SCHOOLS AND CHILDCARE FACILITIES

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

WHAT IS COVID-19?
COVID-19 is a respiratory disease caused by a new coronavirus that started spreading in the Hubei Province of China in late 2019. The Metro Public Health Department is working closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Tennessee Department of Health to inform the public of the best ways to fight and prevent the illness.

WHAT ARE THESE GUIDELINES FOR?
These guidelines are designed to help reduce the risk of exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19 in schools and childcare facilities. The guidelines provide strategies to keep respiratory infections from entering a facility and planning for a possible COVID-19 infection disruption.

Additional information on COVID-19 can be found at Coronavirus.Nashville.gov.

PREVENTING THE SPREAD TO YOUR FACILITY

Encourage sick employees and students to stay home
- Remind workers of sick leave policies and importance of staying home when sick.
- Sick workers and students should be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Discourage the use of perfect attendance awards and incentives.
- Identify critical job functions and positions, and cross-train employees to cover duties of absent workers.

Establish policies and procedures for students and employees that get sick at school
- Separate sick students and employees from others until they can leave.

Emphasize respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene for residents and visitors
- Place posters encouraging good preventative measures including hand-washing and covering coughs and sneezes (available from MPHD).
- Provide soap and hand sanitizer in multiple locations.

PLANNING FOR POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF RESPIRATORY INFECTIONS LIKE COVID-19

Review and update emergency operations plans
- Develop information-sharing systems with key partners.
- Monitor and plan for absenteeism.
- Create communications plan for school community including staff, students and families.
- Perform routine environmental cleaning.

Discuss plans for dismissal and cancellation of classes
- Consider cancellation of extra-curricular group activities and large events.
- Communicate to staff and students best practices for prevention outside of school.

Ensure continuity of education in case of dismissal and cancellation
- Discuss alternative instruction methods (i.e. digital and distance learning).
- Identify solutions for technical and access challenges of online instruction.
- Consider continuity of meal program while planning.