



# Hughes Springs

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Department of State Health Services (DSHS) has recently advised that they expect to see a rise in the number of COVID cases due to the upcoming holidays. We also expect to see a rise in the number of flu and strep cases, as is normal this time of year.

With that in mind, HSISD will be ramping up some of our mitigation practices. We want to do everything humanly possible to ensure our students, staff and community stay healthy.

**We ask that you make sure your child is properly masked each day before sending them to school – if they are in a grade required to wear masks. Also, please be sure you wash your child’s mask daily. If you cannot wash it daily, it is best to have multiple masks.**

**Please be vigilant about screening your child for symptoms each day. Do not send your child to school if they are sick, have a fever or have recently been in close contact with someone who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19.**

The definition of close contact is:

- a) being directly exposed to infectious secretions (Ex: 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; however, additional factors like masking (i.e., both the infectious individual and the potential close contact have been consistently and properly masked), ventilation, presence of dividers, and case symptomology may affect this determination.

Either (a) or (b) defines close contact if it occurred during the infectious period of the case, defined as two days prior to symptom onset to 10 days after symptom onset. In the case of asymptomatic individuals who are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, the infectious period is defined as two days prior to the confirming lab test and continuing for 10 days following the confirming lab test. Living in the same house with a lab-confirmed individual or caring for a lab-confirmed individual would also constitute close contact.

**Directly exposed, means being in direct contact with the sick individual.**

Example – Jill has COVID. Jane spent the night with Jill the night before she became sick. Jane is considered “close contact”.

Jane has a brother, Jack who is in elementary school. Jack has not been around Jill at all. Jack is NOT “close contact” as he was not in direct contact with Jill.

If you are unsure if your child meets the definition of close contact, please call the school nurse and we will help you in any way possible. The elementary nurse can be reached at 903-639-3838. The junior high/high school nurse can be reached at 903-639-3884.

Also, please understand, anytime we have a positive COVID case, we spend an enormous amount of time investigating it.

We watch any necessary bus videos, cafeteria videos, hallway videos, etc. We question staff, question students, question the sick individual and question the sick child's parent(s) to make determinations of who should be deemed a "close contact". Once we determine who is "close contact" we call those parents and inform them. The last step is making the public notification, which is the letter we post.

We do not take these situations lightly and are doing everything humanly possible to ensure the safety and health of our students and staff while also adhering to DSHS and Texas Education Agency guidelines.

Please review our health guidelines, which were posted in August. They are available here: <https://www.hsisd.net/upload/page/0082/Dist%20Health%20Guidelines%20with%20CDC%20Scenarios%20-%20Aug%2011.pdf>

Make sure you understand the requirements to return to school if you are sick or quarantined, the meaning of close contact and the meaning of "quarantine".

Please remind your child not to share food or drinks, to respect others' personal space and be properly masked.

It is going to take all of us working together to keep our school healthy, which ultimately translates into keeping our community healthy as well.

Thank you in advance!