care, and Youth Programming (updated 3/15/2022) For people who are sick or test positive. ● Students who have a fever of at least 100 degrees must stay home from school. Students can return to school 24 hours after the fever is gone (without fever-reducing medication) if they are feeling well enough to participate in school, unless they have tested positive for COVID and are within their 5-day isolation.
<p>COVID-19 Testing and COVID-19 Vaccination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Free rapid tests will be available for students, staff, and families during the 2022-2023 school year. Individuals reporting symptoms of COVID-19 or individuals who have had close contact with a positive person are strongly encouraged to utilize the district's rapid tests. Testing kits can be picked up at the main office of each building.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Winona Area Public Schools encourages staying up to date with COVID-19 vaccinations, including boosters, which is the leading public health strategy to prevent severe disease.
Respiratory Etiquette and Hand Hygiene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students and staff members are encouraged to build routines of handwashing and respiratory etiquette into the daily schedule. Employees, students, and visitors will be instructed to cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve or tissue when coughing or sneezing. All students, staff, and visitors are encouraged to use hand sanitizer prior to or immediately upon entering district buildings. All buildings will have hand sanitizer dispensers available for public use.
Cleaning and Ventilation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular housekeeping practices are conducted by our maintenance department, including routine environmental cleaning of classrooms and common spaces. WAPS has evaluated the operational capacity of indoor ventilation systems to ensure they are in proper working order in preparation for the school year. Whenever possible, steps will be taken to increase the intake percentage of outside air to increase dilution of contaminants, and minimize recirculation, while maintaining indoor air conditions. In the absence of effective mechanical ventilation, steps will be taken to increase natural ventilation as much as possible, including opening windows when possible and safe.
Accommodations for Children with Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies and procedures will be provided. To learn more about accommodations, parents/guardians should contact their child’s case manager.
Visitors & Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WAPS welcomes visitors, community providers, volunteers, and other authorized adults into district buildings as long as they adhere to relevant provisions of the WAPS COVID-19 Health Protocols. Nonpublic students visiting district buildings to receive educational services will adhere to relevant provisions of the WAPS COVID-19 Health Protocols.
Key Kids	The Key Kids program will follow the elementary school processes.
Athletics & Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitions/Games: All participants, coaches, and advisors must comply with WAPS COVID-19 Health Protocols at home events. When traveling to other schools for away events, WAPS participants, coaches, and other persons must comply with away school district’s protocols, unless they contradict and are more relaxed than the provisions of the WAPS COVID-19 Health Protocols.

- **Face Coverings:** When distancing cannot be maintained, such as on the sidelines, student-athletes will be strongly recommended to wear a face covering both indoors and outdoors **at a high COVID-19 Community Level.**
- **Transportation:** When using district transportation for any purpose, including school buses and vans, occupants will **follow the current CDC/Federal mandate.**
- **Health Screening:** All participants are expected to complete daily health screenings prior to coming to school. Students should refrain from these activities when they have symptoms consistent with COVID-19 and should be tested. If students are absent from school due to being sick, they must remain home from after-school activities and athletics.
- **Contact Tracing and Quarantine:** Contact tracing will not be conducted. Individuals who have been in close contact with an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 are encouraged to follow the CDC's recommendations for [What to Do If You Were Exposed to COVID-19](#).
- **Per MSHSL requirements for Individuals who test positive:**
 - Days 0-5: Individuals may not participate in practice or contests.*
 - Days 6-10: Individuals may participate in practices and contests on days 6-10 if the following requirements are met:**
 - The individual must have lessening symptoms and be fever-free for at least 24 hours.
 - During days 6-10, no mask is required if the participant has a negative PCR/NAAT test or antigen test. Participants must show proof of negative results to their coach/supervisor.
 - If not tested, individuals must wear a well-fitting mask at all times, avoid travel and avoid being around people who are at high risk

**Day 0 is the day symptoms started or the day of the test if asymptomatic. Student is eligible for practice and contests on Day 6 if all three conditions have been met.)*

***It is highly recommended that any student-participant who has tested positive for COVID-19 follow the "[Graduated Return to Sport Protocol](#)" that is provided by the Minnesota State High School League and the MSHSL Sports Medicine Advisory Committee.*