

Report outbreaks of acute respiratory illness (ARI) when 10% of students are absent on a given day

A school or childcare facility is experiencing a reportable ARI outbreak when:

- 10% or more of the student population is absent on a single day due to ARI.
- ARI symptoms can include cough, fever or chills, shortness of breath, fatigue, body aches, headache, sore throat, or runny nose or congestion

Ill individuals do not need to be from the same classroom or have known contact with one another.

Report ARI outbreaks via an online survey or by phone

To report a confirmed or suspected outbreak, schools and childcare providers must:

- Complete the online survey form (use QR code at right)
- **OR** call your local health department* or 1-877-PA-HEALTH

PADOH may follow up to request additional case or absentee information.

Individual cases do not need to be reported

Individual cases of influenza, COVID-19, or respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) do not need to be reported by schools or facilities.

However, schools and childcare providers may **consult with PADOH at any time** if they are concerned about a particular case or trend.

Students and/or staff should stay home until fever-free and symptoms improve

Anyone with ARI should remain home until:

- They are **fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medicine**, and
- Their symptoms have improved overall

Pennsylvania regulations require reporting of ARI outbreaks and unusual absenteeism

[28 Pa. Code § 27.3. Reporting outbreaks and unusual diseases, infections and conditions.](#)

All **outbreaks or unusual clusters of illness** must be reported to the **Pennsylvania Department of Health**. Absenteeism reporting can include general illness, symptom-specific trends, or clusters observed across classrooms or districts.

[28 Pa. Code § 27.21a. Reporting of cases by health care practitioners and health care facilities.](#)

School nurses and childcare providers must report **unusual increases in absenteeism**.

* Facilities located in Allegheny, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Erie, Montgomery, and Philadelphia counties and those in Allentown, Bethlehem, Wilkes-Barre, and York cities should continue to follow the guidance provided by their local health department.

