



Diocese of Covington
Department of Catholic Schools
COVID-19 Return to School Requirements

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The Department of Catholic Schools has released the “COVID-19 Return to School Requirements” document to provide all schools within the Diocese of Covington consistent procedures to return to school for in-person instruction. This document was created based upon the most up-to-date information from various sources including, but not limited to, the Kentucky Department of Health, the Kentucky Department of Education, and the Centers for Disease Control along with the guidance of educators, medical professionals, attorneys, and the Diocesan Coronavirus Task Force. **As new information is received from health and government officials, there may be updates to these requirements that will be communicated following a review from the task force.**

Schools **are required to follow** the directives marked “Diocesan Requirements.” The “Diocesan Guidelines” are provided as a guide, offering suggestions or ideas for schools to use depending upon their own unique needs. Each school must ensure that the local level school plans and procedures are in compliance with the Diocesan requirements.

School Activity	Diocesan Requirements	Diocesan Guidelines
Employee Health Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Each employee must sign an “Employee Acknowledgement of Responsibility to Perform Daily Personal Health Assessment.” ▪ Employee completes a daily personal health assessment before employee leaves home for school. ▪ Employee must document their self-assessment each day upon arrival. 	
Student Health Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Each family signs an “Acknowledgement of Responsibility to Perform Daily Personal Health Assessment.” ▪ Each student, with the assistance of a parent or guardian, completes a daily personal health assessment before the student leaves home for school – this is in addition to, and does not replace, the temperature check at the school. 	

School Activity	Diocesan Requirements	Diocesan Guidelines
Immunizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student must be current with required immunizations to return to school for in-person instruction. 	
Signs and Messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Post signs in highly visible locations (e.g., school entrances, restrooms) that promote everyday protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs (such as by properly washing hands and properly wearing a cloth face covering). ▪ Regularly broadcast announcements on the PA system on the ways to reduce the spread of COVID-19. ▪ Post signs on front doors informing visitors of the screening requirements required before entering (temperatures/symptoms). This includes delivery services and mail. ▪ Facilities must be marked for six feet distance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Include messages (for example, videos) about behaviors that prevent the spread of COVID-19 when communicating with staff and families (such as on school websites, in emails, and on school social media accounts). ▪ Find free CDC print and digital resources on CDC’s communications resources main page.
Arrival to School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students wear masks during arrival ▪ Once temperature screened, students must proceed directly to the classroom (unless part of the breakfast program) avoiding congregation in the halls or other common areas or students proceed directly to the classroom wearing masks to have temperature taken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stagger arrival times according to class level with the exception of siblings. ▪ Schools may need to lengthen the morning arrival to accommodate the staggered drop-off. ▪ Identify specific windows of time when certain portions of the school population will arrive (ex: divide by alphabet/last name).
Temperature Checks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Temperature checks (touchless thermometer) conducted for all students and staff at point of school property entry. ▪ Staff clean hands before touching the thermometer. ▪ The thermometer cleaned according to the manufacturer’s recommendations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Schools may use temperature entry screening equipment. ▪ Health Professional Volunteers. Use staff for supervision. ▪ Designate a set of staff members to administer employee temperature checks at school as early as possible upon arrival. Self-checks are not sufficient.

School Activity	Diocesan Requirements	Diocesan Guidelines
Temperature Checks <i>Continued</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A health screening station(s) must be established at the facility, near but not blocking, each entry used for student arrival. This can be outdoors under cover for inclement weather. Floor markings must be visible to maintain six feet distance between students. Schools should eliminate large gatherings at these stations which may require multiple entry points or longer, staggered arrival times. ▪ Temperature checks can be taken before entering the classroom with six feet distance between students. ▪ Persons who have a fever of 100.4⁰ (38.0⁰C) or above must not be admitted to the facility. ▪ In the event that a student does not meet the health requirements, an isolation area is utilized where students can wait for a second temperature check using a different thermometer and to be picked up, if necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For some schools, checking temperatures at vehicles can minimize the need for isolated areas and procedures for holding/transporting sick students.
Spacing/Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase space between student seating to be six feet or greater. ▪ If the physical space in the school does not allow for spacing students' desks six feet apart, space desks as far away as possible and require masks at all times in that classroom for students and staff. ▪ Place markings on the floor/facility as a reminder of areas that are six feet apart. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use self-contained classrooms, if feasible, to limit exposure to a small group of students/staff. ▪ Have breaks/recess outside, and open windows where feasible to help improve ventilation. ▪ Clean classrooms during the time students are out of the room. Wipe door handles and desk tops in between classes, if possible.

School Activity	Diocesan Requirements	Diocesan Guidelines
Spacing/Classroom <i>Continued</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Modify classes/activities that normally require multiple students to engage in an activity, so distance and sanitation needs are met. ▪ Reduce congestion in common areas (school office, guidance, drop off/pick up, etc.). ▪ Create seating charts for students in classes to assist with contact tracing, if needed. ▪ Turn desks to face in the same direction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduce class sizes to allow for smaller cohorts of students to decrease the potential need for contact tracing. ▪ Plexiglass may be used in classrooms for dividers between students if approved by the local health department and it meets fire code requirements. These must be securely fastened to prevent student injury and should be cleaned frequently.
Masks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students enrolled in first grade and above and staff are required to wear a cloth face covering, unless medically waived. ▪ Messages or images on masks align with the Catholic faith and school dress code. ▪ Teach and reinforce use of cloth face coverings and are most essential in times when physical distancing is difficult. ▪ At teacher discretion, masks can be lowered during classroom time if all students and staff are seated six feet apart and no persons are walking around inside the classroom. ▪ When students are outside and six feet from others, masks are not required. ▪ Masks are to be worn when students are moving from place to place in classrooms, school buildings, and other school facilities. ▪ Masks must cover nose and mouth, stay in place and be in good condition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with students and families to identify alternative face coverings based on individual student medical needs and circumstances. Schools should maintain extra masks for those individuals that need them. ▪ Cloth face coverings are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected but does not have symptoms. Cloth face coverings are not surgical masks, respirators, or other medical personal protective equipment. ▪ Information should be provided to staff, students, and students' families on proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings. ▪ Masks should be labeled with name. ▪ Every student/staff should have multiple masks. ▪ Coordinate a pick up day to distribute masks to students so they can practice prior to the first school day. ▪ Schools have the final determination on acceptable masks.

School Activity	Diocesan Requirements	Diocesan Guidelines
Hallway Traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students and staff moving through the hallways must wear masks. ▪ Facilities are to be marked to show the traffic direction and social distancing (including stairwells). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Designate one-way hallway traffic when possible or staying to the right side. ▪ Designate certain doors for entry and exit. ▪ Identify and reduce areas of congregation by students.
Lockers/Cubbies/Coat & Backpack Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limit use. ▪ Avoid congregating. ▪ Face coverings required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Possible morning, lunch and afternoon use. ▪ Establish procedures for staggered use.
Shared Objects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Avoid sharing of items that are difficult to clean or disinfect. ▪ Keep each child's belongings separated from others' and in individually labeled containers, cubbies, or areas. ▪ Avoid sharing electronic devices, toys, books, and other games or learning aids. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing of high touch materials to the extent possible (e.g., assigning each student his or her own art supplies, equipment, pens, pencils, calculators) or limit use of supplies and equipment by one group of children at a time and clean and disinfect between use. ▪ Teachers using paper worksheets have a turn-in tray that can be isolated for 24 hours. ▪ Identify materials that can be asked to be brought in and used by individual students.
Water Fountains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Water fountains can only be used to fill water bottles. ▪ Students bring their own water bottles to be refilled throughout the day. ▪ Water fountains are to be cleaned and sanitized frequently throughout the school day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School has limited amount of disposable water bottles for backup.

School Activity	Diocesan Requirements	Diocesan Guidelines
Isolation Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Designated area for isolation of sick students with an ability to maintain adult supervision. ▪ Assure student is wearing a face covering if there is no medical reason to prevent this. ▪ Sick students can't be sent on the school bus. ▪ Health room supplies must include gloves, face masks, and face shields. ▪ The isolation area must be cleaned and sanitized after each use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transportation criteria for how a student gets home if the parent has no transportation or not responding. ▪ Students need to be picked up in a set amount of time - within 60 minutes. ▪ Parents must have a back-up contact on their emergency cards. ▪ Consider having a first aid and medication station outside the health office for students who are well and use the health room space for ill students. ▪ Additional guidance https://education.ky.gov/comm/Documents/Reopening%20Considerations%20Workplace%20Health%20and%20Safety%20FINAL.pdf
Cafeteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stagger lunch times and promote social distancing at tables. ▪ If students eat in the cafeteria, surfaces must be cleaned and sanitized between cohorts of diners. ▪ Students and staff use hand sanitizer or wash hands well before eating lunch or snacks, and after placing their masks back on their faces after they eat. ▪ Put labels on the tables to indicate six feet spacing. ▪ Assigned seating will be needed to support contact tracing if the school experiences a positive COVID-19 case. ▪ Siblings may sit next to each other. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Each school task force along with the cafeteria manager must determine if they can meet the serving and cleaning guidelines to serve meals and eat in the cafeteria. ▪ If social distancing is not possible in the cafeteria, have meals served to the classroom or students bring it back to the classroom. Eating outside with spacing is also an option. ▪ Cafeterias can serve hot lunches at schools where students will eat in the cafeteria. ▪ Cafeterias can offer box/bag lunches or grab-n-go lunches for those eating outdoors or in classrooms. ▪ Students still have the option to pack under both scenarios.

School Activity	Diocesan Requirements	Diocesan Guidelines
Recess/Playgrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students must practice good hand hygiene by washing/sanitizing their hands before going out to play and immediately upon returning inside the school building after putting on masks. ▪ Assign a recess schedule that limits how many classes are on the playground at one time. ▪ Students must engage in no contact activities. ▪ Equipment must be sanitized. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If multiple playground areas are available, utilize them to minimize how many students are mixing. ▪ Provide no contact recess activities - Red light-Green light, Shadow tag, jump rope, hula hoops...
Gymnasiums, P.E. Classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have P.E. classes outside whenever possible and reasonable. ▪ Clean and sanitize frequently used equipment between classes or sports teams. ▪ When students are engaged in physical activity face masks should be removed. ▪ Student activities should be no contact and include six feet or more distance between each student. ▪ When students are outside and six feet from others, masks are not required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide hand hygiene rules in the gym and advise students not to share personal items. ▪ Allow students to wear PE uniform for the entire day to eliminate changing. ▪ Locker Room - end class early for students to change. Provide multiple changing areas. ▪ Develop activities that omit the sharing of equipment. ▪ Identify as many low-touch physical activities as possible. ▪ Provide disinfectant wipe stations throughout the room for use on equipment.
Dismissal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stagger dismissal with safe distancing and masks. ▪ Parents are to remain in their vehicles and not congregate outside of school exits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extend dismissal time. ▪ Provide additional pickup routes and locations if possible.
Extra-Curricular Activities (After school clubs, academic team, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ After-school clubs, academic teams, etc. are to social distance at least six feet. ▪ Avoid sharing of items. 	

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Field Trips, Assemblies, and School Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cancel field trips, assemblies, and other large group activities to avoid mixing students in large common areas (1st half of school year). Further date TBD. ▪ Limit non-essential visitors and activities with outside groups and organizations. Students requiring outside services – such as mental health, speech, occupational and physical therapies – are allowed, but service providers must follow screening protocol and must wear proper PPE. ▪ College Reps not permitted until further notice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pursue virtual group events. ▪ Pursue virtual activities and events in lieu of field trips, student assemblies, special performances, school-wide parent meetings, and spirit nights, as possible. ▪ Grade level meetings may be held. Students must be spaced six feet and wearing masks.
School Masses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Follow Diocese of Covington Protocols for Celebrating the Liturgy amid COVID–19 https://covdio.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Protocols.pdf ▪ Students must sit in designated area. ▪ Designated area for visitors (if space allows for visitors) and follow school dismissal procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review First Friday Mass options with pastor/chaplain. ▪ Consider class-level Masses. ▪ Examine the possibility of adding school Mass times to allow all students to attend in person.
Aftercare*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limit the number of students for Aftercare. ▪ Provide a space with social distancing. ▪ Omit sharing items. ▪ Establish a limit on the number of students permitted in each indoor area to be used. ▪ Limit contact between students of different classes/grade levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Utilize outdoor spaces as much as possible. ▪ Provide procedures for parents to pick up students with minimal contact (call ahead of arrival; limit on-site payments).
<p><i>*In addition to the Diocese of Covington COVID-19 guidance, aftercare, daycare and childcare programs operated by or at schools and parishes in the Diocese of Covington and licensed by the state of Kentucky must also follow the regulations provided by the Kentucky Division of Regulated Childcare.</i></p>		

School Activity	Diocesan Requirements	Diocesan Guidelines
Sanitation and Environmental Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Utilize Guidance on Safety Expectations and Best Practices for Kentucky Schools https://education.ky.gov/comm/Documents/Safety%20Expectations_FINAL%20DOC.pdf ▪ Utilize KDE Facilities and Logistics https://education.ky.gov/comm/Documents/Phase%20II%20Reopening%20Considerations%20Facilities%20and%20Logistics%20FINAL.pdf 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Share plan with school community.
Contact Tracing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be prepared to cooperate with the contact tracing investigation with manifests of classroom cohorts, cafeteria seating charts, etc. that will allow quick identification of those at high risk of infection from the positive COVID-19 student/staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Share Contact Tracing PDF ▪ https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/covid19/CTyouractionmatters.pdf ▪ Additional resources ▪ https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/contact-tracing.html
Traditional Learner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students must commit to following safety guidelines to protect themselves, their peers, and faculty and staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Outside of school, students and families are encouraged to remain Healthy at Home to the greatest extent possible and avoid large gatherings.
At-Home Learner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school's main focus and efforts are to provide in-person instruction. ▪ Students who choose learning-from-home must commit to the guidelines set forth by the school. ▪ Students are held to the same grading and performance standards as traditional learners. ▪ Students are held to the same attendance standards and may be marked absent if not logged on at the times designated by the school. 	

School Activity	Diocesan Requirements	Diocesan Guidelines
At-Home Learner <i>Continued</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A request to return to the traditional program must be made to the principal one week in advance of intent to return; however, a student may have to remain an at-home learner through an entire quarter/trimester, as determined by school. ▪ Students may not participate in school-sponsored extracurricular activities. ▪ The at-home learning option is designed for COVID-19 related concerns, quarantine, or illness. ▪ Videoing of the class must focus only on the teacher unless the parents of every child in the classroom have given permission for their child to be on video. 	
Emergency Response Drills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Refer to COVID-19 Considerations for Reopening Schools: Facilities and Logistics. ▪ https://education.ky.gov/comm/Documents/Phase%20II%20Reopening%20Considerations%20Facilities%20and%20Logistics%20FINAL.pdf 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider preparing a virtual demonstration of the process for the drills.
Elementary Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All school teams and on-campus athletic activities are suspended until further notice. 	
High School Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strict adherence to KHSAA Guidelines ▪ No outside groups to use facilities until further notice. 	
Medical Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Schools may provide for the ongoing medical care for students, as per a normal year. 	
Parent-Teacher Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parent and teacher meetings are to be conducted virtually, if possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If face-to-face meetings are required, meetings will take place in large open areas with the use of masks and social distancing.

School Activity	Diocesan Requirements	Diocesan Guidelines
Meetings (School board, Boosters, PTO)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Virtual/video meetings are recommended whenever possible. ▪ Outdoor meetings (ex: pavilion) are recommended if possible - following public health guidelines.
Family Trips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ According to the CDC, travel increases your chances of getting and spreading COVID-19. Families are discouraged from traveling to another country or state (outside of the tristate area) for family trips. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-in-the-us.html ▪ Families must notify the school of trips that may increase student exposure to COVID-19. ▪ As a result of traveling, students may be subject to a 14-day quarantine and/or a COVID-19 test to return to school. 	
Infection Procedures:		
<p>What are the symptoms of COVID-19? The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has identified several symptoms of COVID-19, including high fever (above 100.4°F), sore throat, nausea, headache, muscle aches, loss of taste or smell, runny nose, fatigue, diarrhea and a new, uncontrolled cough that causes difficulty breathing.</p> <p>What should a parent do if a child has symptoms of COVID-19? If your child shows symptoms of COVID-19, you should contact your doctor. Your doctor may ask that your child participate in a COVID-19 test. You must alert your school’s main office and do not send your child to school. If the symptoms occur during the school day, your child will be immediately sent to the office and you will be contacted to pick your child up from school.</p> <p>My child had COVID-19-like symptoms, but not COVID-19. When can he/she return to school? If your child does not have COVID-19, but has another illness, you must keep your child home until he/she is fever and symptom free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication. A negative COVID-19 test or doctor’s note will not be required for return.</p>		

Infection Procedures continued:

What should I do if my child tests positive for COVID-19? You should immediately contact your doctor for additional instructions. You must contact your school's main office. You must not send your child to school.

When can a student return to school after receiving a positive COVID-19 test? If a student tests positive for COVID-19 or does not seek medical attention, students must isolate and not return to school until they have met [CDC's criteria to discontinue home isolation](#). This includes:

1. At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared;
2. At least 24 hours have passed since the last fever without the use of fever reducing medications and
3. Other symptoms have improved.
4. Any decision to return to school must be cleared by a physician who has evaluated the student and will not rely solely on a negative test.

What should I do if a member of my household (who is not my child) tests positive for COVID-19? You must immediately contact your school's main office. Your school will ask that you keep your child home for at least 14 days. If your family member recovers from COVID-19 (through meeting the criteria in the previous question) AND your child shows no COVID-19 symptoms for the 14-day period, your school may allow your child to return.

What happens if my child's teacher tests positive for COVID-19? Should any employee have COVID-19 symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19, we will follow the same protocols used for students (see above). If your child's teacher becomes sick and is unable to work, your school will provide a substitute teacher.

What happens if another student in my child's class tests positive for COVID-19? Your school will make all parents aware that a student has tested positive for COVID-19. All students in the class(es) will be monitored closely for COVID-19 symptoms. If more than one student tests positive for COVID-19, it is likely that the entire class(es) will be isolated (sent home) for at least 14 days. Students will be allowed to complete work at home while the cohort is away from school.

Could my child's school building be closed down due to COVID-19 this year? We will do our best to ensure a safe and healthy environment in the coming year. However, if numerous cases appear in a single school, resulting in the isolation of multiple classes/cohorts, we may need to close the school building and transition all students to Non-Traditional Instruction for a time (in consultation with NKY Health Dept.). Parents will be updated regularly should that need arise.