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To: Humboldt County Educators  
From: Ian Hoffman, MD, MPH  
Date: March 29th, 2021  
Re: Updates regarding distancing, cohorts, quarantine, travel

Recent updates from both CDC and CDPH have changed the landscape for K-12 and early childhood education policy in regards to **distancing protocols, cohorts, quarantine length and travel recommendations**. This memo is to link educators with the newest guidance and to provide/update Humboldt County Public Health's recommendations.

**Classroom distancing updates:**

- **CDPH** updated March 20, 2021 to reflect reopening guidance changes under "Criteria to Reopen for In-Person Instruction" and COVID-19 Safety Plan (CSP) Posting and Submission Requirements for In-person Instruction" and to reflect physical distancing guidance under "Classroom Space."
- **HCPH:** *Maximize space between seating and desks.* Distance teacher and other staff desks at least 6 feet away from student and other staff desks. Maintaining a minimum of 3 feet between student chairs (range 3 feet to 6 feet) is strongly recommended by CDPH and HCPH based on national and international data and guidance to date. Schools implementing physical distancing policies with less than 6 feet between students should focus on high mask adherence—if there are doubts about mask adherence, consider more robust physical distancing practices. Additional mitigation layers, such as use of stable groups and increased ventilation, can also enhance safety. Maintain 6 feet of distancing as much as possible during times when students or staff are not masked (e.g., due to eating or drinking) to minimize transmission.

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/COVID19-K12-Schools-InPerson-Instruction.aspx#>



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**Quarantine update for educational settings:**

- **CDPH:** Quarantine in school settings cannot be shorter than 10 days. Both CDC and CDPH still note that 14 days is safest to prevent spread of infection to others.
- **HCPH:** Based on our local epidemiology and our demonstrated ability to limit transmission with appropriate preventive measures in place, even during surge, HCPH will support quarantine periods of 10-14 days. The shorter quarantine is acceptable assuming contacts have remained asymptomatic and with the exceptions noted below per CDPH guidance. This can be applied in K-12 and early childhood education settings. Testing on day 5-7 of quarantine is recommended but is not required.

**Fully Vaccinated Individuals:** Fully vaccinated people with no COVID-like symptoms do not need to quarantine or be tested following an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19, as their risk of infection is low. Fully vaccinated people who do not quarantine should still monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days following an exposure. If they experience symptoms, they should isolate themselves from others, be clinically evaluated for COVID-19, including SARS-CoV-2 testing, if indicated, and inform their health care provider of their vaccination status at the time of presentation to care.

<https://humboldt.gov/DocumentCenter/View/91570/Mass-Quarantine-Order>

<https://humboldt.gov/DocumentCenter/View/91582/Home-Quarantine-Instructions>

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/COVID-19-Quarantine.aspx>

**Cohort updates:**

- **CDPH guidance** applies to groups of children and youth in controlled, supervised, and indoor environments operated by local educational agencies, non-profits, or other authorized providers, including, but not limited to, public and private schools; licensed and license-exempt child care settings; organized and supervised care environments, i.e., "distance learning hubs"; recreation programs; before and after school programs; youth groups; and day camps. This guidance governs operations in these settings located in counties in Tier 1 / Purple / Widespread under the Blueprint for a Safer Economy, unless sector-specific guidance and directives applicable to that setting expressly authorize them to operate with larger group sizes in Tier 1 / Purple / Widespread. This guidance does not supersede any regulations or directives issued by authorities with independent regulatory authority over these settings.
- **HCPH: This new CDPH guidance removes the cap on group size unless otherwise dictated by licensing or local public health requirements.** For example, if a Child Care is only allowed to have a certain number of participants under their license, that number dictates group size. Industry Guidance regarding child care and day camps still is active. The guidance for these settings still emphasizes small stable groups as a means to decrease transmission. HCPH supports this guidance and is not placing a cap on group size.

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/small-groups-child-youth.aspx>

<https://www.cdss.ca.gov/Portals/9/CCLD/PINs/2020/CCP/PIN-20-22-CCP.pdf>



## Humboldt County Travel Guidance – UPDATE 3/26/21

Although case rates are improving in California and many parts of the country, COVID-19 activity is still high and travel clearly increases your risk of COVID-19 infection. Travel for non-essential purposes is discouraged by CDC, CDPH and Humboldt County Public Health (HCPH) at this time. Travel increases your chance of spreading and getting COVID-19. **CDC recommends that you do not travel at this time. Delay travel and stay home to protect yourself and others from COVID-19. CDPH recommends avoiding all non-essential travel and staying within 120 miles of your place of residence.**

Should travel be necessary, and you are exposed while traveling, you may bring COVID-19 back home to your family and your community. Vaccination is helping to make travel safer but there is significant concern about variants and so, until we know more, it is important to continue to exercise caution in order to minimize the spread of COVID-19 variants. **Currently CDC, CDPH and HCPH have not altered travel guidance for vaccinated persons.** CDC has allowed for gathering with members of one additional household for vaccinated households (if the other household's members are also vaccinated or there are no high risk individuals in that household) but CDC did not extend this to travel. When travelling, you may be more likely to encounter variants of concern. It is best to be cautious and limit exposures.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention currently recommends the following measures for travelers when travel is necessary. Until updated statewide guidance is available from the CDPH, HCPH is endorsing the CDC guidance for essential travel.

As always, it is important to **check with your employer** as workplaces may have different or additional requirements or recommendations.

### Pre-Travel:

- If you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the past 14 days, delay your travel. The same recommendation holds if you have had close contact with people outside your household members in the previous 14 days, such as attending parties, weddings, funerals or visiting crowded spaces such as restaurants, bars, gyms or movie theaters.
- If possible, it is recommended to get tested 1-3 days before travel. You should wait to travel until you receive your result.
- If you are ill, do not travel.

### During Travel:

- Use all preventive measures such as masking, distancing and frequent hand washing/sanitizing during travel.
- Avoid crowds, events and gatherings of people who are not part of your household.

### Post-travel:

- Get tested. It is best to get tested 3-5 days after your return and quarantine for a total of 7 days if your test is negative. Monitor yourself for symptoms.
- If you do not get tested, quarantine for 10 days and monitor for symptoms.
- If your household members did not travel, consider masking and distancing in your home until you complete quarantine.

For the full CDC travel guidance, please visit: [Travel During COVID-19 | CDC](#)

