Quick Reference for Communicable Diseases in Schools (K-12, parochial, etc.)

IMPORTANT NOTES: If your school is located within a county or municipal health department (CMHD) jurisdiction, you should refer to the guidance provided by your local health department: Allegheny, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Erie, Montgomery, Philadelphia, Allentown, Bethlehem, Wilkes-Barre, and York City.

An outbreak of ANY disease is reportable to Pennsylvania Department of Health. Specific outbreak definitions are provided for some diseases; otherwise, please report when there is concern about the presence or spread of a disease, or an increase in absenteeism due to any illness.

Reporting should be made to the Pennsylvania Department of Health (PA DOH) by calling 877-PA-HEALTH or using this survey link: https://arcg.is/1mjf0j2.

Schoolchildren who require toileting assistance should follow the exclusion and readmission criteria for childcare facilities for any gastrointestinal (GI) infection or symptom.

Enteric/Gastrointestinal (GI) Diseases

Disease	Reporting Requirements	Exclusion Guidance	Readmittance Criteria	Case and Outbreak Guidance
Amebiasis	Outbreaks of two or more cases: **Yes**	If symptomatic, refer to Symptom-Based Diseases table. Anyone working or volunteering as a **food handler** or **health care provider** within the school must be excluded from those duties until readmittance criteria are	Refer to Symptom-Based Diseases table. **Excluded food handlers:** Two consecutive negative stools obtained at least 24 hours apart. Stool may not be collected sooner than 48 hours after receiving antiparasitic treatment (§27.153)	**Contact PA DOH PA DOH or local health department to receive guidance (Call 1-877-PA-HEALTH)**

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		met (§27.153 and § 27.155)		
Shiga toxin-producing E. coli (STEC) infection	Outbreaks of two or more cases: **Yes**	If symptomatic, refer to Symptom-Based Diseases table. Anyone working or volunteering as a **food handler** or **healthcare provider** within the school must be excluded from those duties until readmittance criteria are met (§27.153 and § 27.155)	Refer to Symptom-Based Diseases table. **Excluded food handlers:** Two consecutive negative stools obtained at least 24 hours apart. Stool may not be collected sooner than 48 hours after receiving antibacterial treatment (§27.153)	**Contact PA DOH PA DOH or local health department to receive guidance (Call 1-877-PA-HEALTH)**
Shigellosis	Outbreaks of two or more cases: **Yes**	If symptomatic, refer to Symptom-Based Diseases table. Anyone working or volunteering as a **food handler** or **healthcare provider** within the school must be excluded from those duties until readmittance criteria are met (§27.153 and § 27.155)	Refer to Symptom-Based Diseases table. **Excluded food handlers:** Two consecutive negative stools obtained at least 24 hours apart. Stool may not be collected sooner than 48 hours after receiving antibacterial treatment (§27.153)	**Contact PA DOH PA DOH or local health department to receive guidance (Call 1-877-PA-HEALTH)**
Typhoid/Paratyphoid Fever	Outbreaks of two or more cases: **Yes**	If symptomatic, refer to Symptom-Based Diseases table. Anyone working or volunteering as a **food**	Refer to Symptom-Based Diseases table. **Excluded food handlers:** Three consecutive negative stools obtained at least 24	**Contact PA DOH PA DOH or local health department to receive guidance (Call 1-877-PA-HEALTH)**

		handler or **healthcare provider** within the school must be excluded from those duties until readmittance criteria are met (§27.153 and § 27.155)	hours apart. Stool may not be collected sooner than 48 hours after receiving antibacterial treatment, and no earlier than 1 month after illness onset (§27.153)	
Hepatitis A infection	Outbreaks of two or more cases: **Yes**	If symptomatic, refer to Symptom-Based Diseases table. Anyone working or volunteering as a **food handler** or **healthcare provider** within the school must be excluded from those duties until readmittance criteria are met (§27.153 and § 27.155)	Refer to Symptom-Based Diseases table. **Excluded food handlers:** Until 1 week following the onset of jaundice, or 2 weeks following symptom onset or IgM antibody positivity if jaundice is not present (§27.153)	**Contact PA DOH PA DOH or local health department to receive guidance (Call 1-877-PA-HEALTH)**
Norovirus/Rotavirus **Campylobacteriosis** **Cholera** **Cryptosporidiosis** **Cyclosporiasis** **Listeriosis** **Salmonellosis** **Giardiasis** **Yersiniosis** **Other GI infections**	Outbreaks of two or more cases: **Yes**	If symptomatic, refer to Symptom-Based Diseases table.	Refer to Symptom-Based Diseases table.	**Contact PA DOH PA DOH or local health department to receive guidance (Call 1-877-PA-HEALTH)**

Vaccine Preventable Diseases

Link to: School Immunization Information

If above symbol is present: Vaccine is available and is highly encouraged to prevent or mitigate severe disease.

Disease	Reporting	Parent Notification	Exclusion Guidance	Readmittance Criteria	Outbreak Guidance	Vaccine Guidance
Measles	Individual cases: **Yes** (§27.23); § 27.160 A single suspect measles case may prompt an epidemiological investigation. **Report suspect measles cases to your local health department or to PA DOH by calling 1-877-PA-HEALTH.**	Communicate broadly with all parents and staff reminding them of immunization recommendations. Additional notification regarding exposures might be necessary based up Department of Health recommendations	**Exclude from school (student and staff) § 27.71. § 27.160 § 27.72 § 27.75** Inform families of unvaccinated children and unvaccinated staff that they may need to stay home for up to 21 days each time they are near someone who has measles.	Four days from the onset of rash (rash onset is day 0). Exclusion may also be ordered by the Department as specified in § 27.160 (relating to special requirements for measles).	**Contact PA DOH PA DOH or local health department to receive guidance regarding contact management.** *Advise pregnant contacts to notify their health care provider.* In consultation with public health, unvaccinated or under-vaccinated asymptomatic children may be requested to not attend the facility. MEASLES: INFORMATION TO PREVENT SPREAD IN SCHOOL AND CHILD CARE SETTINGS Develop a plan and implement strategies to rapidly identify staff	Measles can be prevented with the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine. People exposed should contact their health care provider to receive MMR vaccine recommendation. Vaccine should be offered to all attendees, staff, and volunteers who are not up to date with age-appropriate vaccination. Measles vaccines are available from many doctor's offices, urgent care centers, local pharmacies, local

					and students susceptible to measles. Check immunization records. Review the immunization status for all children AND staff members/ volunteers. Be watchful for students who may come to school with fever and other signs and symptoms of measles.	health department or the PA DOH.
Mumps 	Individual cases: **Yes** (§27.23) Outbreaks: Yes Definition: A mumps outbreak is defined as 3 or more cases linked by time and place.	Communicate broadly with all parents and staff about mumps occurring among close contacts, an institution, or setting. Communicate broadly with all parents and staff reminding them of immunization recommendations.	Exclude from school **§ 27.71** (student and staff).	PA DOH recommends 5-day exclusion from onset of symptoms.	**Contact PA DOH or local health department to receive guidance regarding contact management.** *Advise pregnant contacts to notify their health care provider.* See Strategies for the Control and Investigation of Mumps Outbreaks Parents should contact their health care provider to review immunizations.	Mumps vaccination can prevent severe sickness. Two doses of the MMR vaccine are the best way to be protected against mumps. A third MMR vaccine dose might be recommended for people previously vaccinated who are part of a population at increased risk for acquiring mumps

						because of an outbreak.
Rubella **(Rubella virus, German Measles)**	Individual cases: **Yes** (§27.23) A single rubella case is a potential outbreak. If multiple clustered cases, temporally or spatially, are suspected, notify the local health department or PA DOH (877-PA-Health) immediately.	Contacts of the case should be informed of their potential exposure to rubella, assessed for susceptibility and advised to monitor symptoms. Communicate broadly with all parents and staff reminding them of immunization recommendations.	Exclude from school **§ 27.71** (student and staff).	Seven days from the onset of rash. **§ 27.71**, a deviation from the current regulation but based on public health studies. During an outbreak, children without evidence of immunity should be immunized or excluded for 21 days after onset of rash of the last case in the outbreak.	**Contact PA DOH or local health department to receive guidance regarding contact management**. *Advise pregnant contacts to notify their health care provider.* Unvaccinated persons who receive MMR vaccine as part of the outbreak control may be immediately readmitted to school provided all persons without documentation of immunity have been excluded. All exposed persons who have been exempted from rubella vaccination should also be excluded from attendance, contact the health department for guidance.	Rubella can be prevented with the MMR vaccine. Children should get 2 doses of MMR vaccine to be protected against rubella. Teens and adults should also be up to date on MMR vaccinations.
Pertussis (Whooping cough)	Individual cases: **Yes** (§27.23)	Contact the health department to receive template	Exclude from school **§ 27.71** (student and staff).	Three weeks from the onset of symptoms	**Contact PA DOH or local health department to**	There are two types of combination

	If multiple clustered cases, temporally or spatially, are suspected, notify the local health department or PA DOH (877-PA-Health) immediately.	letter to share with the school community. Provide education to parents/guardians about pertussis symptoms and request that parents/guardians notify the school if their student is displaying pertussis-like symptoms.		(cough, runny or stuffed nose, low grade fever) or 5 days from institution of appropriate antimicrobial therapy.	**receive guidance regarding contact management.** Promote cough and sneeze etiquette. Review immunization record(s) of students and staff to determine if they are up to date and encourage those not up to date to discuss vaccination with their provider. In consultation with public health, unvaccinated or under-vaccinated asymptomatic children may be requested to not attend the facility. A child would be allowed to return if they receive 5 days of antibiotic prophylaxis. If antibiotic prophylaxis is refused for the child by the parent/guardian, exclusion from school may be longer (up to 21 days after exposure to the most recent case in the facility).	vaccines that protect against whooping cough: **DTaP and Tdap**. Whooping cough vaccines are recommended for people of all ages.

Varicella (chickenpox)	Individual cases: **Yes** (§27.23) A single varicella case is a potential source for an outbreak. An outbreak of varicella is defined as the occurrence of ≥3 varicella cases that are related in place and are epidemiologically linked.	PA DOH strongly recommends using the template letter to share with the school community with there are 3 or more cases/outbreak. Communicate broadly with all parents and staff about varicella occurring among close contacts, an institution, or setting. Communicate broadly with all parents and staff reminding them of immunization recommendations.	Exclude from school § 27.71 (student and staff).	Exclude until all the lesions have crusted. § 27.71	Contact PA DOH or local health department to receive guidance regarding contact management. *Advise pregnant contacts to notify their health care provider.* Contacts without documentation of immunity should be immunized or excluded. Immediate readmission may occur following immunization.	The varicella vaccine prevents almost all cases of severe illness. There are two vaccines available for varicella in the United States. Varivax (VAR) or ProQuad (MMRV-Measles, Mumps, Rubella and Varicella. If a vaccinated person does get chickenpox, called breakthrough chickenpox, the symptoms are usually mild (fewer to no blister and low or no fever).

Symptom-Based Diseases/Unknown Illness

Disease	Reporting Requirements	Parent Notifications	Exclusion Guidance	Readmittance Criteria	Outbreak Guidance
Persistent Vomiting	Suspected outbreaks (unusual spread or increase in absenteeism due to illness): **Yes**	Up to facility's discretion	Exclude from school § 27.72 (student and staff).	When physician/school nurse determined illness to be resolved or noncommunicable § 27.73	**Contact PA DOH or local health department to receive guidance (Call 1-877-PA-HEALTH)**
Persistent Diarrhea	Suspected outbreaks (unusual spread or increase in absenteeism due to illness): **Yes**	Up to facility's discretion	Exclude from school § 27.72 (student and staff).	When physician/school nurse determined illness to be resolved or noncommunicable § 27.73	**Contact PA DOH or local health department to receive guidance (Call 1-877-PA-HEALTH)**
Fever (>= 102 F), OR Fever + Productive Cough, OR Fever + Rash	Suspected Acute Respiratory Illness (ARI) outbreaks (see below): **Yes**	Up to facility's discretion	Exclude from school § 27.72 (student and staff).	When physician/school nurse determined illness to be resolved or noncommunicable § 27.73	**Contact PA DOH or local health department to receive guidance (Call 1-877-PA-HEALTH)**
Acute Respiratory Illness (Influenza, RSV, COVID-19, Rhinovirus, Fifth Disease/Parvovirus)	Outbreak: **Yes** An ARI outbreak is 10% or more absent due to respiratory	Up to facility's discretion	Anyone with respiratory symptoms should stay home (student and staff)	Until fever free without fever reducing meds for 24 hours, AND	Stay home if sick Perform enhanced environmental cleaning of high-touch surfaces

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	symptoms (coughing, fever or chills, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, body aches, headache, sore throat, and runny nose or congestion) Report to local health department or PA DOH (877-PA-Health) if concerned.			symptoms are improving	Don't share eating/drinking utensils • Wash hands frequently • Cover coughs or sneezes • Consider masking if possible Encourage vaccination for students and staff, including influenza, COVID-19, and for some groups, RSV and pneumococcal.
Rash	Report to local health department or PA DOH (877-PA-Health) if concerned.	Up to facility's discretion	If paired with fever or behavioral change, should be excluded from school **§ 27.72** (student and staff).	When physician determined illness to be resolved or noncommunicable	**Contact PA DOH or local health department to receive guidance (Call 1-877-PA-HEALTH).**
Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis)	Individual Cases: No Report to local health department or PA DOH (877-PA-Health) if concerned.	Up to facility's discretion	Exclude from school **§ 27.71.** (student and staff)	Until judged non-infectious (no discharge) by school nurse/physician **§ 27.71.**	**Contact PA DOH or local health department to receive guidance (Call 1-877-PA-HEALTH)**

Other Diseases and Concerns

Disease	Reporting Requirements	Parent Notifications	Exclusion Guidance	Readmittance Criteria	Recommendations
Bed Bugs	Individual Cases: No If concerned or experiencing widespread infestation, report to local health department or PA DOH (877-PA-Health).	The notification should be kept general and should not identify the affected student or staff. Educate staff members and families about bed bugs.	Exclusion from school is not recommended for bed bugs.	Not applicable	Schools should teach staff how to recognize bed bugs. Other prevention includes: • reducing clutter • vacuuming regularly (especially along walls and furniture edges) • sealing cracks and crevices • storing backpacks, coats, and nap items separately • Inspecting new or used furniture • Treating or washing fabric items before use Schools should contact pest management to inspect and determine treatment.

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					Children and staff should freshly launder and manage belongings and personal items. After a bed bug is found, staff should continue inspections for at least 30 days. Monitoring should continue for up to 60 days if treatment was conducted.
Hand Foot and Mouth Disease	Individual Cases: No Suspected outbreaks (unusual spread or increase in absenteeism due to illness): **Yes** Report to local health department or PA DOH (877-PA-Health).	Up to facility's discretion	No exclusion needed unless the child has mouth sores with constant drooling or meets other exclusion criteria (e.g., fever).	When symptoms resolve: - If rash, then once sores crusted / resolved - If fever, then once back to normal temperature	HFMD Fact Sheet
Lice (Head and Body)	Individual Cases: No If concerned or experiencing widespread infestation, report to local health	Up to facility's discretion. The notification should be kept general and should not identify the	Exclude from school **§ 27.71** (student and staff) at the end of the day.	**Head Lice**: The person shall be allowed to return to either the school, child care, or other group setting immediately after first treatment. The person	Prevent spread of lice in your facility by machine washing and drying any shared linens at the facility.

	department or PA DOH (877-PA-Health). Recommendations for Caregivers of Individuals with Head Lice	affected student or staff.		shall be reexamined for infestation by the school nurse, or other health care practitioner, 7 days posttreatment. **§ 27.71.** **Body Lice**: After completion of appropriate treatment. **§ 27.71.**	Vacuum the floors and furniture where person with lice sat/laid. Avoid contact / sharing of clothing, hair accessories or tools, bedding and furniture, and stuffed animals More information here: Head Lice Prevention FAQ Recommendations for Caregivers of Individuals with Head Lice
Mycoplasma Pneumoniae	Individual Cases: **No** Report to local health department or PA DOH (877-PA-Health).	Up to facility's discretion. A template letter is available upon request.	Anyone with respiratory symptoms should stay home (student and staff)	Until fever free without fever reducing meds for 24 hours, AND symptoms are improving.	Stay home if sick Perform enhanced environmental cleaning of high-touch surfaces Don't share eating/drinking utensils Wash hands frequently Cover coughs/sneezes Consider masking, if possible
Strep Throat	Individual Cases: **No** Report to local health department or PA DOH (877-PA-Health).				

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Scabies	Individual Cases: **No** Report to local health department or PA DOH (877-PA-Health).	Exclude from school **§ 27.71** (student and staff). Guidelines to Return to Participation after a Skin Infection	After completion of appropriate treatment **§ 27.71.**	More information here: Skin Infections in Sports
Impetigo	Individual Cases: No Report to local health department or PA DOH (877-PA-Health).	Exclude from school **§ 27.71** (student and staff). Guidelines to Return to Participation after a Skin Infection	Twenty-four hours after the institution of appropriate treatment. **§ 27.71.**	More information here: Skin Infections in Sports
Ring Worm	Individual Cases: No Report to local health department or PA DOH (877-PA-Health).	Exclude from school **§ 27.71** (student and staff). Guidelines to Return to Participation after a Skin Infection	The person shall be allowed to return to school, child care, or other group setting immediately after the first treatment, if body lesions are covered. Neither scalp nor body lesions that are dried need to be covered.**§ 27.71.**	More information here: Skin Infections in Sports.

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