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DPHSS Guidance Memorandum 2021-02

RE: Minimum Requirements for In-Class Operations of K-12 Schools and Institutions of Higher Education

The purpose of this document is to establish a process by which K-12 Schools (Schools) and Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) are required and/or recommended to operate upon such time Schools and IHEs are authorized for in-person classes. The authorization for in-class operations of Schools and IHEs is contingent upon *I Maga'hagan Guahan* Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero's promulgation of an Executive Order authorizing such activity.

Outlined below are the minimum requirements for in-class operations of K-12 Schools and IHEs.

A. General Requirements and Restrictions

1. Schools and IHEs may operate at the occupancy designated on the Executive Order in effect at the time of operation and any Executive Orders further modifying such occupancy. A minimum distance of 6 feet of social distancing shall be maintained between occupants of the facility.
2. Schools and IHEs must post signs at the entrance of the main office(s), and around the campus, advising students, employees and visitors regarding measures to limit the spread of COVID-19, including:
 - a. Proper washing of hands;
 - b. Proper wearing of face covering;
 - c. Maintaining a minimum of 6 feet social distancing between others; and
 - d. Staying home if sick.
3. All Schools and IHEs are required to comply with DPHSS' *Rules and Regulations for School Building Sanitation* that mitigate COVID-19 transmission:
 - a. Housekeeping Requirements
 - General cleanliness and sanitary conditions must be maintained throughout the campus, which must include disinfection of frequently touched surfaces.
 - b. Handwashing Unit
 - Soap and disposable sanitary paper towel or hand dryer/blower must always be provided at or near each handwashing unit.

- c. Restrooms
 - Student-toilet and student-urinal ratios and 6 feet social distancing must be maintained, which may require monitoring to ensure compliance.
 - Toilet ratio:
 - Elementary School
 - 1 for each 35 females
 - 1 for each 59 males
 - Secondary School and IHE
 - 1 for each 45 females
 - 1 for each 50 males
 - Urinal ratio:
 - 1 for each 30 males
- 4. All students, employees, and visitors of Schools and IHEs must wear face masks at all times, and such face masks must cover both the nose and mouth at the same time.
 - a. Face masks with exhalation valve are prohibited as it does not stop virus droplets from escaping which may infect others.
 - b. Face shields may be used in addition to a face mask but it cannot be worn in lieu of a face mask.
 - c. School staff are to provide a face mask to any student who does not have one or who arrives to the School or IHE without one.
 - d. Schools and IHEs will adopt U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines for face coverings for certain population and situations, including those with certain medical conditions, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or asthma (e.g., “Who Should Not Wear a Cloth Face Covering” and “Feasibility and Adaptations”). The wearing of face shield may be one alternative for these individuals, as provided in applicable CDC guidelines.

B. Hygiene and Daily Practices at Schools and IHEs

- 1. During the opening days of every School, and the start of every semester at IHEs, all students and employees must be informed of COVID-19 mitigation measures.
- 2. The manner in which such information is provided is at the discretion of each School and IHE and must include:
 - a. Proper wearing of face mask (face covering);
 - b. Proper hand washing technique;
 - c. Social distancing (maintaining 6 feet distance);
 - d. Avoid touching eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands;
 - e. Proper sneezing technique;
 - f. COVID-19 symptoms; and
 - g. What to do if feeling sick. Schools and IHEs must establish written procedures for students and employees who are feeling sick (See Section E. Sick Students and Employees).
- 3. Schools and IHEs must establish written procedures for students and employees who are feeling sick. Students and employees for Schools and IHEs must be released and sent home immediately after obtaining information from Items b and c below. School students must

be isolated, and parents must be notified immediately to pick up their child within one (1) hour.

- a. Surfaces in the classroom or workspace of the student or employee must be cleaned and disinfected.
 - b. Information regarding persons who had contact with the sick student or employee during the time the student or employee had symptoms and two (2) days prior to onset of symptoms must be compiled by Schools and IHEs, and presented to DPHSS upon request.
 - c. Emergency contact numbers for parents/legal guardians of sick students must be compiled by Schools and IHEs and presented to DPHSS upon request.
4. Schools and IHEs must provide hand-sanitizers in each classroom for student and employee use prior to or upon entering the classroom. Additionally, students and employees must be encouraged to possess their own personal hand-sanitizer for their use.
 5. Sharing of office, classroom furniture, equipment, and other items is discouraged. If shared, such items must be disinfected frequently following the cleaning and disinfecting procedures provided in this document.
 6. The use of water fountains and other shared self-service devices at Schools and IHEs is prohibited without an outlined mitigation process limiting COVID-19 transmission.
 7. Schools and IHEs must provide contactless trash bin for use.

C. Cleaning, Disinfection, and Ventilation

All Schools and IHEs must:

1. Intensify detail-cleaning and disinfection of facilities.
2. Surfaces in the classroom or workspace of a sick student or employee must be cleaned and disinfected.
3. Focus on high touch areas (e.g., door handles, tables, counters, desktops, keyboards, toilets, telephones, etc.).
4. Consider using a checklist to ensure thorough cleaning and disinfection of high touch surfaces, equipment, and common areas of the facility.
5. Provide and maintain adequate materials and supplies to help prevent transmission, such as well-stocked handwashing stations.
6. Ensure that toilet facilities and handwashing sinks are thoroughly and frequently cleaned and disinfected.
 - If commercial-grade, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registered household disinfectant is unavailable, a home-made disinfectant may be used by mixing 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) of bleach (5% - 6% hypochlorite concentration) per 1 gallon of water, or 4 teaspoons of bleach per quart of water.

7. Ensure ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible, such as by opening windows and doors or consider using portable high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) fan or similar filtration systems to help enhance air cleaning. Do not open windows and doors if they pose a safety or health risk (e.g., allowing pollens in or exacerbating asthma symptoms) to individuals occupying the facility.
8. Take steps to minimize air from blowing from one person directly to another individual if fans and other mechanical ventilation systems are used.

D. Social Distancing and Other Protective Measures

1. Desks and common-seating spaces, including cafeterias, must be arranged so as to ensure a minimum of 6 feet social distancing (separation) between individuals.
2. Learning stations and activities may be modified so that there are fewer students per group and students can be at least 6 feet apart. When it is difficult to space students at least 6 feet apart, physical barriers, such as sneeze guard, plexiglass, or partition must be used.
3. School desks may face the same direction and not face each other, unless a barrier is in place, or students sit on the same side of tables with a minimum of 6 feet apart from each student if there are no physical barriers between them.
4. Assigned seating must be implemented for students, ideally the same seat in every class, with documentation/record of where they are, to help facilitate contact tracing if needed.
5. All Schools and IHEs must utilize visual aids (e.g., painter's tape, stickers), in high traffic areas such as cafeterias, receptions areas, hallways, and offices to illustrate traffic flow and appropriate spacing to support social distancing
6. Schools and IHEs with staircases, it is recommended that students, employees, and visitors utilize one-way-traffic option, when applicable.
7. Schools and IHEs must install physical barriers, such as plexiglass and partitions, particularly in areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain at least 6 feet apart promoting social distancing. Barriers can be useful at reception and other areas where it is difficult to maintain 6 feet spacing for social distancing.
8. Schools and IHEs must limit or prohibit the mixing of students if possible. For example, students in a class may stay in one classroom throughout the day, while teachers move between classrooms; or classes may use different entrances and exit, if available, or Schools and IHEs may establish an order for each classroom students to enter and leave the building or classroom.
9. There should be a minimum of a 6 foot buffer between teacher or instructor space and the nearest student in the front of classroom.
10. All Schools and IHEs must restrict non-essential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving other groups.

11. Congregations, as defined in the Executive Order or DPHSS Guidance memoranda, for outdoor gatherings, events, and extracurricular activities are prohibited at Schools and IHEs unless otherwise approved by DPHSS.
12. Schools and IHEs must eliminate or restrict access and use of communal spaces, including lounges for teachers, employees, and students.
13. Schools must stagger recesses, breaks, and lunchbreaks.
14. Schools must stagger arrival and dismissal times to minimize over-crowding at drop-off and pick-up locations and times.
15. Schools must divide entry points, rather than funneling students, employees and visitors through the same entry.
16. Schools must provide supervision for students of different ages to ensure adherence to recommended measures, including during breaks between classes.
17. Schools must promote consumption of food in designated areas (i.e., cafeterias or classrooms) in accordance with current authorized occupancy rate for indoor dining.
18. Schools must foster awareness to deter students from gathering and socializing when leaving the school.
19. Students and personnel that utilize school bus services must adhere to the following guidelines:
 - a. Determine and maintain a maximum capacity for students of each vehicle while meeting 6 feet physical distancing mitigation measure.
 - b. Create a plan for seating based on maximum capacity determined above, and develop a plan for bus routes that accommodates the capacity limitations. Mark or block seats that must be left vacant. Sample seating options include:
 - Option 1: Seat one student to a bench on both sides of the bus, skipping every other row.
 - Option 2: Seat one student to a bench, alternating rows on each side to create a zigzag pattern on the bus.
 - c. Instruct students and parents to maintain 6 feet distancing at bus stops to include when students are loading on or unloading from the bus.
 - d. Seat students from the rear of the bus forward to prevent students from walking past each other. To further prevent students from walking past one another, afternoon runs should be boarded based on the order in which students will be dropped off. (Students who get off first should board last and sit in the front of the bus.)
 - e. Students and employees should wear face masks (face coverings) at bus stops and on while on buses.
 - f. Face masks must be worn at all times while on the bus, unless exempted from CDC guidance for use of face masks.
 - g. Face masks and hand sanitizers must be available on the buses.

Some of the above measures may result in the need to increase the number of school buses or trips, or a need for parents or legal guardians to choose the option of dropping off or picking up their child(ren).

E. Sick Students and Employees

1. If a student or employee calls in sick, the School or IHE must advise the student, parent or legal guardian, or the employee to:
 - a. Stay home;
 - b. Not leave the house, except to get medical care;
 - c. Not visit public areas;
 - d. Monitor for symptoms including fever, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, body aches, headaches, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion, nausea, and diarrhea; and
 - e. Look for emergency warning signs for COVID-19 and seek emergency medical care immediately or call "911," including:
 - Trouble-breathing;
 - Persistent pain or pressure in the chest;
 - New confusion;
 - Inability to wake or stay awake; and/or
 - Bluish lips or face.

2. If a student or employee is identified with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 while on school grounds or during the daily symptom screening or check, the following steps must be taken:
 - a. The employee or student must be assessed and preliminary contact tracing must be performed.
 - b. The employee must be released and sent home immediately. School students must be isolated, and parents or legal guardians must be notified immediately to pick up their child within one (1) hour. Sick students must be isolated until picked-up by parents or legal guardian.
 - c. Information regarding persons who had contact with the sick student or employee during the time the student or employee had symptoms and 2 days prior to onset of symptoms must be compiled by Schools and IHEs, and presented to DPHSS upon request.
 - d. Emergency contact numbers for parents or legal guardians of sick students must be compiled by Schools and IHEs and presented to DPHSS upon request.
 - e. Sick students or employees must be advised to seek medical clinical evaluation and testing, and notify the School or IHE of test result.

3. If a student or employee is diagnosed with a probable or laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19, the following steps must be taken:
 - a. Once a student or employee is notified of a probable or laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19 result, the individual or, in the case of a minor student, their parent or legal guardian, shall inform the School or IHE point of contact immediately and stay home.

- b. The student, parent or legal guardian for those minor students, or employee will be contacted by DPHSS Investigation Unit to conduct case investigation.
 - c. Schools and IHEs must close the identified study area or workspace of the COVID-19 positive student or employee for as long as possible, ideally, at least 24 hours before the area is cleaned and disinfected.
 - d. Schools and IHEs must follow applicable DPHSS Guidance Memoranda and initiate the gathering of important information relative to the COVID-19 positive student or employee, such as a list of possible close contacts by name and location. Schools and IHEs must utilize trained personnel to gather and present such information to DPHSS, upon request.
 - e. All activities and information collected by a School and IHE shall be limited to the school setting and be consistent with applicable federal, state, local, and territorial privacy and health, medical, and workplace laws and regulations.
 - f. Students or employees who are identified to be close contacts by DPHSS case investigators will be directed for COVID-19 testing as appropriate and should notify the School or IHE of test result.
 - g. Students or employees who are not identified as close contacts through case investigation may return to school or work.
 - h. Schools and IHEs shall not disclose the name of the student or employee who tested positive to other students or employees unless permission has been given in writing by the affected student or student's parent or legal guardian, or employee.
 - i. Employees will be placed on leave according to the School or IHE's leave policy, if identified as "close contacts" to a COVID-19 positive student or employee.
 - j. All personnel involved in case investigation and contact tracing activities with access to confidential information shall sign a confidentiality statement acknowledging the legal requirements to not disclose COVID-19 information.
4. Asymptomatic Student or Staff. If the student or staff was asymptomatic, someone who did not develop symptoms throughout the course of being COVID-19 positive:
- a. They may return to school or work 10 days after the date of their first positive confirmed COVID-19 test; and
 - b. Isolation and other precautions can be discontinued.
5. Symptomatic Student or Staff. If the student or employee was symptomatic, they may return to school or work:
- a. Ten (10) days after the date of their first positive confirmed COVID-19 test; and
 - b. After 24 hours with no fever (without the use of fever-reducing medications) and other symptoms have improved.
 - c. Requiring a negative COVID-19 test prior to returning to school or work is not recommended. Instead, employers and schools should follow the time and symptom-based approach described above in determining when individuals can return to school or work following COVID-19 diagnosis. If the student or

employee was monitored by DPHSS, they will be issued a written clearance letter by DPHSS once they are cleared to return to school or work.

6. If a student or employee is diagnosed with probable or laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19 through any School or IHE clinic or health center, the student or student's parent/legal guardian, or employee will be informed of their result, DPHSS would be notified and DPHSS will contact them for more information.
7. If a student or employee was in close contact with someone outside the school who tested positive with COVID-19 as identified by DPHSS, such student or employee must inform the School or IHE point of contact once they are identified by DPHSS as a close contact, and they must quarantine for 14 days, during which they are not to report to school or work until cleared by DPHSS.

F. High Risk Activities

High risk activities increase droplet and aerosol transmission because such activities are difficult to perform while wearing a face mask. For such activities, Schools and IHEs must follow current Executive Orders and DPHSS Guidance Memoranda.

G. In-Class Operations Plan

1. A written In-class Operations Plan must be formulated by **each individual School and IHE**.
2. Each School and IHE's written In-Class Operations Plan must include and address:
 - a. Minimum requirements outlined in this DPHSS Guidance Memorandum;
 - b. Measures to protect high-risk students and employees (older persons, persons with underlying medical conditions);
 - c. Procedures for sick students and employees, particularly those with COVID-19 symptoms;
 - d. Procedures for monitoring and enforcing these measures internally, including identification of individuals responsible for such monitoring and enforcement; and
 - e. The role of a full-time or part-time school nurse.
3. Each School and IHE must have a full-time or part-time school nurse to lead and coordinate implementation of the School or IHE's COVID-19 prevention and control measures. This individual, at a minimum, must:
 - a. Be designated as the institution's point-of-contact to respond to DPHSS inquiries and complaints/concerns from students, parents, and employees; and
 - b. Evaluate, and revise as necessary, the institution's implementation of its COVID-19 policy and procedures.
4. Positive results must be reported to DPHSS Medical Operations by calling "311" and selecting Option 1.
5. Each School and IHE must implement an absenteeism process tracking the daily attendance of students and employees absent from school.

Attached is a listing of useful resources:

- Attachment A: Guam K-12 Public and Private School, and IHE Re-opening Plan Template
- Attachment B: High Touch Surface Sanitization/Disinfection Guidance
- Attachment C: List of Other Resources

All In-Class Operating Plans for Schools and IHEs must be emailed to PCOR2Plans@dphss.guam.gov. If plans have previously been submitted, such plans must be resubmitted in accordance with the minimum requirements set forth in this DPHSS Guidance Memorandum.

DPHSS' initial approval of all submitted plans will be conditional until receipt of plans and compliance inspection by Division of Environmental Health (DEH). For additional questions, please contact the DEH at 300-9579; 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday.


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Director

Attachments