

# GISNY COVID-19

## Health and Safety Procedures

In the event a student or staff member reports testing positive for COVID-19 or is exposed to a person who tests positive for COVID-19:

- The student or staff member should immediately notify our school nurse, Mary Beirne, RN at [nurse@gisny.org](mailto:nurse@gisny.org) or (914) 948-6952
- COVID-19 is a reportable disease under New York's Public Health Law. Our school nurse will immediately notify state and local health departments and cooperate with contact tracing efforts, including notification of potential contacts, such as workers or visitors who had close contact with the individual, while maintaining confidentiality required by state and federal laws and regulations.

### Daily Screening Protocol:

All students, staff and visitors are required to complete the **GISNY Health Screening** prior to entering the school. Only those individuals who have a 4/4 score on Questions 2 through 5 will be permitted to enter school.

If any of the questions from 2 through 5 are answered in the affirmative - which results in the screening score being less than 4/4 - the student/staff member should stay at home and contact their health care provider as soon as possible. Additionally, please contact the GISNY school nurse at [nurse@gisny.org](mailto:nurse@gisny.org)

Students and staff will be cleared to return to the in-person learning environment at school subject to the following **NYS Department of Health Return to School Protocol**:

- Documentation from a health care provider following evaluation, **and**
- Negative COVID-19 diagnostic test result, and symptom resolution, **or**
- If COVID-19 positive, see **'Returning to School: Following a COVID-19 Diagnosis or Quarantine'** (p.4).

### Management of Sick Persons at School:

Staff have been provided training on how to identify signs of illness in students and staff and the procedure to send symptomatic students to the school nurse.

**In the event a person becomes ill with COVID-like symptoms while at school, the following procedure will be followed:**

- The ill/symptomatic person will be accompanied to the designated isolation area in the gym lobby by our school nurse.
- This location was selected to ensure that those individuals who exhibit COVID-like symptoms are appropriately separated from others in a well-ventilated area equipped with a cot and chairs.
- The ill/symptomatic person will be assessed by our school nurse wearing appropriate PPE.
- The student's parent will immediately be notified and will be asked to come to school as soon as possible.

- The student will be under direct supervision of a staff member in appropriate PPE at all times.
- The staff member will be seated on the other side of the glass wall.
- When the student's parent/guardian arrives to pick up their student, they will be given written guidance indicating the need to follow up with their child's pediatrician/HCP.
- Students may return to the in-person learning environment at school subject to the **NYS Department of Health Return to School Protocol:**
  - Documentation from a health care provider following evaluation, **and**
  - Negative COVID-19 diagnostic test result, and symptom resolution, **or**
  - If COVID-19 positive, release from isolation (see 'Returning to School: Following a COVID-19 Diagnosis or Quarantine', p.4)
- Our school nurse will be in daily contact and will guide this process.

**Procedures for Students and Staff from the Affected Individual's Classroom:**

- Areas used by ill persons before they transferred to the isolation area will be closed off and not used before undergoing a thorough cleaning and disinfection per CDC guidelines.
- All remaining room occupants will wash their hands and go to a clean area within the school for the remainder of the day.
- Where possible, custodial staff will wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting the area in accordance with CDC guidance.

**Special Considerations: For Students with a Physician/HCP diagnosis of either Asthma or Migraines/Headaches:**

- **A Student with an Established Physician's Diagnosis of Asthma:**
  - Families are requested to follow up with their child's pulmonologist to ensure optimum baseline asthma control.
  - Parents are requested to submit their child's treatment plan by the first day of school for the 2020-2021 school year.
  - A student with asthma symptoms (which may include a cough) will be evaluated by our school nurse.
  - The RN's assessment will include a respiratory assessment, including lung auscultation to check for wheezing, a temperature check, an oxygen saturation check, as well as an assessment for the presence of absence of other COVID-19 symptoms.
  - Any student with atypical findings (different from the child's baseline, or not noted in the physician/HCP treatment plan) will be isolated and the parent will be informed of the need to pick up their child and follow up with the student's physician/HCP.
  - Students may return to the in-person learning environment at school subject to the NYS Department of Health Return to School Protocol outlined above.
- **A student with an established diagnosis of Migraine/Headaches:**
  - Families are requested to follow up with their child's neurologist to ensure optimum baseline headache/migraine control.
  - The neurologist's treatment plan should identify the child's aura symptoms as well as their migraine triggers and should be submitted by the first day of school.

- The same assessment process as outlined for asthma above will apply; however, the school nurse will conduct a focused neurological assessment rather than a focused respiratory assessment.
- An infection screening will be also be done, to include a temperature and pulse oximetry check.
- Any child with atypical findings (that is, different from that child’s baseline, or not noted in the physician/HCP treatment plan) will be isolated and their parent will be informed of the need to pick up their child and follow up with the student’s physician/HCP.
- Students may return to the in-person learning environment at school subject to the NYS Department of Health Return to School Protocol outlined above.
- **Similar procedures will apply to all students with a current physician’s treatment plan for chronic health conditions affecting other body systems.**

### **Our Procedures Following Notification of a Confirmed Case of COVID-19 in our Community:**

**Important Consideration:** Not every person with symptoms will be diagnosed with COVID-19. A diagnosis requires either a positive COVID-19 test and/or a physician/health care provider (HCP)’s diagnosis. However, in order to facilitate rapid case identification, and keep our communities as safe as possible, it is vitally important for us to refer all individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 to their physician/HCP for further management and testing.

#### **Important Definitions:**

- **‘Case’ Definition:** In medical terminology, a case is defined as: “A person having a particular disease, disorder or condition”. A variety of criteria may be used to identify cases – for example, a physician diagnosis or a diagnostic test.
  - A person who fails the daily screening may become a case; however, until either a formal diagnosis or a positive COVID-19 test this individual is not yet a case in the medical sense of the word. He/she is a ‘person under investigation’ (PUI) for COVID-19.
  - Likewise, the same distinction applies to individuals sent home with any of the COVID-19 symptoms. They may indeed become a confirmed case - after a positive test or a physician’s diagnosis - but pending either of the above, they are a PUI.
- **‘Close Contact’ Definition:** while the CDC defines ‘close contact’ as interactions within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes with a COVID-19 case, the NYSDOH defines close contact as someone who was: ‘within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 10 minutes starting from 48 hours before illness onset until the time the person was isolated’. We will follow the NYSDOH definition in our procedures.
- **Isolation:** A case will be instructed to **isolate** at home by their physician/HCP, and/or when they receive a positive test result. Isolation guidance will be provided by the WCDOH.
- **Quarantine:** Persons who had close contact with a case will be advised to **quarantine** at home and self-monitor for symptoms, and to follow CDC guidance should symptoms develop. Quarantine guidance will be provided by the WCDOH.

### **A Confirmed Case of COVID-19 in our Community:**

In the event that the school is notified that a staff member or student has been diagnosed with COVID-19, either as a result of a positive test or a physician/health care provider’s diagnosis, or if a family

member has been diagnosed with or presumed to have COVID-19 and is being isolated, the following procedures will be followed:

- **Cases:** School staff and students diagnosed or positive for COVID-19 will be instructed to follow appropriate WCDOH and CDC guidance for home isolation.
- **Close Contacts:** School staff and students with known exposure to someone with diagnosed or positive for COVID-19, (a case) will be instructed to self-quarantine at home for 14 days.
- **Household Contacts:** Siblings, family members or other students in the same household of a COVID-19 case will also be instructed to self-quarantine at home for 14 days.
- A case may be released from isolation before a contact finishes quarantine.
- Cases with immunocompromising conditions may be required to isolate for 20 days.

### **Notification of Cases and Exposures to our School Community:**

Mr. Hierath will inform the school community of all COVID-19 cases or exposures within our school community in consultation with the local health department and in accordance with all applicable confidentiality and privacy requirements.

### **Contact Tracing:**

Contact Tracing and informing those with potential exposure is a fundamental public health control strategy to minimize infectious disease spread within a group or population. If we can break a chain of contact, we can limit the spread of infectious disease.

### **Identifying Close Contacts:**

Our GISNY contact tracing team (Mary assisted by Dijana) will assist the Westchester County Department of Health to determine a case's close contacts per the NYSDOH definition of close contact.

Our team will notify potential contacts, including parents of students, staff or visitors who had close contact with the case, while maintaining confidentiality required by state and federal laws and regulations. Our contact tracing team has completed the New York State approved John's Hopkins COVID-19 Contact Tracing course.

- If a student/employee is diagnosed with COVID-19, the school nurse will notify the Westchester County Department of Health as COVID-19 is one of the reportable diseases in New York, if the WCDOH has not already notified the school nurse.
- In the event of a positive case, our school nurse will inform Mr. Hierath immediately.
- Any decision to shut down parts of the school or the entire school will be decided by Mr. Hierath in consultation with the WCDOH.
- All positive cases will be contacted daily by our school nurse who will check in to offer support and answer any questions.

### **Returning to School: Following a COVID-19 Diagnosis or Quarantine:**

The following procedure will be followed for allowing persons to return to school following illness, or diagnosis of a confirmed case of COVID-19, or following quarantine:

Once a student or employee is excluded from the school environment, for a confirmed case of COVID-19, or for quarantine, they may return if they satisfy the recommendations of the CDC, the NYSDOH and their return is coordinated with the WCDOH.

**Currently, those guidelines are:**

**Symptomatic, Untested:** Persons who have not received a test proving or disproving the presence of COVID19, but did experience symptoms may return if the following conditions have been met:

- a. An infected person must isolate for at least 10 days after onset of symptoms, **and**
- b. Their symptoms have improved, **and**
- c. They have had no fever, without the use of medicines for at least 72 hours, **and**
- d. A doctor's note clearing the individual to return to return to work/school, **and**
- e. A release from isolation note from the WCDOH (which will be issued online by the WCDOH when all conditions to end isolation have been met).

**Symptomatic, Tested:** Persons who experienced symptoms and have been tested for COVID-19 may return to school if the following conditions have been met:

- a. An infected person must isolate for at least 10 days after onset of symptoms, **and**
- b. Their symptoms have improved, **and**
- c. They have had no fever, without the use of medicines for at least 72 hours, **and**
- d. A doctor's note clearing the individual to return to return to work/school, **and**
- e. They have received two negative tests in a row, at least 24 hours apart, **and**
- f. A release from isolation note from the WCDOH (which will be issued online by the WCDOH when all conditions to end isolation/quarantine have been met).

**Tested positive with no symptoms:** Persons who have not had symptoms but test positive for COVID19 may return to school if the following conditions have been met:

- a. An infected person must isolate for at least 10 days without symptoms, **and**
- b. They have a negative COVID-19 test, **and**
- c. A doctor's note clearing the individual to return to return to work/school, **and**
- d. A release from isolation note from the WCDOH (which will be issued online by the WCDOH when all conditions to end isolation/quarantine have been met).

**Additional Information for Persons at High Risk:**

Currently, information indicates that older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Those at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are people aged 65 years and older and people who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility. Those at high risk include people of all ages with underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, including:

- Individuals with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
- Individuals with serious heart conditions
- Individuals who are immunocompromised:
  - Many conditions can cause a person to have a weak immune system, including cancer treatment, smoking, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies,

poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune weakening medications.

- Individuals with severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 or higher)
- Individuals with diabetes
- Individuals with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
- Individuals with liver disease

### **Important Information for Families:**

If your child has one of the medical conditions listed above, please discuss your child's return to in-person education with his/her pediatrician or other specialist health care provider. **Please ensure that we have updated treatment orders!** This is an important consideration, especially for students with any of the conditions listed above, as well as for students who suffer from **asthma**, and/or **chronic headaches or migraines**.

### **Important Information for Faculty/Staff:**

Employees identified as high risk - as defined above - and employees who are seeking accommodations under ADA will be required to provide documentation from a health care provider specifying the nature of the illness.

The school will engage in the "interactive process" with the employee and, where possible, to develop "reasonable accommodations" that will support the employee so they can continue to provide the instructional program for students.

Where "reasonable accommodations" are not possible, employees will be informed of leave options available under state and federal laws.

~END~

**Update: September 6, 2020** (Addition of **Daily Screening Protocol** on p. 1, including information on the NYSDOH's Return to School Protocol; Added the NYSDOH 'Close Contact' definition, p.3, edited for clarity).