



Barry-Eaton District Health Department

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BEDHD SCHOOL GUIDANCE FOR NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) September, 2022

1. Strongly Promote Vaccination

Strongly encourage staff and students to vaccinate themselves against COVID-19. Vaccination is the best tool we have to avoid serious illness and hospitalization. It is never too late to get a first, second, or booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine. Barry-Eaton District Health Department (BEDHD) strongly encourages those who are eligible to get their first, second, or booster dose as soon as possible. Currently boosters are recommended for some individuals 5 and older. Individuals 12 and older interested in a booster dose must receive a bivalent booster. More information about eligibility and availability of COVID vaccines can be found on our website [HERE](#). COVID-19 vaccines can be found at BEDHD, local pharmacies, local health care providers, and more. [Ways that school districts can take specific actions to increase vaccination rates](#). It is important for schools to take an active stance with vaccination promotion among staff and students.

BEDHD offers Community-Based clinics at schools, libraries or other public meeting places to increase access to vaccination and meeting community members where they are. Community-based clinics can be held during business hours, after-hours, or on weekends. Please reach out to Kaylynn Miesen for questions and/or scheduling a clinic at KMiesen@bedhd.org or (517) 541-2614.

2. Testing

Testing is a valuable tool which can help prevent those who are infectious from spreading COVID-19 to other people. If a staff or student is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, encourage them to seek out testing to confirm if they have COVID-19. Close contacts to someone with a diagnosed case of COVID-19 should seek out testing 5 days after their exposure. It is recommended every district have a testing plan in place for outbreaks, large events, and holidays. In order to utilize HRAs (see below), a district MUST have a testing plan in place.

[MDHHS Rapid Antigen Testing Training Series, FAQs & Resources:](#)

- Use this link for information regarding training, reporting, and reordering Antigen COVID Tests.

Testing Resources to share with families to obtain at-home COVID-19 tests:

- [MI Backpack Home Tests](#) - MI Backpack Home Tests is an At-Home COVID-19 Testing Program for K–12 Settings Expanding on the MI Safer Schools Testing Program launched by MDHHS in the 2020-2021 school year. MDHHS has implemented a program to make free, at-home COVID antigen tests available to students in Michigan's schools.
- [Project ACT](#) - Every household in MI is eligible to have a set of 5 FREE at-home rapid COVID tests mailed to them through Project ACT. Apply at www.accesscovidtests.org
- [Library Partnership for At-home Tests](#) - MDHHS has partnered with several libraries across the state of Michigan to provide free at-home COVID-19 test kits to Michiganders.
- [Health Insurance Reimbursement for At-home Tests](#) - If someone has health insurance through an employer or Marketplace, insurance will pay them back for 8 at-home tests each month for each person on the plan.

3. Health Resource Advocates

BEDHD was awarded funding through MDHHS to support a *new* Health Resource Advocate (HRA) program. Utilizing these funds, BEDHD has hired 6 HRAs who will help support the needs of Barry and Eaton county schools. While the grant is funded through COVID-19 prevention funding and requires schools who choose to utilize the HRAs to have an active COVID-19 testing plan in place, there is ample opportunity to focus on other COVID-19-related public health issues. The intention of this programming is to focus on areas such as mental health support, substance use prevention, and other areas schools feel COVID-19 negatively impacted and there is a need to address.

If there are questions about the program or there is a need to discuss/implement a COVID-19 testing plan and utilize our team of HRAs, please connect directly with our HRA Outreach Supervisor:

LMetcalfe@bedhd.org or (517) 541-2624.

4. Isolation

All people who test positive for COVID-19 should undergo isolation for **at least 5 full days**. Day 0 is the day symptoms began or the day of the positive test (for people with no COVID-19 symptoms). If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status, they must isolate for 5 days and may return to school **wearing a well-fitted mask for at least another 5 days** (days 6-10) as long as their symptoms are improving and they have been fever free for over 24 hours (without the aid of fever-reducing medication). **If they are unwilling or unable to wear a mask, they should isolate for the full 10 days**. Individuals with a positive case of COVID-19 must be excluded from all school and non-school related events. All positive cases must be reported to BEDHD within 24 hours.

5. Exposure

Those who were exposed to positive COVID-19 cases are encouraged to wear a well-fitting mask and monitor symptoms for 10 days. If someone who was exposed to COVID-19 develops symptoms, they are encouraged to get tested at least 5 days after their exposure and to stay home until they know the results. If the contact's test is negative, they should continue taking precautions (masking) through day 10.

*****Please Note: as of September 1, 2022, BEDHD is **not** requiring contact tracing for schools. This may be subject to change due to the evolving nature of COVID-19 in our district.***

Symptom Monitoring after Exposure

During days 0-10 following exposure:

- Watch for symptoms, such as fever, cough, shortness of breath or other COVID-19 symptoms.
- If symptoms develop, get tested immediately and isolate until receiving test results. If test is positive, then follow isolation recommendations.
- If symptoms do not develop, get tested at least five days after last exposed.
- If possible, stay away from others in the home, especially people who are at higher risk of getting very sick from COVID-19.

For the full 10 days after last exposure, avoid people who are immunocompromised or at high risk for severe disease, and nursing homes and other high-risk settings.

6. COVID Calculators

On the BEDHD website we have provided several "[COVID Calculators](#)" to assist with timelines of isolation, mask wearing, reinfection, and vaccination/boosters. These calculators may be especially helpful in complex cases or answering questions about when a staff member or student may return to school.

7. Outbreak Interventions

Please follow the CDC K-12 guidance below if your school is experiencing a COVID-19 outbreak.

If a school is experiencing an outbreak (**3 or more cases**), please consider adding prevention strategies regardless of COVID-19 community levels. Strategies that can help reduce transmission during an outbreak include:

- wearing well-fitting masks or respirators
- Improving ventilation (for example moving school activities outdoors, opening windows and doors, using air filters)
- Screening/testing
- Case investigation and contact tracing
- Encourage parents/guardians to screen their children before sending them to school

Early identification of cases to ensure that they stay home and isolate is a critical component of outbreak response. Schools and Early Childhood Education Centers (ECE) programs may also consider suspending high-risk activities to control a school- or program-associated outbreak.

Should you need additional support, our HRA program can help come up with a plan and offer technical assistance. If you have further questions or concerns please reach out to covidschools@bedhd.org or call 517-541-2641.