



## A Message from your Lenawee County Superintendents May 11, 2021



BLISSFIELD COMMUNITY SCHOOLS



On Monday, May 10, 2021, all 12 Lenawee County public school district superintendents met with representatives from the Lenawee County Health Department ("Health Department") for the purpose of reviewing the mandatory quarantine of students who were in close-contact with a COVID-19 positive person while in school.

After consultation with the Health Department and in accordance with Public Health Order 2021-1, **beginning today, May 11, 2021, Lenawee County public schools will no longer require students who were in close contact with a COVID-19 positive person while at school to quarantine from school or school-associated activities, unless quarantine is required by the Lenawee County Health Department such as in the case of a school outbreak or if the close contact occurred in the home.** Although students may not be required to quarantine, schools will continue to conduct contact tracing and will inform those individuals who are believed to have been in close contact with a COVID-19 positive person.

This decision has been made in part after consideration of nearly a full school year of data surrounding school-associated cases of COVID-19. With limited exception, the data collected by Lenawee County school districts suggests that COVID-19 spread is not occurring within the school environment.

This action by the school districts does not preclude students from being subject to mandatory quarantine by the Lenawee County Health Department. Michigan Administrative Rule 325.175 vests authority in the local health officer to exclude from school attendance any individual lacking documentation of immunity or otherwise considered susceptible to communicable disease, if, in the opinion of the local health officer such is necessary to control disease spread. Thus, any student who is subject to a mandatory quarantine by the Lenawee County Health Department will be prohibited from attending school and participating in school-associated activities until such time as the quarantine period is lifted.

In accordance with Public Act 339 of 2020, school employees who have been in a close contact with a COVID-19 positive or probable person will be required to quarantine unless the employee is fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or the employee tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 90 days.

The following frequently asked questions and responses are intended to help address any questions that may result from this change:

1. **Does this impact the isolation requirement for COVID-19 positive or probable students or other individuals?**

No, any student or other person who has tested positive or is probable for COVID-19 must stay home from school until such time as at least 10 full days from the onset of symptoms (symptom onset is day zero) and at least 24 hours has passed with no fever without the use of fever reducing medications and the symptoms must have improved.

2. **Does this impact students who were in close contact with a COVID-19 positive or probable person outside of school?**

Generally, no. Students who were in close contact with a COVID-19 positive or probable person outside of school, such as in the student's home, are required to quarantine in accordance with Public Health Order 2021-1 or if ordered to do so by the Lenawee County Health Department.

3. **Are there circumstances under which students who are close contacts in school may be required to quarantine?**

Yes, the Lenawee County Health Department has indicated that in cases of school outbreaks students who are a close contact with a COVID-19 positive or probable case will be subject to mandatory quarantine.

The definition of school "outbreak" as provided by the Lenawee County Health Department is two or more laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases among students or staff within a school with onsets within a 14-day period, who are epidemiologically linked, do not share a household, and were not identified as close contacts of each other in another setting during standard case investigation or contact tracing as determined by the Lenawee County Health Department.

4. **Will the schools still conduct contact tracing?**

Yes, schools will still conduct contact tracing and will inform any student or other individual deemed to have been in close contact with a COVID-19 positive or probable person. Student close contacts may voluntarily elect to quarantine, but will not be required to unless directed by the Lenawee County Health Department in accordance with their authority under Michigan Administrative Rule 325.175(4) or unless the student develops signs or symptoms of COVID-19.

If requested by the Lenawee County Health Department, contact tracing information performed by the schools will be provided in accordance with the requirements of Michigan Administrative Rule 325.174(2).

5. **Will close contact students who voluntarily elect to quarantine be provided with educational programming?**

Yes, students will be provided with the opportunity to participate in school virtually as has been the case all year when students were subject to quarantine or isolation orders.

6. **Does this change impact any other COVID-19 safety measures?**

No. Staff, students, and visitors are still required to wear face masks while present on school property in accordance with the requirements of the May 6, 2021,

Michigan Department of Health and Human Service order. Other COVID-19 mitigation measures, including enhanced cleaning, student cohorting, physical distancing, and athlete testing will continue to be required in accordance with applicable orders and the guidance of the Lenawee County Health Department, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, and United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

7. **Does this change impact school staff?**

No, in accordance with Public Act 339 of 2020, school employees who have been in a close contact with a COVID-19 positive or probable person will be required to quarantine unless the employee is fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or the employee tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 90 days.

8. **If a student is currently subject to quarantine, must the student fulfill the full quarantine period?**

If the student was quarantined because he or she was a close contact at school, no, provided that the student does not have any signs or symptoms of COVID-19. Students who were a close contact at school and who do not have any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 may return to school tomorrow, Wednesday, May 12, 2021. Athletes who were a close contact at school and who do not have any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 may participate in athletic practices and competitions beginning today, Tuesday, May 11, 2021.

9. **If a student is experiencing signs or symptoms of COVID-19, can the student come to school?**

No, the student must stay home from school for at least 10 days from the onset of signs or symptoms and at least 24 hours has passed with no fever without the use of fever reducing medications and the symptoms must have improved, unless the student has tested negative for COVID-19, in which the case the student must remain home until such time as the symptoms improve.

In addition to the changes described above, the Lenawee County Health Department has also indicated that the mandatory quarantine period will be reduced from 14 to 10 days beginning on May 11, 2021.

The challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic have been like no other in recent history. Despite these challenges, our students, staff, and community have largely acted with compassion and respect in complying with public health requirements and recommendations to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Lenawee County's public school districts will continue to work closely with representatives from the Lenawee County Health Department to prevent the spread of COVID-19 within our communities. Thank you for continuing to do your part to help keep our students, staff, and communities safe and healthy!

# LENAWEE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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## **PUBLIC HEALTH ORDER (2021-1) FOR CONTROL OF PANDEMIC QUARANTINE ORDER IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS**

Matters of concern to the health of Lenawee County citizens having been brought to the attention of the Health Officer of the Lenawee County Health Department, and the Health Officer having made the following determinations, issues this Order pursuant to the Michigan Public Health Code, MCL 333.2451 and 333.2453, as well as R. 325.175(4), which is an administrative rule promulgated by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services pursuant to MCL 333.2226(d).

1. On October 5, 2020 and as recently as April 16, 2021, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services ("MDHHS") through its Directors have declared an Emergency Order to address threats to the public health posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. The virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person, primarily through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person or carrier coughs, sneezes, or talks. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. Spread is more likely to occur when people are in close contact with one another.
3. Although vaccinations in the County are proceeding at a positive level and the hope is that continued vaccination will lead to reduced community transmission, COVID-19 remains a public health issue that impacts local institutions such as educational settings.
4. Household transmission of COVID-19 is common, with one study finding that transmission rates were as high as 53%. Because risk of transmission is high among households, household members who are not sick but have been exposed to COVID-19, pose a higher risk to educational settings if they return before a quarantine period has been completed.
5. It has been observed in educational settings that when prevention strategies such as masking, distancing, and handwashing are applied consistently that school-associated transmission of COVID-19 may be reduced.
6. As of May 5, 2021, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services ("MDHHS") has advised that enforcement of MDHHS' school quarantine guidelines must be now by local health department order.

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** that all Educational Institutions and all Persons in Educational Settings must adhere to the following rules:

- a. Household close contacts of COVID-19 cases are required to quarantine for at least 10 days after last exposure to a COVID-19 case.

The mission of the Lenawee County Health Department is to promote a safe and healthy environment.

- b. All Persons in Educational Settings in Close contact with a COVID-19 case involved in an Outbreak are required to quarantine for at least 10 days after last exposure to a COVID-19 case.
- c. As soon as possible, persons identified as close contacts in an educational setting should be notified of their potential exposure.

**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that the following terms shall have the following definitions for purposes of this ORDER:

- a. "COVID-19 case" is defined by the August 2020 interim position statement published by the Council for State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) Executive Board and referenced in the Michigan State and Local Public Health Standard Operating Procedures. For the purposes of this order, a person must meet the confirmed or probable case definition as defined by CSTE and be documented in the Michigan Disease Surveillance System as a COVID-19 case. The CSTE definition can be found at the following site:  
[https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.cste.org/resource/resmgr/ps/positionstatement2020/Interim-20-ID-02\\_COVID-19.pdf](https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.cste.org/resource/resmgr/ps/positionstatement2020/Interim-20-ID-02_COVID-19.pdf)
- b. "Close contact" means being within 6 feet of someone who is a COVID-19 case for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.
- c. "Educational Institutions" or "Educational Settings" is broadly defined and includes but is not limited to, youth camps, youth programs, childcare centers, preschools, primary through secondary schools, vocational schools, colleges, and universities. This definition includes educationally affiliated extracurricular activities such as school athletics.
- d. "Fully vaccinated persons" means persons for whom at least two weeks has passed after receiving the final dose of an FDA-approved or authorized COVID-19 vaccine.
- e. "Household close contact" means a close contact that lives with a COVID-19 case in a shared dwelling with common kitchen or bathroom facilities. In dwellings with shared kitchen or bathroom facilities occupied by 20 or more unrelated persons, households are defined by individuals who share a bedroom.
- f. "Outbreak" in an educational setting is generally defined by the CSTE as two or more laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases among students or staff with onsets within a 14-day period, who are epidemiologically linked, do not share a household, and were not identified as close contacts of each other in another setting during standard case investigation or contact tracing, as determined by the Lenawee County Health Department.
- g. "Persons in Educational Settings" means students, teachers, administrative staff, attendees, volunteers, coaches, camp leaders, and other employees or volunteers of Educational Institutions.

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**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that this ORDER shall not apply to the following Persons in Educational Settings:

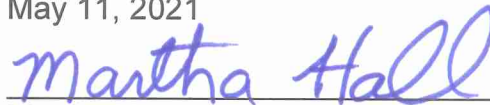
- a. Persons who were a confirmed or probable COVID-19 case in the past 90 days and recovered.
- b. Fully vaccinated persons.

**IT IS FURTHER REMINDED** that:

- a. In alignment with MDHHS guidance, the Lenawee County Health Department recommends at least a 10-day quarantine for all close contacts of COVID-19 cases.
- b. Contact tracing in educational settings remains a mandate outlined in current MDHHS Epidemic Orders. Per the May 6, 2021 Gatherings and Facemask Order issued by MDHHS, "Upon request, businesses, schools, and other facilities must provide names and phone numbers of individuals with possible COVID-19 exposure to MDHHS and local health departments to aid in contact tracing and case investigation efforts".
- c. This order does not supersede current MDHHS Epidemic Orders. Current MDHHS mask mandates, including those relevant to Educational Institutions still apply.

**THIS ORDER** is effective immediately and remains in effect until further order of the health officer.

May 11, 2021



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Martha Hall, MPH, REHS  
Lenawee County Health Officer