

Novel Coronavirus - Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Planning for Schools and Child Care Closure

The state may modify or update closure criteria based on new information

Guidelines for emergency school or child care closure

It will be important to work closely with your Local Public Health Department as you begin considering closing school or child care. Public Health is not currently recommending that schools or child care proactively close unless they have a confirmed case of COVID-19 in a staff or student. The following guidance should be considered a requirement for all schools and child care in Colorado, and schools and child care in partnership with their local public health agencies can choose to close at an earlier time in order to prevent further COVID-19 transmission.

State ordered closure criteria

- Any school* in Colorado with a single confirmed case of COVID-19 in a staff or student will close for a minimum of 72 hours for cleaning and social distancing
- Any schools that are closed will partner with their local public health agency to conduct contact tracing and further COVID-19 testing.
- Any school with a second confirmed case of COVID-19 in a staff or student within a 30 day period requires a second minimum 72 closure for cleaning, testing and public health investigation.
- Any school with 3 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in staff or students within a 30 day period requires a closure for a minimum of 14 days.
- If 3 schools in a district have confirmed cases of COVID-19 within a 30 day period, all schools within the district are required to close for a minimum of 14 days for cleaning, testing and public health investigation.
- Other factors to consider when making decisions to close one or more schools, include:
 - Families with students in multiple buildings
 - Shared facilities
 - Shared transportation
 - Central kitchens
 - Shared staff

Cleaning guidance

Increase deep cleaning to at least 2 times per week and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces like doorknobs, tables, drinking fountains and handrails. For instructions regarding disinfecting see [here](#). For an additional list of recommended products visit: <https://www.americanchemistry.com/Novel-Coronavirus-Fighting-Products-List.pdf>

District guidance

If an immediate family member, caregiver, or guardian of a student tests positive for COVID-19, the site leader and superintendent should determine if that individual was recently on campus. The student should be tested, and decisions regarding school closure should be based on information gathered. Schools may choose to close for 24 hours based on the immediate family member, caregiver, or guardian's positive test while waiting for the student's test results. If the student tests positive, follow the state ordered closure criteria above.

How long to close a school or child care

Decisions to reopen a school should be done in consultation with your local Public Health Department

Consideration/challenges for when schools and child care are closed

- Children being fed - access to meals
- Child protection issues - younger children unsupervised because parent(s) has to work
- Children/youth congregating in other sites
- Parent absenteeism from work in order to care for children
- Children with special needs can have more difficulty learning when returning to school after extended absence
- Availability of substitute teacher pool
- Setting and size of school/district
- Addressing fear and stigma associated with being sick
- Privacy concerns

*Also refers to preschools and child care centers