

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



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Commissioner

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DATE: March 15, 2024

TO: Superintendents of Schools, School Nurses, Childcare Providers

FROM: Manisha Juthani, MD; Commissioner Department of Public Health

SUBJECT: Updated Respiratory Viral Disease Guidance

The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) has adopted and recommends the updated respiratory viral disease guidance that was issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on Friday, March 1. Since the start of the 2023—2024 respiratory virus season, DPH has taken a pan-respiratory virus approach to managing COVID-19, influenza, and RSV. This strategy has been consistent with the CDC [guidance for managing viral respiratory diseases including COVID-19, influenza, and RSV](#). This updated guidance continues to protect those at most risk, and evidence indicates that it will not significantly increase severe disease related to COVID-19 or other respiratory viruses.

The key change in this guidance is updated recommendations for isolation for COVID-19. Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 should isolate based on their symptoms. They may return to normal activities when they are:

- fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications (e.g. ibuprofen, acetaminophen) AND
- other symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours.

Upon return to normal activities, individuals should take added precaution over the next 5 days, such as taking additional [steps for cleaner air](#), [hygiene](#), [masks](#), [physical distancing](#), and/or [testing when they](#) will be around other people indoors. If the individual develops fever or starts to feel worse after they have gone back to normal activities, they should isolate again until the conditions to return to normal activities are met.

These updated recommendations apply to all community settings, including schools and child care. Schools and child care providers are encouraged to review and update their viral respiratory disease policies to operationalize the latest CDC guidance, in particular changes to the recommended COVID-19 isolation period. Additionally, we would like to provide a reminder that any suspected or confirmed outbreak in a school or child care setting is immediately reportable by telephone to both DPH (860-509-7994) and the local health department where the school or child care facility is located. School and child care facilities should continue to work closely with local public health to identify and investigate suspected outbreaks and implement mitigation strategies to limit disease



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