

OREGON SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

Communicable Disease Management Plan

Section: Operations
OAR: 581-022-2220
Subject: Communicable Disease
Approved: Director-Oregon School for the Deaf
Date: 8/31/2023

Excerpts taken and modified from [ODE's Communicable Disease Guidance](#):

Communicable disease prevention is of paramount importance to support in-person learning, support regular school attendance and to maintain the health of the school community. Communicable disease prevention, response and recovery efforts in school settings promote health and prevent disease among students, staff, and surrounding communities.

School health is a shared responsibility. At Oregon School for the Deaf, our Nursing Supervisor Christina Matthews (RN) and our Maintenance Supervisor Brian Marshall, are individuals trained in the health and safety fields, well-versed in strategies and protocol to ensure the health and wellbeing of our students and staff. We know that as a statewide school, we have a larger measure of precautions to engage in since our student body (K-21) meet in Salem, Oregon and then return home weekly to a variety of areas in this state, which is a unique situation in public education with far reaching consequences of spreading illness.

As such, at OSD we mitigate those risks with ways we can work on, together as a team:

Health Education - We use developmentally appropriate curriculum that addresses the prevention of communicable

diseases including teaching effective hand hygiene, providing parents with information on recognizing signs and symptoms of communicable illness and when to keep ill children home, teaching appropriate sexuality education to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted infections and encouraging age-appropriate hygiene for all levels.

Physical Education - We have K-12 programs that ensure communicable disease prevention in all physical education and sport areas. For example, we have appropriate facilities to shower after sports or water activities. We provide proper cleaning and hand-washing equipment at all events, and we provide staff training regarding safe practices periodically. All of our staff are required to complete yearly training in Safe Schools that remind us of communicable disease prevention.

Health Services - At OSD we are fortunate to have a nursing staff on duty during all student contact time. They learn basic ASL to communicate directly with our staff and students and they are trained to assess, coordinate and report to local public health authorities. They provide a warm and inviting Student Health Services with private areas to care for students until parents can come to the school, should any student become ill while on campus. They educate not only our staff, but our students as well through billboards, email reminders and small group workshops. They coordinate dental, vision, and health screening on a yearly basis. They are in constant communication with our students' families, always fielding questions about health and safety.

Nutrition Services - At OSD, we know that healthy students require balanced and nutritious diets to strengthen the immune system to fight illness. Safety measures are followed to ensure that all food, food areas, and utensils are prepared and cleaned in accordance with public health guidelines to

prevent outbreaks of foodborne illness. Our coffee shop, Jungle Java, also follows these guidelines with all the students who handle the drinks, obtaining their Food Handler's Permit.

School Counseling and Psychological Services - We are fortunate to have on staff 2 school counselors and 1 school psychologist who work collaboratively with our health services personnel to minimize fear and confusion for students and staff that often occur with communicable disease incidents or outbreaks. They communicate fluently in ASL and can address emergencies quickly and efficiently, and when information is made available, they share accurate information as permitted by confidentiality policies.

Health Promotion for Staff - We encourage a healthy lifestyle that reduces communicable disease risks for staff. For example, we offer opportunities inhouse to complete up-to-date immunizations, promote wearing a face covering when appropriate, practice and model effective hand washing, and offer training in communicable disease recognition and prevention through our Student Health Services. We have a Wellness Committee to promote healthy offerings in our cafeteria. We also have an active Safety Committee, chaired by our Maintenance Supervisor Brian Marshall, that meets monthly to discuss concerns any of our staff members may have regarding health and safety.

PREVENTION

School-Wide Efforts - As outlined above, we have a prevention-oriented health services program at our school. It is appropriately supervised and adequately equipped to meet the needs of our students and staff. We have space to isolate an ill student or staff member from the rest of the school population. Prevention-oriented health services include many

types of health promotion, and reducing the spread of communicable disease is an important part of these services.

We implement a layered mitigation approach, to prevent illness and keep students in school, learning with teachers and staff as much as possible. When we do have a high illness rate that results in a large number of students and staff being absent from school, we lean into the protection offered by our safety protocols.

Germs (disease-causing organisms including bacteria and viruses) can be transmitted directly from person to person, or via contaminated surfaces, water, or food. To reduce the spread of disease, the following processes and protocols are followed by staff at OSD:

- Surfaces or objects commonly touched by students or staff (such as doorknobs, desktops, toys, exercise mats) are cleaned at least daily.
- Transmission of respiratory pathogens are reduced by the recommended or required use of face coverings indoors, and in crowded outdoor settings if recommended by our nurses.
- Surfaces or objects soiled with body fluids (such as blood, phlegm, vomit, urine) are cleaned as soon as possible. After the fluid is removed, the surface or object is disinfected, using gloves and other precautions to avoid contact.
- We ensure effective ventilation and improve indoor air quality by increasing the amount of fresh outside air that is introduced into the system, exhausting air from indoors to the outdoors, and cleaning the air that is recirculating indoors with effective filtration methods (e.g., HEPA filters). Each classroom and office has an air filtration system. Maintenance changes those filters periodically.
- We provide age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education, including hygiene and appropriate barrier methods

to reduce the spread of disease. OHA/ODE CD Guidance – Updated 5/2023 Page 7 of 35

- We verify required immunizations, and we provide related information in a method that families can understand.
- We have protocols in place for identifying and responding to signs of illness, including space to isolate an ill student or staff member away from the rest of the school population. [OAR 581-022-2220]

Special protocols may be necessary related to specific illnesses or disease outbreaks. We consult with the Nursing Supervisor who in turn consults with the local health authority.

Individual Behaviors

OSD promotes health by making it easy for staff and students to clean their hands throughout the day and cover coughs and sneezes. Our Nurse communicates clearly to staff and students that individual actions help protect everyone in the community from illness, or death.

All students and staff are educated to maintain good hygiene and practice ways to reduce the spread of disease. Important prevention measures we encourage include wearing a face covering, respiratory etiquette, handwashing, and avoiding public settings when ill. In addition, all staff and students follow Standard Precautions to reduce body fluid exposure, and report to the school nurse or school administrator any body-fluid contacts with broken skin, mucous membranes in the nose, mouth or eyes, or through puncture wounds - such as human bites and needle-stick injuries.

Hand hygiene is important. Frequent and thorough hand washing is a critical way to prevent the spread of many communicable diseases. When done correctly, hand washing

will help students, school staff and visitors avoid spreading and receiving germs. When soap and water are not available, hand sanitizer can be used to reduce the spread of germs. The soap and rubbing action of handwashing helps dislodge and remove germs. Hand sanitizers kill some germs but do not effectively remove particles, such as dirt or body fluids. Therefore, visibly dirty hands should always be washed with soap and water. Additionally, some bacteria and viruses are not killed by hand sanitizers.

For greatest protection, hands should be washed with soap and water when possible. Wearing a face covering is an effective way to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses. Students and staff may choose to wear a face covering for many different reasons, and those decisions are always supported. Individuals may choose to mask if they are feeling sick, if they are at increased risk for severe illness or live with someone who is, or when wearing a mask makes them feel more comfortable. Cough, fever and other symptoms caused by respiratory viruses are important causes of student and staff absence in schools—wearing a face covering helps keep students in school where they learn best.

EXCLUSION

Guidelines OSD Follows -

Exclusion is the process of restricting individuals' attendance at school during a period when they are most likely to be contagious with a communicable disease. Appropriate prevention measures should be prioritized to reduce the need for school exclusions. Students and staff must be excluded while in communicable stages of a restrictable disease.

We follow guidance for school exclusion based on SYMPTOMS in the following Symptom-Based Exclusion Guidelines. School nurse assessment is conducted for symptom-based exclusion,

especially when symptoms may relate to underlying medical conditions. Students and staff must be excluded from the school setting if they are DIAGNOSED with a school-restrictable disease, until permitted to return per local public health guidance. Other illnesses warrant exclusion until they are no longer contagious. [OAR 333-019-0010]

In accordance with OAR 333-019-0010, the school administrator must also exclude susceptible students and school staff if they are EXPOSED to measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, pertussis, hepatitis A or hepatitis B. The local public health authority (LPHA) can assist with guidance in individual cases and may waive the requirement for restriction.

OSD personnel considering a student exclusion will also consider the following:

- School staff may not determine a diagnosis or prescribe treatment unless they are licensed health care providers acting within their scope.
- The school administrator is required to enforce exclusion per Oregon law. [OAR 333- 019-0010]
- Collaboration with the registered nurse practicing in the school setting is recommended and may be legally required when communicable disease concerns arise for students with underlying medical conditions. “A registered nurse or school nurse¹ is responsible for coordinating the school nursing services provided to an individual student.” [ORS 336.201]
- The registered nurse practicing in the school setting or the LPHA should be consulted regarding notifying parents/guardians about health concerns, including risks and control measures.
- Specialized Clinical Procedures guidance should be utilized to reduce spread of respiratory diseases while maintaining services for students with special healthcare needs.
- Changes to routine guidance may be warranted during times

of increased concern about a specific communicable disease, such as during a local disease outbreak.

Symptom-Based Exclusion Guidelines - Students and staff will be excluded from the school setting if they are in the communicable stages of a school-restrictable disease. Symptoms which commonly indicate a communicable disease are listed below.

Students and staff should be excluded from the school setting if they exhibit:

1. FEVER: a measured temperature equal to or greater than 100.4°F orally.

- MAY RETURN AFTER fever-free for 24 hours without taking fever-reducing medicine.

2. COUGH: persistent cough that is not yet diagnosed and cleared by a licensed healthcare provider OR any acute (non-chronic) cough illness that is frequent or severe enough to interfere with participation in usual school activities.

- MAY RETURN AFTER symptoms improving for 24 hours (no cough or cough well-controlled.)

3. DIFFICULTY BREATHING OR SHORTNESS OF BREATH not explained by situation such as exercise: feeling unable to catch their breath, gasping for air, breathing too fast or too shallowly, breathing with extra effort such as using muscles of the stomach, chest, or neck.

- MAY RETURN AFTER symptoms improve for 24 hours.
- This symptom is likely to require immediate medical attention

4. HEADACHE WITH STIFF NECK AND FEVER.

- MAY RETURN AFTER fever-free for 24 hours without taking fever-reducing medicine AND symptoms resolve.
- This combination of symptoms may indicate a serious

condition. We advise the student's guardian to seek medical attention.

5. DIARRHEA: three or more watery or loose stools in 24 hours OR sudden onset of loose stools OR student unable to control bowel function when previously able.

- MAY RETURN AFTER 48 hours after diarrhea resolves OR after seen and cleared by a licensed healthcare provider or LPHA for specific diarrheal diagnoses.

6. VOMITING: at least 1 episode that is unexplained.

- MAY RETURN AFTER 48 hours after the last episode of vomiting OR after seen and cleared by a licensed healthcare provider.

7. SKIN RASH OR SORES: new rash not previously diagnosed by a health care provider OR rash increasing in size OR new unexplained sores or wounds OR draining rash, sores, or wounds which cannot be completely covered with a bandage and clothing.

- MAY RETURN AFTER rash is resolved OR until draining rash, sores or wounds are dry or can be completely covered OR after seen and cleared by a licensed healthcare provider.

8. EYE REDNESS AND DRAINAGE: unexplained redness of one or both eyes AND colored drainage from the eyes OR eye irritation accompanied by vision changes OR symptoms such as eye irritation, pain, redness, swelling or excessive tear production that prevent active participation in usual school activities.

- MAY RETURN AFTER symptoms resolve OR after seen and cleared by a licensed healthcare provider.

- Eye redness alone, without colored drainage, may be considered for attendance per CDC guidelines and school nurse assessment.

9. JAUNDICE: yellowing of the eyes or skin that is new or

uncharacteristic.

- MAY RETURN AFTER seen and cleared by a licensed healthcare provider.

10. BEHAVIOR CHANGE: may include uncharacteristic lethargy, decreased alertness, confusion, or a behavior change that prevents active participation in usual school activities.

- MAY RETURN AFTER symptoms resolve; return to normal behavior OR after seen and cleared by a licensed healthcare provider.

- These symptoms may indicate a serious condition. We advise the student's guardian to seek medical attention.

11. MAJOR HEALTH EVENT or STUDENT REQUIRING MORE CARE THAN SCHOOL STAFF CAN SAFELY PROVIDE. May include an illness lasting more than two weeks, emergency room treatment or hospital stay, a surgical procedure with potential to affect active participation in school activities, loss of a caregiver or family member, or a new or changed health condition for which school staff is not adequately informed, trained, or licensed to provide care.

- MAY RETURN AFTER health and safety are addressed.
- Written instructions from a licensed healthcare provider are likely to be required.

We will comply with state and federal regulations such as the Americans with Disabilities Act ensuring free and appropriate public education (FAPE). Our school staff will follow the appropriate process to address reasonable accommodations and school health service provision in accordance with applicable laws.

Please refer to [ODE's Communicable Disease Guidance](#) for further disease specific guidelines found on pages 14-35.

For questions or comments regarding this document, please contact:

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PROTOCOL ALIGNS TO THE FOLLOWING OSD AND ODE POLICY

POLICY EB-SAFETY PROGRAM

- COMMUNICABLE DISEASE MANAGEMENT PLAN PER OAR 581-022-0220.
- SCHOOL-LEVEL COVID-19 MANAGEMENT PLANS (OPERATIONAL PLAN PER OAR 581-022-0107 AND SAFE RETURN TO IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION AND CONTINUITY OF SERVICES PLAN PER ODE ESSER III)
- OREGON OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH RULES PER OR-OSHA (E.G. EXPOSURE CONTROL PLAN, COVID-19 WORKPLACE RISK, AND COVID-19 WORKPLACE REQUIREMENTS FOR EMPLOYER-PROVIDED LABOR HOUSING, ETC.)

STAKEHOLDERS

Oregon School for the Deaf Staff
Oregon School for the Deaf Students
Local and Statewide Communities