

**LEMON GROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT
2021-2022 COVID FAQs (08/12/21)**

PARENT INFORMATION RESOURCES

Q: Is there comprehensive guidance for parents on how to prepare for their child to return to in-person learning?

A: Yes. All across America, parents and families are preparing for the return to school as our nation continues to reemerge from the COVID-19 pandemic. This summer, students are already reengaging with their peers and communities, getting ready to return to classrooms and school buildings after the challenges of the last year. Here is a link to a [great resource guide for parents](#) from the USDE.

Another great resource for parents to read for the latest updates in Public Health Guidance is [linked here from the California Public Health Department](#).

MASK / FACE COVERING GUIDELINES

Q: Are face coverings mandatory for PK-12 students when they return to school?

A: Yes. All students in PK-12 schools must wear a face covering indoors regardless of vaccination status, unless exempted.

Q: Are face coverings mandatory for PK-8th staff in the school setting?

A: Yes. Staff members are required to wear a face covering indoors while in the presence of students, regardless of vaccination status, unless exempted.

If a staff member is alone in their classroom or office, then they do not need to wear a facial covering.

Q: Are face coverings mandatory for PK-8th staff in District Offices?

A: Yes. Staff members are required to wear a face covering indoors, unless exempted with a medical doctor's note.

Q: Which individuals are exempt from wearing a face covering in a PK-12 school setting?

A: [CDPH guidance](#) indicates the following individuals are exempt from wearing masks at all times:

**LEMON GROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT
2021-2022 COVID FAQs (08/12/21)**

- Persons younger than two years old. Very young children must not wear a mask because of the risk of suffocation.
- Persons with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that prevents wearing a mask. This includes persons with a medical condition for whom wearing a mask could obstruct breathing or who are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a mask without assistance.
- Persons who are hearing impaired, or communicating with a person who is hearing impaired, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication.
- Persons for whom wearing a mask would create a risk to the person related to their work, as determined by local, state, or federal regulators or workplace safety guidelines.

Q: What if students or staff have a medical condition that prevents them from wearing masks?

People who have medical conditions that don't allow them to wear a mask are exempt, but they must wear a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge or another non restrictive alternative if their condition permits it.

Q: Are schools required to provide masks if students don't come with their own masks?

Yes - schools must provide students with a face covering if they forget or are unable to bring one of their own. The procedures for school sites to order PPE remain the same as 2020-2021 procedures established.

Q: What if a student forgets a mask at home, refuses to wear one or is unable to wear a mask?

We provide masks to every child if they are unable to provide their own or forget their face covering at home.

If a student is unable to wear a mask due to a medical reason, there is an exemption process in place that is coordinated through each school site's Health Clerk and the District Nurse.

**LEMON GROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT
2021-2022 COVID FAQs (08/12/21)**

We will work with families on an individual basis to educate and share information about the public health requirements and public health benefits of consistently wearing facial coverings in indoor settings with unvaccinated individuals.

Finally, we do have a virtual academy option for families who decide that not wearing facial coverings is highly important to them. We are happy to accommodate our students through the virtual option.

Q: Are masks required for staff and students when outside?

Outdoors, masks are optional for all.

Q: Many in the community believe schools have the ability to allow individuals to choose whether or not they wear a mask indoors at a K-12 school based on the language issued by CDPH. What discretion (if any) do districts and schools have in allowing mask choice?

A: Everyone in a K-12 school setting is expected to wear masks indoors, regardless of vaccination status. Districts and schools cannot choose to make face coverings optional. Schools are required to enforce the mask mandate by developing and implementing local protocols. Schools should offer alternative educational opportunities for students who will not wear a face covering.

Q: What orders explain why districts must follow the mandatory face covering requirement issued by the CDPH?

A: County health officials have confirmed that all school districts must comply with the guidance for schools as required by the [State Public Health Officer Order of June 11, 2021](#), which derives its authority from Health and Safety Codes 120125, 120140, 120175, 120195 and 131080 and other applicable laws. In addition, the [San Diego County public health order](#) states: "Pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 120175.5 (b), all governmental entities in the county shall continue to take necessary measures within the governmental entity's control to ensure compliance with State and local laws, regulations, and orders related to the control of COVID-19."

Q: Does the indoors mask mandate for schools apply to school board meetings?

**LEMON GROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT
2021-2022 COVID FAQs (08/12/21)**

A: The K-12 school guidance does not apply to school board meetings. However, the Lemon Grove School District policy for our Board meetings is that people are required to wear masks, regardless of their vaccination status. If a member of the public does not wish to wear a face covering, they are able to watch our Board meetings streamed live via YouTube, using a computer with access to the internet.

Q: What reasoning does CDPH use to continue requiring face coverings indoors in K-12 school settings?

A: In shaping its [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools in California, 2021-22 School Year](#), the CDPH says its primary goal is returning all willing students to full-time in-person instruction and keeping them in school as much as possible. The two most restrictive prevention measures that were included in last year's guidance are no longer required: physical distancing and cohort scheduling. The elimination of these measures will benefit students and families by allowing districts to provide full-time in-person instruction for every student enrolled in its schools.

With the elimination of the most restrictive prevention strategies from the guidance, California is relying on a robust testing program and the mandatory use of face coverings in indoor spaces to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and its highly contagious variants on school campuses.

Q: Are the mask guidelines possibly changing due to the surge in COVID cases?

The California Department of Public Health will continue assessing the plan and decide no later than Nov. 1 whether to update the mask requirements.

TESTING

Q: What are the requirements for students and staff to be tested for COVID-19?

As you may have heard, today Gov. Gavin Newsom announced that California will require schools to verify that workers are fully vaccinated or tested regularly for COVID-19. [The new order](#) applies to public and private schools serving students in transitional kindergarten through grade 12; it does not apply to home schools.

LEMON GROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT
2021-2022 COVID FAQs (08/12/21)

Under the order, all schools must verify vaccine status of all workers, with certain modes accepted as proof of vaccination. Workers who are not fully vaccinated, or for whom vaccine status is unknown or documentation is not provided, must be considered unvaccinated. Those employees are required to undergo diagnostic screening testing at least once weekly with either PCR testing or antigen testing.

Local educational agencies must be in full compliance with the order by Oct. 15, 2021. The order is part of the state's efforts to protect Californians from the dangerous Delta variant of COVID-19 that is now circulating in our community. Vaccination status can have an impact on if and how long employees are required to quarantine after an exposure to COVID-19, and employees who are not vaccinated may be offered additional personal protective equipment under rules from Cal/OSHA.

The district will provide free COVID testing to all staff and students on a weekly basis at their school site. Communities with higher case rates than their county average, should do either [antigen or molecular screening testing](#) for all unvaccinated people weekly or twice weekly. LGSD is implementing weekly testing.

Q: How will LGSD students and staff be tested for COVID-19?

We will continue to provide surveillance testing for free on a weekly basis. Surveillance testing for students requires parental permission. Surveillance testing will be provided at every school site. We are using the same testing vendor, National COVID Testing Solutions, we used during the 2021-2021 school year.

[National Covid19 Testing Solutions](#) has implemented many process improvements that will make the testing experience more effective and informative for parents in this new school year. We are able to implement a blanket permission form for parents this year, so there is no need to complete a permission form each week. In addition, there is a text notification for parents with test results that will be sent automatically 2-3 days after testing.

Staff who are NOT vaccinated, shall be required to participate in weekly surveillance testing. Vaccinated staff (with proof of vaccination on file with the Human Resources Department) are exempt from weekly surveillance testing. Vaccinated staff may opt to participate in weekly surveillance testing at their discretion, at no cost to the employee. [Link to directions](#) to upload vaccination proof (only accessible by LGSD staff).

**LEMON GROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT
2021-2022 COVID FAQs (08/12/21)**

Q: What happens if a student or staff member has COVID-like symptoms or tests positive for COVID?

This guidance applies to all staff and students, regardless of their vaccination status. School officials should advise students and staff members with COVID19 symptoms not to return for in-person instruction until they have met all three criteria:

- They have a negative COVID19 test or a health care provider has provided documentation that the symptoms are due to something else or at least 10 days have passed since the onset of their symptoms.
- At least 24 hours have passed since the resolution of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- Other symptoms have improved.

If they test positive for COVID, they must isolate at home for at least 10 days since their symptoms began and 24 hours after their fever goes away, per the Department of Public Health’s [July 2020 guidance](#) on isolation and quarantine. If they test positive for COVID but don’t have symptoms, they can discontinue isolation 10 days after their test.

They don’t need a negative test to come out of isolation. Since last year, [CDC has maintained](#) that people who test positive for COVID aren’t likely to be infectious 10 to 20 days after their symptoms first started.

Per [Assembly Bill 86](#), which was approved in March, schools are required to report COVID-19 cases to their local public health department. The school’s local public health department will conduct contact tracing, and schools should have a COVID-19 liaison to assist the local public health agency with their investigation.

Q: What if a student or staff member comes into contact with someone who tests positive for COVID at school?

If a vaccinated person comes into “close contact” with someone who tests positive for COVID at a school, they only have to quarantine if they start to show symptoms. Close contact is [defined](#) by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as being within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative 15 minutes or longer over a 24-hour period.

LEMON GROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT
2021-2022 COVID FAQs (08/12/21)

K-12 students, however, are exempt from this definition as long as both students were correctly and consistently wearing masks and other K-12 school prevention strategies were in place. So vaccinated and unvaccinated students who come into close contact with someone with COVID can continue attending school in-person but must get tested at least twice weekly over at least 10 days; testing will likely be available through their school.

If, however, an unvaccinated student came into close contact with someone who has COVID and they were not wearing a mask for 15 consecutive minutes indoors, they must quarantine for at least 10 days since the last exposure; the quarantine can end after Day 7 if a diagnostic specimen is collected after Day 5 from the date of the last exposure and tests negative. The student/parent must also self-monitor for symptoms daily for up to 14 days from the last known exposure and continue all the recommendations around mask-wearing, hand-washing and other precautions.

If an unvaccinated student or staff member begins to show symptoms during the 14-day period, they must immediately isolate, get tested and contact their health care provider with any questions regarding their care, according to the state Public Health Department.

SOCIAL DISTANCING / COHORTING

Q: Will students be required to social distance?

The state has adopted the [CDC's stance](#) that in-person instruction can occur safely without physical distancing requirements as long as masking and other safety practices are in place.

California does, however, recommend schools maximize physical distance between students as much as possible during mealtimes if indoors. The state also recommends schools use additional spaces outside the cafeteria for mealtime seating, such as classrooms, gymnasiums or outdoors. The Lemon Grove School District will have students eat breakfast and lunch outdoors.

Q: Where can I find my school's safety plan?

LEMON GROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT
2021-2022 COVID FAQs (08/12/21)

The California Department of Public Health [recommends](#) that all schools and districts post their safety plan outlining the safety measures in place for the 2021-22 school year on their websites and at schools, as well as disseminate the plans to families before the start of the school year.

Also, schools that receive federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funds under the [American Rescue Plan](#) are required to adopt a “safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services plan” to be reviewed and amended every six months. The plan must describe how the school or districts will keep students and school staff safe using those funds.

We are in the process of revising our plan to reflect the new guidance and we will post it to the district website once it is completed. We will also share with all staff and families electronically.

VACCINATION

Q: Are employees required to vaccinate?

No, employees are not required to get the COVID19 vaccine. We highly encourage employees to be vaccinated. However, all unvaccinated employees are required to complete a COVID19 test on a weekly basis.

Q: Are eligible students required to vaccinate?

No, students are not required to get the COVID19 vaccine. We highly encourage students who are 12 years or older to be vaccinated.

Q: Do we track the vaccination status of employees?

We do not require employees to submit their vaccination status to us. However, we ask employees to provide proof of vaccination. This information is useful because vaccination status comes into play when there is COVID exposure and determines the length of the quarantine period. An employee who provides proof of vaccination does not need to be tested on a weekly basis.

Q: Do we track the vaccination status of students?

LEMON GROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT
2021-2022 COVID FAQs (08/12/21)

We do not require families to submit the student’s vaccination status to us, as this time. We appreciate families who submit the student’s proof of COVID vaccination if they have received the vaccination. It saves us time in determining the need to quarantine if they are exposed to a COVID positive person at school. We reserve the right to update this policy at any time in the future.

VISITORS, GUESTS & VOLUNTEERS

DEFINITIONS:

1. A **visitor** is defined as an individual who, with school district authorization, attends a student performance, special event, festival, back-to-school event, student conference etc. A visitor must use the registry process (Raptor) unless otherwise specified.
Examples of a visitor include: parents, guardians, community members, etc.
2. A **guest** is defined as an individual who, with school district authorization, assists students, schools and teachers on a non-regular basis or who individually observes a classroom or activity. A guest may also assist with educational programs or with special events on an occasional or infrequent basis. A guest is required to report his or her presence at the school office and use the registry process (Raptor).
Examples of a guest include: vendors, elected officials, individuals observing a classroom, employees from other sites, etc.
3. A **volunteer** is defined as an individual who, with school district authorization, voluntarily assists schools, educational programs, or students on a regular and ongoing basis. A volunteer is required to complete a Volunteer Application (one per site), Code of Conduct, submit a negative TB test and have a Megan’s Law Background Check completed prior to rendering service. In addition, when the approved volunteer is on campus, they will be required to sign-in on campus using the registry process (Raptor).

Q: Will the district allow volunteers on campuses?

The state [recommends](#) schools limit nonessential visitors, volunteers and activities involving external groups or organizations with people who are not fully vaccinated, especially in communities with moderate-to-high COVID transmission.

At this time we are not allowing volunteers on campus due to the elevated local COVID case rate. The district reserves the right to change this policy at any time, based on the current

LEMON GROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT
2021-2022 COVID FAQs (08/12/21)

community COVID infection rate. We will revisit this policy in October to determine if COVID conditions have improved.

To be certified as an authorized LGSD Volunteer, all interested people must follow [this process](#).

Q: Will visitors be allowed on campuses?

The state [recommends](#) schools limit nonessential visitors, volunteers and activities involving external groups or organizations with people who are not fully vaccinated, especially in communities with moderate-to-high COVID transmission.

We will allow approved guests (contractors) to visit campuses with proof of COVID vaccination. We will not maintain a file of outside volunteers/contractors vaccination statuses. Paper Vaccination Cards or a California Public Health Department (CDPH) [Digital COVID-19 Vaccine Record](#) must be presented each time the visitor arrives on campus. A contractor SHALL NOT be allowed to work in person in LGSD without proof of COVID19 vaccination. This is non-negotiable.

Parents who are required to visit campus, shall not be required to provide proof of vaccination. We may ask parents to provide proof of vaccination, but parents are not required to do so. They shall comply with all district COVID19 screening and requirements (i.e. facial coverings, temperature screening, COVID19 symptom screening, social distancing, etc.)

The district reserves the right to change this policy at any time, based on the current community COVID infection rate.

School and district leaders, teachers and staff are encouraged to continue to hold virtual meetings for parents, individuals and groups when it makes sense for the type of meeting required.