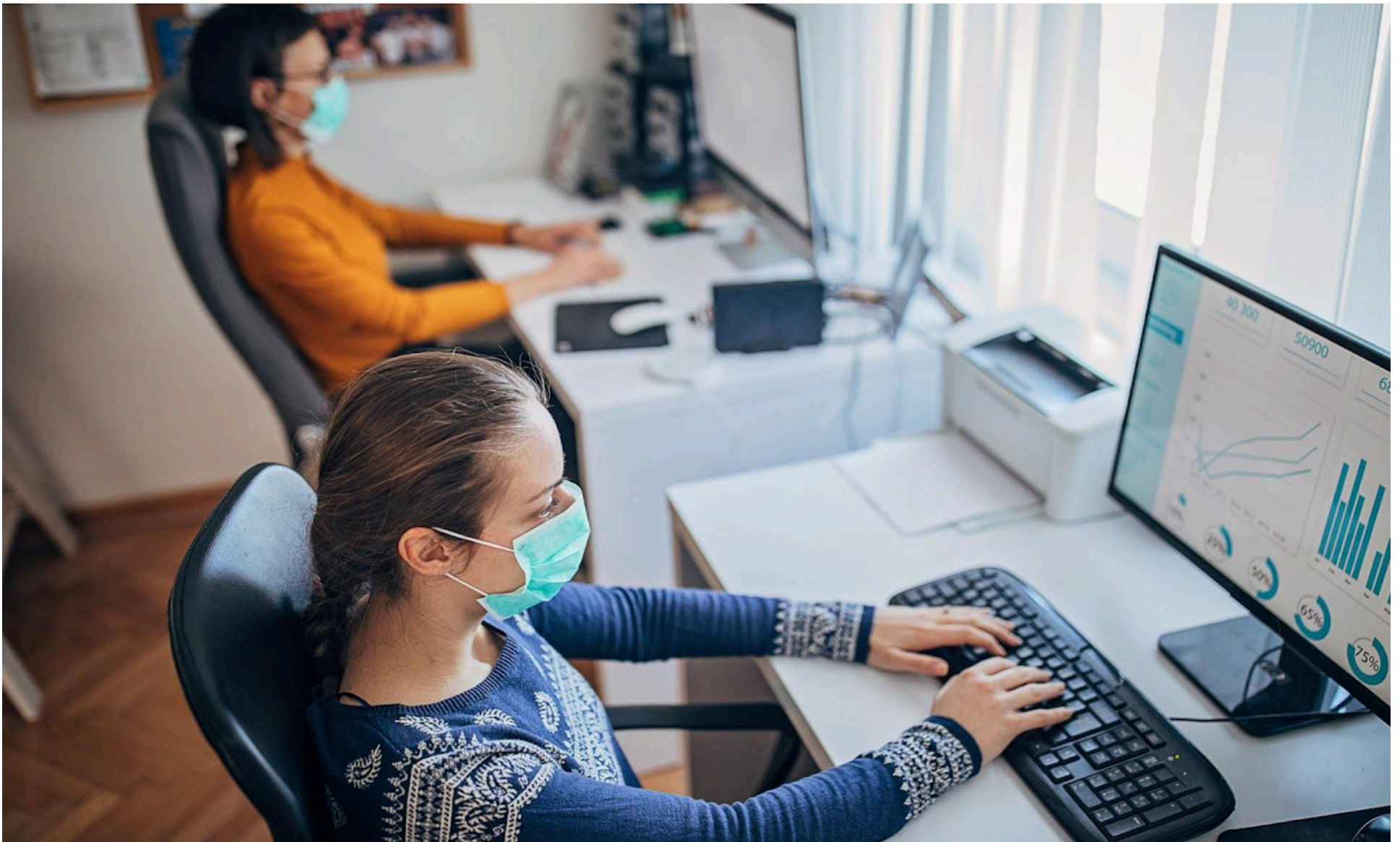




# Back to Class 2020-2021



## Return to Work Guide

Dear Weslaco ISD Family,

Throughout this global pandemic, Weslaco ISD administration and staff have planned protocols to ensure the highest levels of safety for students and staff. It is with the health and welfare of everyone in mind, that a School Safety and Security Committee drafted this Back to Class 2020 Return to Work Guide. We thank the committee members for their care, commitment, and time in developing a guide that is completely aligned to the direction currently provided by health officials, such as the Centers of Disease Control (CDC) and the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

While safety crosses multiple basic operational components in Weslaco ISD, we know that personal commitment to adhere to the expectations and protocols delineated in this guide will definitely help our collective efforts to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus. Please review this guide carefully, and if you have questions, use the newly created email [BackToSchool2020@wisd.us](mailto:BackToSchool2020@wisd.us) to let us know.

This guide is not all-encompassing but designed to provide a general overview of employment-related changes for the 2020-2021 school year. It includes important information from local, state, and federal health and educational authorities about how we can safely reopen schools to staff and students.

Staff and I continue to meet with state and local health authorities and the TEA Commissioner, Mike Morath, to receive updates on the pandemic. As this unprecedented pandemic evolves, we will continue to make decisions using the guidance from these official authorities and update this guide accordingly.

Our top priority remains the health and safety of everyone. Together, we will make it through this pandemic. We wish you the best this school year and always.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Priscilla Canales". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

Dr. Priscilla Canales, Ph.D  
Superintendent of Schools

**Table of Contents**

Safety Precautions.....3

Communication Plan.....3

Employee Attendance.....3-6

Working from home guidelines.....7

Dress Code.....7

What to Expect when Arriving at Work.....7

Meetings.....7

Infection Protocols.....8

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).....8

Supporting Documents.....10

**SAFETY PRECAUTIONS**

**Campus Cleaning**

- Campuses will be cleaned and disinfected throughout the instructional day.
- Classrooms will be equipped for cleaning between transition of students.
- Age appropriate signage for proper hygiene practices will be posted throughout the buildings.
- Hand sanitizing and/or hand washing stations will be available:
  - At every entrance
  - In hallways
  - In all classrooms

**Screening**

- Teachers and staff must self-screen daily for COVID-19 symptoms and for close contact with any individual who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19.
- Symptoms and close contact are defined by Texas Education Agency (TEA) Public Health Guidance, and the Centers for Disease Control (DCD).
- Teachers should take their temperature each day as part of this self-screen.
- Teachers and staff should notify their principal/supervisor if they are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, experience symptoms, or have been in close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed.
- Each employee is required to clock in and out daily using the Web-Clock link. Employees will answer the pre screening questions before they are allowed to clock in for the day.

Face coverings and/or face shields will be mandatory where applicable.

Adherence to social distancing guidelines is expected at all times.



## COMMUNICATION PLAN

Cabinet members will communicate to their respective principals or department supervisors regarding high-risk areas, increases in PPE requirements, closures of certain buildings or areas of buildings, and other updated state, federal and local guidelines as deemed necessary.

## EMPLOYEE ATTENDANCE

Employees are required to work at their assigned District location unless given an alternative assignment by Human Resources and/or Risk Management. Employee start and end times may be adjusted to minimize the number of employees congregating in common areas. Employees needing to report a regular absence should follow normal campus/department procedures to report the absence.

**COVID-19 Related Absences** should be reported to the immediate supervisor as soon as symptoms or exposure occurs. The supervisor will provide guidance for reporting symptoms/exposure. An employee's accrued state and local leave may be used until the proper documentation from the employee is received in the Risk Management department. The District will follow board policy DEC and the Family First Coronavirus Response Act (see information below) for COVID-19 related absences. If it is determined an employee is eligible for leave under the Family First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), an employee's accrued state and local leave may be returned to the employee. In the event an employee tests positive for COVID-19, is seeking medical treatment for symptoms, or is being tested for COVID-19, Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL) may be utilized from the first day the employee was absent from work due to COVID-19. EPSL is available through December 31, 2020 and can only be accessible one time for a maximum of 80 hours. If an employee tests positive or has symptoms that require the employee to be out longer than the allotted hours, the employee will need to apply for Family Medical Leave and use accrued state and local leave.

## COVID-19 Reporting Process

Upon a positive/suspected COVID-19 test result:

- The employee must report the result to their immediate supervisor, and the supervisor will direct the employee to remain at home.
- The employee will be contacted by Risk Management and/or Human Resources to discuss the following:
  - Leave
  - Contact Information
  - Isolation
  - Communications
  - Medical Release
- The Risk Management Department will monitor and determine when the employee may return to work based on the following TEA and CDC Guidelines:
  - In the case of an individual who was diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual may return to school when the following criteria are met:

1. at least one day (24 hours) has passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);
  2. the individual has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath);
  3. at least ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared
  4. medical release provided by the employee's physician or county health authority.
- In the case of an individual who has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and who is not evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19, such individual is assumed to have COVID-19, and the individual may not return to the campus until the individual has completed the same three-step set of criteria listed above.
  - If the individual has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to school before completing the above stay at home period, the individual must either (a) obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis or (b) obtain an acute infection test at an approved testing location (<https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/>) that comes back negative for COVID-19.

## Contact Tracing

Risk Management will work with an employee who was tested positive for COVID-19 to identify individuals who may have had close contact with the positive employee. Employees identified will be contacted by the Risk Management Department.

TEA, using health official guidelines, defines close contact with a lab confirmed individual as follows:

- A. being directly exposed to infectious secretions (e.g., being coughed on while not wearing a mask or face shield);  
or
- B. being within 6 feet for a cumulative duration of 15 minutes, while not wearing a mask or face shield;

if either occurred at any time in the last 14 days at the same time the infected individual was infectious.

Individuals are presumed infectious at least two days prior to symptom onset or, in the case of asymptomatic individuals who are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, two days prior to the confirming lab test.

## Additional COVID-19 Absence Information

- If an employee receives positive COVID-19 test results from their health care provider, the employee should not return to work until 10 days after symptom onset as long as there has been an improvement of symptoms and the employee is fever free for at least 24 hours without fever reducing medication. Employees must be cleared by the Risk Management **before reporting to work**.
- If the employee is not able to obtain a medical certification, the employee should alert the Risk Management Department.
- If an employee refuses to come to work without cause, the employee will be charged accrued state and local leave and may also be subject to administrative disciplinary actions. Weslaco ISD employees are considered essential personnel and therefore must report to work when requested.

## Guidance on Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)

- Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL) - Two weeks (up to 80 hours) of paid sick leave at the employee's regular rate of pay where the employee is unable to work because the employee is quarantined (pursuant to federal, state, or local government order or advice of a healthcare provider), and/or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and seeking a medical diagnosis; or
- Two weeks (up to 80 hours) of paid sick leave at two-thirds the employee's regular rate of pay because the employee is unable to work because of a bona fide need to care for an individual subject to quarantine (pursuant to federal, state, or local government order or advice of a healthcare provider), or to care for a child (under 18 years of age) whose school or childcare provider is closed or unavailable for reasons related to COVID-19, and
- Up to an additional 10 weeks of paid extended family and medical leave at two-thirds the employee's regular rate of pay where an employee, who has been employed for at least 30 calendar days, is unable to work due to a bona fide need for leave to care for a child whose school or childcare provider is closed or unavailable for reasons related to COVID-19.

Please contact the Risk Management and/or the Human Resources Department for any additional information.

## WORKING FROM HOME

In the event an employee or group of employees has been approved by their supervisor and HR to work from home, the employee must review and acknowledge receipt of the WISD Remote Working Agreement that can be found at <https://www.wisd.us/departments/human-resources>

## DRESS CODE

Board Policy DH (Local) states the following regarding employee dress code:

An employee's dress and grooming shall be clean, neat, in a manner appropriate for his or her assignment, and in accordance with any additional standards established by his or her supervisor.

## WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN ARRIVING AT WORK

- Allow for time to self-assess for COVID-19 symptoms prior to your start time.
- Use the self-screening tool to verify you do not have COVID-19 symptoms and have not been in contact with someone in the last 14 days with a confirmed COVID-19 case or under evaluation for COVID-19 symptoms. If symptoms occur, do not enter the building. Contact your supervisor immediately.
- Remain 6 feet apart when feasible.
- Stay in your assigned work area as much as possible.
- Use phone or video conferencing instead of face-to-face conversations when feasible.
- Maintain social distancing in common areas such as teacher's lounges.
- Be prepared to eat your lunch in your assigned work area.
- Schedules will be similar to regular work/school day including conference periods and lunch times.

## MEETINGS

Every effort will be made to minimize face-to-face department/faculty meetings and video conferencing will be encouraged. If face-to-face meetings are necessary, social distancing and masks may be required. A video conferencing alternative will be provided, if requested.

## Infection Protocols

- Isolation areas will be established for students and adults who experience COVID-19 symptoms while at school or work. These isolation rooms must be supervised at all times, always stocked with masks and hand sanitizer, and thoroughly cleaned each day.
- Should a student or employee become ill while at a WISD school or building, administrators will immediately notify school nurse (for students) or department supervisor (for employees) to report exposure, suspected, or confirmed positive COVID-19. The student or staff member will be isolated until the individual has left campus.
- Areas or buildings where the student or employee was present will be closed for cleaning and disinfecting in alignment with Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines.
- Impacted staff, students, and parents will be notified of any closures and/or possible exposures.

## (FAQS) FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

While this is not an exhaustive list of questions, these are the most commonly asked. Please email [BackToSchool2020@wisd.us](mailto:BackToSchool2020@wisd.us) with any additional questions.

**Q. If an employee's family member gets COVID-19 requiring the employee to quarantine, will the employee have to use their accrued leave?**

**A.** The District may require the employee to use accrued leave until the HR/Risk Management department receives appropriate documentation. Documentation may include medical documentation, state/local quarantine orders, and/or completed HR forms. The District will follow Board Policy DEC (LOCAL) and other requirements under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). If it is determined an employee is eligible for leave under the Family First Coronavirus Response Act an employee's accrued leave may be returned to the employee. Every employee's circumstance is different and will be taken into consideration when it comes to accrued leave.



**Q. If an employee is exposed to COVID-19 while at work will the employee have to use their accrued leave?**

**A.** The District may require the employee to use accrued leave until the HR/Risk Management department receives appropriate documentation. Documentation may include medical documentation, state/local quarantine orders, and/or HR forms completed. The District will follow Board Policy DEC local and other requirements under the FFCRA. If it is determined an employee is eligible for leave under the FFCRA an employee's accrued leave may be returned to the employee. Every employee's circumstance is different and will be taken into consideration when it comes to accrued leave. HR will determine if the employee's essential job functions will allow for the employee to temporarily work from home. Any employee approved to work from home will be required to review and acknowledge the WISD Remote Work Agreement.

**Q. Will employees with underlying health conditions be required to physically report to work?**

**A.** Employees will be required to be physically present unless district, state or local officials declare otherwise. Any request to work from home due to underlying health conditions will be considered on a case by case basis by the HR/Risk Management department and employee supervisor. Employees must be able to perform their essential job functions.

**Q. Can a teacher with compromised immune systems require a student to wear more PPE?**

**A.** The District will make reasonable efforts to provide the teacher with appropriate PPE. It is important that employees notify their supervisor if they have a concern.

**Q. Will employees be required to show a negative result for COVID-19 prior to returning to work?**

**A.** If an employee received positive COVID-19 test results from their care provider, the employee should not return to work until 10 days after symptom onset as long as there has been an improvement of symptoms and they were fever free for at least 24 hours without fever reducing medication. A medical release provided by the employee's physician or county health authority should be provided.

Additional Q&A information can be found at <https://www.wisd.us/departments/human-resources>

## Daily COVID-19 Screening

In the last 48 hours, have you had any of the following symptoms unrelated to any other medical conditions that you already have?

- Temperature of 100.4° or above or higher
- Sore throat
- New uncontrolled cough that causes difficulty breathing (or, for students with a chronic allergic/asthmatic cough from baseline)
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Abdominal pain
- New onset of severe headache, especially with a fever
- Close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed case of COVID-19

### YES or NO

If you have answered YES to any of the above, you may not enter any Weslaco ISD facility until all of the following criteria have been met:

- At least 1 days (24 hours) have passed since recovery of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications,
- AND you have improvement in symptoms such as cough and shortness of breath,
- AND at least ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared,
- OR you may provide written clearance from a medical professional in order to return.

To be considered exposed to COVID-19, you need to have prolonged close contact with a person who has the virus. Close contact includes living in the same household, caring for a sick person with the virus, being within 6 feet of a sick person with the virus for at least 15 continuous minutes without the use of a face covering, or being in direct contact with secretions from the sick person.

# Stop the spread of germs that can make you and others sick!



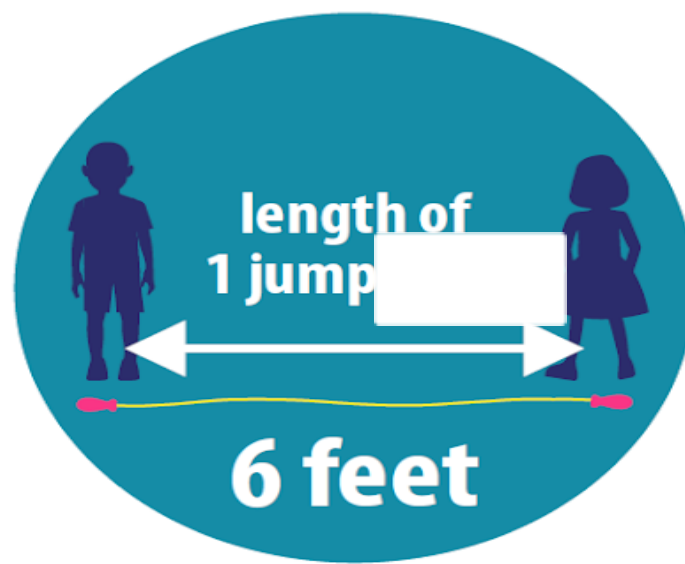
Wash your  
hands often



Wear a cloth  
face cover



Cover your coughs  
and sneezes



Keep **6 feet** of space  
between you and  
your friends



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus)