

TAKOMA ACADEMY PREPARATORY SCHOOL ILLNESS POLICY AND COVID-19 GUIDELINES

Illness Policy

Maryland state guidelines require that students MUST be fever free (less than 100 degrees) and without vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours to attend school. Students should remain at home where they can rest comfortably and have the individual care that they require. Please do not send ill children to school after premedicating them with Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen.

If the student has a fever (greater than 100.4), frequent cough, vomiting, diarrhea or pain, they must stay home until they are 24 hours past the last episode of the symptoms mentioned below and without the aid of fever reducing or antidiarrheal medication. A note from your Health care provider will be requested to return to in person instruction.

If there are specific requests when a student returns to school, please provide a written Doctor's order from your Healthcare Provider to the office.

Students must be picked up from school, 40 minutes from the time the school calls the parent or guardian. We will not be able to accommodate a delay in this process.

COVID-19 Guidelines

The symptom list for COVID-19 mimics common issues such as seasonal allergies and gastrointestinal upset. Parents must be in tuned to how their students are feeling each day before arrival to school. Please do not bring students to the school if they have mild to moderate symptoms of any kind.

The symptom list for children has expanded this year as several illnesses mimic the same symptoms of COVID-19. You should keep your student home if:

- They or anyone in your house is positive for COVID-19.
- The My Med Bot health screening has alerted you to remain home.
 - Please contact the school guidance
- You have any of the following symptoms:
 - Fever (100 or greater) or chills
 - Loss of taste or smell
 - Diarrhea or severe gastrointestinal upset
 - Cough or Runny nose
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Moderate to severe headache
 - Vomiting
 - General malaise or feeling ill
 - Sore throat
 - Moderate to severe symptoms of seasonal allergies

If staff or students, or the family of staff or students test positive for COVID-19, you **must** communicate this to the school.

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COVID-19 Travel Policy- Updated 8/27/2021

The travel policy has been created with guidance and recommendations from the Center for Disease Control and the Maryland Dept. of Health. We reserve the right to implement more conservative policies based on current Montgomery county COVID-19 transmission statistics. By signing the community agreement, you commit to following the policy.

We are advising families and staff who are attending **in person instruction** not to participate in activities that could increase you or your family's risk of getting or spreading COVID-19.

If you will be travelling out of the country **and you are a staff member or student attending in person instruction**, please be aware of the following:

Fully vaccinated travelers should continue to follow the CDC guidelines for traveling safely including:

- Wearing a mask over your nose and mouth
- Staying 6 feet away and avoiding crowds
- Washing your hands and using hand sanitizer.

After travel, **fully vaccinated** persons should:

- Get tested with a viral test 3-5 days after travel
- Monitor for COVID-19 symptoms for 14 days. Isolate and get tested if you develop symptoms.

Unvaccinated travelers please be aware to:

- Be tested with a viral test 1-3 days **prior** to your trip and stay home and self-quarantine for 7 days **after** travel
- Test with a viral test 3-5 days **after** returning to Maryland

In order to return to school, you must notify the school and provide documented proof of your test results and travel dates.

- Quarantine of a class cohort or several, may be necessary as we contact trace after identifying a positive COVID test result. The Montgomery County Dept. of Health will assist with guidance.
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/scientific-brief-options-to-reduce-quarantine.html>

Failing to adhere to the travel policy may result in the reversal of your students in person attendance.

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When a school is informed of a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 or identifies a person with COVID-19-like illness, the person should be safely isolated and if currently at the school, arrangements made for them to leave the site as soon as possible.

The school designee will contact the County department of health to assist us in contact tracing and additional actions.

Isolation Period

When a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 stays home and away from others. Even when there are no symptoms, it is important to isolate to reduce the risk of exposure and potential transmission. In alignment with CDC, Maryland Department of Health and Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services guidelines, the required isolation period is 10 days.

Quarantine Period

When someone who has been exposed to an individual positive for COVID-19 stays home and self-monitors for symptoms. Quarantine reduces transmission by separating those who have been exposed to the virus. In alignment with the CDC, Maryland Department of Health and Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Service guidelines, the required quarantine period is reduced to 10 days if:

- NO symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring; and
- Daily symptom monitoring continues through Day 14; and
- Quarantined individuals adhere to mitigation strategies, including using a face covering, physical distancing and self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19 through Day 14; and
- Quarantined individuals immediately isolate and contact their health care provider if symptoms develop to determine whether they need to be tested.

Note: Children younger than 5 years old and those with a disability or medical condition that makes wearing a face covering unsafe MUST quarantine for 14 days.

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Questions and Answers

Q: Will there be school wide COVID-19 testing?

A: Not at this time.

After having met with several recommended facilities that offer COVID-19 test to determine the feasibility of testing at our school, we will not be offering COVID-19 testing at TA Prep currently. We did weigh:

1. Coverage of cost of testing
 - a. Some free services required the use of other unavailable resources.
 - b. The cost for facilities that had an excellent plan for testing were outside of our budgetary range.
2. Timeframe for the receipt of results
 - a. In school vs community testing: time frames for results vary based on several factors.
3. Resources
 - a. Additional staff, time, labor

In addition, “The CDC does not recommend universal testing of all students and staff as a prerequisite to school attendance. Viral testing only provides COVID-19 status for individuals at the time of testing. One-time or universal entry testing could miss COVID-19 cases in the early stages of infection, and it could miss exposures that happen after testing. A negative test at the beginning of the school year does not mean that a student or staff member will not become infected at a later time.”

Q: Will teachers and staff be tested for COVID-19?

A: We will not mandate surveillance testing for staff or students based on guidance from the Conference and the CDC.

Staff and students will be required to submit a negative PCR test to return to in person instruction in cases that require this documentation.

Q: Will teachers be required to receive the COVID-19 vaccine?

A: Maryland state has not mandated teachers to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Our teachers were added to phase 1b as they are essential education staff and appointments for the vaccine were made available. TA Prep Administration and the Potomac Conference, strongly recommends that employees receive the COVID-19 vaccine; however, it is not mandated at this time.

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Q: Will students and staff be required to wear a mask?

A: Yes. COVID-19 is an airborne virus that is transmitted through the air via respiratory particles. Wearing a mask can prevent the wearer's respiratory particles from landing on surfaces or being inhaled by persons around them.

We ask that all wear masks that are 2ply or greater and fit snugly over the mouth and nose.

Please frequently launder your cloth masks if that will be the covering of your choice. Be sure to supply your student with several masks including an additional mask in their backpack. There may be incidents over the day that could require the student to change their mask.

Masks with vents, bandanas, or gaiter facial coverings will not be allowed.

Q: Will mask breaks be allowed?

A: Students may remove their masks during lunch to eat. Immediately after eating, masks will be re-applied. Lunch may be held outdoors, weather permitting, or in their classrooms. During indoor lunch, students will remain at their desks (spacing 3 feet apart), with windows open for increased ventilation. HEPA air purifiers are located in every classroom and office for increased air filtration.

Q: How will the schools be disinfected every day?

A: We have contracted with two cleaning companies, (one for supplies and one for physical cleaning) to thoroughly clean the building daily. There will also be a midday cleaning of bathrooms and high contact/high touch areas

Q: If my child tests positive for COVID-19, or if there is a person positive for COVID in their home, when may they return to school?

A: Per Maryland Health Department, and Johns Hopkins Contact tracing guidelines:

“Students or their family members who are COVID-19 positive will need to be at home for a minimum of 10 days with improving symptoms AND 24 hours fever free without fever reducers (i.e. Tylenol or Ibuprofen/Motrin) after the first day of illness/symptoms. Day “zero” is the day of onset of symptoms and Day 1 is the day after for purposes of counting out the 10 calendar days for isolation of ill persons.

Additionally, everyone who lives in the household (even if other family members are negative for/not showing symptoms of coronavirus,) **may need to quarantine for additional time as required by the department of health's contact tracing team. This is determined on a case-by-case basis.**

You must inform the school if you, a student or a household member is positive for COVID-19.

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Please see the link below in effort to assist the school and the Department of Health with contact tracing.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/contact-tracing.html>

Q: What about Physical Education?

A: There will be precautions in place to ensure students can have P.E. safely.

- Sanitizing equipment before and after use
- Maintaining social distance (as much as possible)
- Limiting shared use of equipment
- Modified game rules to help keep everyone safe
- Extra break times to recover
- More individual activities

Q: What happens if a student does not adhere or has a hard time following protocols?

A: We expect that initially students will need a day or two of reminders to follow the health and safety protocols. If a student continues to have difficulty following protocols or does not follow their teacher's instructions, parents will be informed that their student will no longer be allowed to attend in person instruction and must attend virtually.

Q: Could you list Testing sites for COVID-19?

A: Sure! Please see below:

Per the Amended Directive for Health care matters for Maryland:

“With testing widely available, Marylanders who believe they should be tested for COVID-19 should contact their healthcare provider. Healthcare providers shall order a COVID-19 test for any individual who believes it necessary, regardless of symptoms.” Additionally, there are several COVID-19 testing sites by county, some of which are drive up testing sites.

Howard County

- <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/Departments/Health/MM-Alerts-and-Recalls/Coronavirus-Testing>

Anne Arundel County

- <https://www.sankofahealthcenter.com/>
- <https://aahealth.org/covid19-testing/>

Montgomery County

- <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/covid19/testing.html>

Prince Georges County

- <https://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/3472/COVID-19-Testing>