



COVID-19 Prevention Program and Safety Plan

**Springs Charter Schools
Revised April 1, 2023
Dr. Kathleen Hermsmeyer, Superintendent**



General Considerations

Springs Charter Schools (Springs) is a network of schools in Southern California that includes: River Springs Charter School, Empire Springs Charter School, Citrus Springs Charter School, Pacific Springs Charter School, Harbor Springs Charter School, and Vista Springs Charter School. Springs' student centers are located in San Bernardino, Riverside, Orange, and San Diego counties.

All guidance included in this plan is consistent with [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools](#) (updated March 20, 2023), Center for Disease Control (CDC), and Department of Industrial Relations for the workplace. [Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Resources](#)

All individuals may be a carrier of the COVID-19 virus and are expected to adhere to the safety protocols outlined in this document. Springs recognizes that not all individuals can tolerate some of the restrictions imposed and will provide alternate plans on a case-by-case basis in order for all staff and all students to have equitable access.

COVID-19 is here to stay, but we have learned methods and gained tools to decrease its impact on our health and well-being. In alignment with the state's SMARTER plan, Springs will continue to provide information and resources, including COVID-19 tests, promotion of vaccinations, and personal protective equipment, to support these goals and prevent broad disruption to in-person learning.

All campus and facility administrators will ensure that staff, students, and community members are educated about the virus, are provided information about the school's plan for reducing the risk of the spread of the virus, and will ensure that all safety precaution protocols are implemented.

NOTE: As Local Educational Agencies (LEA) are required to adhere to local county health and safety guidelines, the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services plan will be continuously reviewed and as appropriate, updated when there are changes to local health and safety guidelines.

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AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBLE STAFF

Springs' Administration and Staff understands that COVID-19 continues to be a community health risk and will continue to rely on strategies to mitigate the spread of the virus at our schools and within our communities. The COVID-19 Safety Plan is in alignment with federal, state, and local health authorities guidance.

Springs Charter Schools operates campuses in San Bernardino, Riverside, Orange, and San Diego Counties.

Authorizing Entities and Charter Schools are:

Helendale Elementary School District - Empire Springs Charter School

Riverside County Office of Education - River Springs Charter School

Orange County Department of Education - Citrus Springs Charter School

California Department of Education - Vista Springs Charter School

Julian Elementary School District - Harbor Springs Charter School

San Diego County Office of Education - Pacific Springs Charter School

Local health agencies in counties where Springs Charter Schools' facilities are located include:

San Bernardino Health Department

Riverside Health Department

Orange County Health Department

San Diego County Health Department

Administrative Staff Responsible to implement the COVID-19 Prevention and Safety Plan are:

Dr. Kathleen Hermsmeyer, Superintendent

Amy Podratz, Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Operations

Dr. Vivian Price, Assistant Superintendent, Education

Tanya Rogers, Assistant Superintendent, Business and Finance

Virginia Smith, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources

Debbie Daniel, Assistant Superintendent, Program Improvement & COVID-19 Network Coordinator

California's Safe Schools for All

[California Safe Schools School Guidance Hub](#) has provided key resources and information for schools across the state that support safe, in-person learning in K-12 schools and mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Resources included provide information on the states vaccination location centers and other family and community resources

[Centers for Disease Control - COVID-19 by County](#) is a valuable community resource for tracking saturation levels of community exposure by county. The county positive case numbers are display in colored levels. See sample below:

What Prevention Steps Should You Take Based on Your COVID-19 Community Level?

Low	Medium	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccinesGet tested if you have symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">If you are at high risk for severe illness, talk to your healthcare provider about whether you need to wear a mask and take other precautionsStay up to date with COVID-19 vaccinesGet tested if you have symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Wear a mask indoors in publicStay up to date with COVID-19 vaccinesGet tested if you have symptomsAdditional precautions may be needed for people at high risk for severe illness

People may choose to mask at any time. People with [symptoms, a positive test, or exposure](#) to someone with COVID-19 should wear a mask. Masks are recommended in indoor public transportation settings and may be required in other places by local or state authorities.

Springs Charter Schools will use the information provided by CDC about community levels of COVID-19, as well and state and local health safety guidelines in making school safety decisions.

The goal of providing a safe learning and work environment for all staff and students and in cooperation with local health authority to mitigate the community spread of COVID-19.

MAINTENANCE AND HEALTHY OPERATIONS

The school has established the following staff liaisons to be responsible for responding to staff and student COVID-19 concerns:

- **Employee’s Supervisor:** Employees are required to immediately report any exposure, symptoms, or confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis or test result to their direct supervisor. The supervisor is trained on referral procedures and reporting requirements in addressing health, safety, and personnel guidance. All supervisors are required to report a confirmed COVID-19 case to Springs Health Services.
- **Facilities Administrator:** Each facility has a designated administrator or leadership staff that is responsible to ensure the safety and well-being of all individuals at that facility. Designated leadership staff may be the principal, director, or administrative designee. All facilities administrators are trained in the safety procedures of the school, including understanding and responding to the spread of COVID-19.
- **Springs Health Services:** Springs Health Services provides all medical and reporting requirements of communicable diseases, including COVID-19.
- **COVID-19 Network Administrators:** The COVID-19 Network Administrator is the superintendent or designee assigned to be responsible to ensure that the school community is adhering to the COVID-19 Program Prevention and Safety Plan for Reopening Schools.

Other Maintenance Operations:

- In collaboration with the Human Resources Department, Senior Leadership staff members are responsible to monitor staff absenteeism and maintain a roster of trained substitute staff as needed.
- Under the direction of senior management, employee supervisors and facilities administrators are responsible for the implementation of the COVID-19 Safety Plan, including monitoring symptoms among students and staff and ensuring that people with

symptoms are isolated as soon as possible.

- In collaboration with senior leadership, principals and directors of instructional programs are responsible for creating systems that allow staff and families to self-report symptoms and receive prompt notifications of exposures, exclusions, and closures, while maintaining confidentiality as required by FERPA, HIPAA, and related confidentiality and privacy law.
- School leadership and employee supervisors will ensure that staff and students who are at higher risk for severe illness or who cannot safely distance from household contacts at higher risk, will be provided reasonable accommodation.

COVID-19 VACCINATIONS

Vaccinations prevent illness by working with the body's natural defenses to help safely develop immunity to disease. Not only do vaccinations provide individual-level protection, but high vaccination coverage reduces the burden of disease in schools and communities and may help protect individuals who are not vaccinated or those who may not develop a strong immune response from vaccination.

Springs Charter Schools will:

- Promote the recommendation that all eligible individuals get vaccinated against COVID-19 and remain up-to-date to protect oneself and reduce transmission of the virus.
- Encourage parents to submit their students vaccination records to the Student Records department or campus office staff to be included in the student's cume file.

OPTIMIZING INDOOR AIR QUALITY

Effective ventilation and filtration can curb the spread of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. It may also protect students and staff from exposure to wildfire smoke and other airborne allergens and pollutants.

Springs Charter Schools will:

- Ensure custodians and campus administration follow [CDPH recommendations to improve indoor air quality](#) to mitigate against COVID-19 in K–12 schools.
- To the degree possible, maximize outdoor activities and learning for students and staff.
- When planning large events and to the degree possible, utilize outdoor venues for large events unless otherwise prohibited by local health authority.

DIAGNOSTIC AND SCREENING TESTING

General Testing Information

Testing remains a key mitigation layer to detect and curb transmission of COVID-19. Schools are encouraged to ensure access to COVID-19 testing for students and staff, particularly for vulnerable communities. Schools should review support and resources offered by the [California COVID-19 Testing Task Force](#), as well as those available through healthcare insurers, local, and federal sources.

CDPH recommends that antigen tests be considered the primary option for detecting COVID-19 in schools, compared to PCR tests. For more information, see the [Preliminary Testing Framework for K-12 Schools](#).

Springs Charter Schools will:

- Utilize over the counter (OTC) antigen tests as the primary option for detecting COVID-19 for students and staff.
- Provide test kits to all Springs community members as supplies are made available.
- Encourage all staff and students to test after returning from vacation, school breaks, or travel prior to returning to campus for in-person instruction.

COVID-19 Positive Case: Staff and Student Guidance

Positive COVID-19 Case

All staff and students, regardless of vaccination status, who is diagnosed with or tests positive for COVID-19 will be required to be excluded from school and/or workplace

- ***Immediately Isolate*** from others (at work, at home, and in the community)
- ***Staff are required to contact their supervisor*** with information and to discuss work assignments, absences, etc. [POSITIVE CASE REPORTING LINK](#)
- ***Parents are required to contact their student's teacher or campus staff*** to report the positive case and received guidance on absences and continued learning through virtual instruction.
- ***Staff report their positive case to Springs Health Services.***
- ***Staff and parents should contact their doctor*** or other medical personnel for guidance on treatment.

Return to School / Work Guidance:

Requirements ***for all staff members***, regardless of vaccination status, previous infection, or lack of symptoms.

- Staff and/or student(s) may return to school and/or the workplace after day 5 if symptoms are not present or are mild and improving, and they are fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication).

- If fever is present, isolation should be continued until 24 hours after fever resolves.
- If symptoms, other than fever, are not improving, continue to isolate until symptoms are improving or until after Day 10.
- Per [CDPH masking guidance](#), infected persons should wear a well-fitting mask around others for a total of 10 days, especially in indoor settings.*

**After ending isolation (no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and symptoms are improving), confirmed cases may remove their mask sooner than Day 10 if they have two sequential negative tests at least one day apart. If antigen test results are positive, the person may still be infectious and should continue wearing a mask and wait at least one day before taking another test.*

Close Contact Exposure to COVID-19: Staff and Student Guidance

Diagnostic Screening

Staying home when sick can lower the risk of spreading infectious diseases, including COVID-19, to other people.

Staff and students are expected to self-monitor their own health daily and report symptoms which may pose a risk of the spread of COVID-19 to their supervisor and/or campus supervisor.

Employees and/or students presenting any of the following symptoms should remain at home:

- Temperature of 100.4 degrees F or higher
 - Sore throat
 - Diarrhea or vomiting
 - New onset of severe headache, especially with a fever
 - Nausea
 - Loss of taste or smell
 - Chills
 - Muscle or body aches

Employees and students presenting with any of these symptoms should consider remaining at home unless there is a known history of these symptoms related to other non contagious health conditions, such as allergies or asthma. In these cases the employee/student may return to work/school and continue to monitor symptoms.

- New or persistent cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- New onset of severe headache, without fever
- Fatigue (difficulty getting out of bed)

Exposure to COVID-19

If a staff member or student ***has been identified as a close contact by being exposed to an individual with COVID-19***, the recommended CDPH actions should be followed.

- **Test within three to five days** after their last close contact and if they test positive should follow the procedures as listed (Positive COVID-19 Case).
- Per [CDPH masking guidance](#), close contacts should wear a well-fitting mask around others for a total of 10 days, especially in indoor settings and when near those at higher risk for severe COVID-19 disease.
- Anyone who comes in close contact with a COVID-19 positive person who have themselves been infected within the prior 30 days do not need to be tested unless symptoms develop.
- If symptoms develop, test, and stay home (see earlier section on symptomatic persons), AND
 - If the test result is positive, follow isolation recommendations above.

FACEMASKS

Face coverings, particularly [high-quality and well-fitting masks](#) (PDF), remain highly effective, inexpensive, and dynamic tools to protect oneself and mitigate transmission of COVID-19 and other respiratory pathogens.

Springs Charter Schools will:

- Ensure that no person is prevented from wearing a mask as a condition of participation in an activity or entry into a school, unless the mask poses a safety hazard.
- Provide well fitting face coverings to all adults and students upon request.
- Provide information to all community members about the proper use and benefits of wearing a high-quality and well-fitting mask.
- In the event that the local health authority issues an order to the general public to wear face coverings, Springs Charter School will comply.

HANDWASHING AND RESPIRATORY ETIQUETTE

Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette can prevent the spread of infectious diseases.

Springs Charter Schools will:

- Teach and reinforce proper [handwashing](#) to lower the risk of spreading viruses, including the virus that causes COVID-19.

- Ensure that adequate supplies to support hand hygiene behaviors, including soap, disposable hand towels, tissues, and no-touch trash cans are provided at each campus for student and staff use.
- Hand sanitizers (less than 60% alcohol) are made available, are stored up, away, and out of reach of younger children and are used only with adult supervision for children ages 5 years and younger.
- Teach and reinforce covering [coughs and sneezes](#) to help keep individuals from getting and spreading infectious diseases, including COVID-19.

CLEANING AND MAINTAINING HEALTHY FACILITIES

In general, routine cleaning is enough to sufficiently remove the virus that causes COVID-19 from surfaces.

Springs Charter Schools will:

- Clean all facilities and classrooms on a daily basis
- Provide classrooms and common areas with appropriate cleaning supplies (cleaner, wipes, gloves, no-touch trash containers).
- Encourage staff and students to use refillable water bottles for personal use.
- Provide daily cleaning of drinking fountains for use by students and staff.
- Sanitize facilities and classrooms only when students are not present.

REPORTING CASES AND CONTACT TRACING

Notifying local health authorities of the disease burden in schools can expedite deployment of additional strategies and resources to manage illness and contain transmission and outbreaks. Furthermore, prompt notification to students and families regarding exposure to infectious diseases, including COVID-19, can allow for rapid testing, early treatment, and prevention of further spread.

Springs Charter Schools will:

- Require all staff to report a diagnosis and/or positive test of COVID-19 to the schools Health Services Department at [REPORTING LINK HERE](#) and to their direct supervisor.
- Require families to notify the school if their child has COVID-19
- Utilize county and state reporting processes to comply with local health authorities reporting requirements for infectious diseases including COVID-19.
- Send general notification to the entire school community during times of elevated [community transmission](#) of COVID-19. This communication will alert all to the increased potential of being exposed to COVID-19 due to a rise in cases among school and community members, and remind all to monitor for symptoms and get tested.

COVID-19 OUTBREAKS AND STAFFING

Springs will utilize this guidance and collaboration with local and state authorities to keep disruptions to in-person learning as minimal as possible. In the event of a COVID-19 outbreak or limited staffing availability caused by COVID-19, school administration will work with families to provide continuity of learning. This may include but is not limited to temporary classroom reassignment, study halls, and more on-site learning opportunities. In the event COVID-19 caused limited staffing, school administrators will work and communicate plans with families.

School Closures

Quarantine Orders from County Health Authority

In collaboration with the local health authority, Springs will work to determine if a full or partial quarantine or closure is needed based on positive case reporting. Full or partial closures will be considered as a last resort as keeping students in school and healthy is the priority.

However, if the local health authority orders a school closure, this information will be provided by Springs in conjunction with state/local officials.

Full or Partial Campus Closures (Staffing Shortages)

Depending on the situation, unanticipated staffing shortage may occur due to a variety of reasons. In these cases the campus administrator may determine that one or more classes may have to move temporarily to an alternate instructional delivery model, such as virtual learning, independent study or home study. In these situations school administration will strive to offer on campus options to accommodate families with scheduling conflicts and other logistical concerns.