

# Tuba City Unified School District #15

## **COVID-19 STAFF PROTOCOLS**

*Be Safe, Be Kind, Be Healthy*

### **INTRODUCTION**

TCUSD is providing the following protocols to mitigate, or reduce the likelihood of the spread of COVID-19. It is important to understand these protocols cannot completely eliminate concerns related to the spread of the virus. TCUSD has enacted these protocols for this reason, but there exists a tremendous amount of personal responsibility on everyone to implement these protocols in their everyday habits.

These mitigation strategies have been adopted based on information from the Center for Disease Control, (CDC) Navajo Department of Health, Coconino County, and our local healthcare provider, Tuba City Regional Health Care. The protocols are regularly reviewed and updated as necessary based on the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and the responsive guidance from these entities. Additional consideration is given to the unique scenarios faced by our staff in the performance of their daily duties and responsibilities.

Additional information can be found at the following links:

CDC - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Navajo Department of Health - <https://www.ndoh.navajo-nsn.gov/COVID-19>

Coconino County - <https://www.coconino.az.gov/2294/COVID-19-Information>

\*Coconino County also provides a regular “School Update” on this page

Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation - <https://www.tchealth.org/coronavirus/index.html>

### **STAFFING ASSIGNMENTS**

#### **Designation of Public Information Officer (PIO)**

The Superintendent shall be designated as the public information officer (PIO) for Tuba City Unified School District and coordinate all COVID-19 related information to students, parents, staff, and community members unless otherwise expressly delegated or directed. To ensure consistent and accurate communication, it is vital that the Superintendent remains the sole provider of information on behalf of TCUSD.

In furtherance of this goal, TCUSD staff should not post COVID-19 related information on their personal media pages which could give the impression or perception of being stated on behalf or otherwise representing TCUSD.

Comments, ideas and COVID-19 related information related to TCUSD should be presented through the proper chain of command for consideration in a formal setting. The district has established regular contingency meetings for this purpose and to encourage such constructive dialogue.

### **Designation of Point of Contact – Policy & Procedural Guidance**

The Human Resources Director shall be the designated point of contact for matters specifically related to staff and COVID-19 including policy guidance, leave and benefits administration unless otherwise expressly delegated or directed.

### **Designation of Point of Contact – Facilities and Supplies**

The Facilities Director shall be the designated point of contact for matters specifically related obtaining supplies, providing physical barriers, all building systems and their functionality including but not limited to ventilation and water systems, unless otherwise expressly delegated or directed

### **Designation of Site Administrators**

The principal of each school shall be designated as the site administrator for their respective school; each department director shall be designated as the site administrator for their respective department(s), work areas and staff. These designations shall remain in effect unless otherwise delegated and approved by district administration.

The site administrator shall be responsible for:

- coordination and enforcement of established COVID-19 protocols;
- addressing parent questions regarding implementation of protocols;
- immediate communication of any confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 among the school population to the superintendent.

## **PROTOCOLS**

### **Staff with Underlying Medical Conditions**

Anyone with an underlying medical condition is at an increased risk for severe illness, including contracting COVID-19. TCUSD is committed to providing reasonable accommodation to staff who are in need of such assistance to reduce their risk of contracting the virus.

Because the district is largely unaware of the medical history and conditions of staff, it is the responsibility of a staff member to notify their direct supervisor and/or HR if they are in need of accommodation related to the circumstances of COVID-19.

The district may require documentation from a healthcare provider to confirm the existence of the medical condition(s) indicated. Any medical information provided to the district will be kept strictly confidential.

\*This protocol is only applicable to staff members with an underlying medical condition and does not apply to family members of staff; for example, an employee without a disability is not entitled to an accommodation in order to protect a family member with a disability from potential COVID-19 exposure.

### **Symptoms of COVID-19**

There are a wide range of symptoms associated with COVID-19. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. Symptom include but are not limited to the following:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

See **Staff Exhibiting Symptoms** section for additional guidance.

### **Entering School Campuses and Facilities**

A single point of entry will be established at each district facility. A “self-administration” station will be established to carry out the following responsibilities:

- Mask check - face coverings are required. If an employee does not have a mask for any reason, masks will be available at the administration station;
- Administration of hand sanitizer;
- Administration of temperature checks:

In the event of an elevated temperature reading, the individual should be instructed to sit in a shaded area for a period of five (5) minutes, at which point a follow-up reading should be taken. If available, a secondary thermometer may be utilized to confirm the reading taken on the first.

A temperature registered at 100.4F or higher will disqualify an individual from entering a district facility. Additionally, the individual will automatically become subject to the *return to work* protocol established herein. Notification will be made to the site administrator.

Any staff member who refuses to adhere to these precautionary measures will not be allowed entrance to the facility.

### **Limiting Staff Movement in District Facilities**

In order to limit the amount of person-to-person interaction, staff shall limit their movement between and within District facilities as much as possible, with the exception of security, maintenance, warehouse, IT and other personnel whose movement is essential to the duties and responsibilities of their position.

Interactions shall primarily take place utilizing technological means including but not limited to phone, email, videoconferencing, e-signature capabilities.

Delivery of items (i.e. inter-department mail) should be delivered to reception or a designated staff at the entrance of each building. Items will then be distributed by the designated staff or picked up by the intended recipient.

In-person meetings will be by appointment only and should be conducted on a limited basis.

Contact information will be posted at the entrance-way to each campus and facility for visitors who arrive without an appointment, and is also available on the TCUSD Phone Directory.

### **Social Distancing**

TCUSD staff are required to maintain a minimum 6 feet distance between themselves and others at all times, unless it is not physically possible or, for the safety of another person, less space is required. If a situation arises that requires a staff member to touch a student or another staff member (for instance, if a student requires toileting help, is having a physical emergency, or requires a two-person restraint), the staff member should resume social distancing as soon as safely possible, wash their hands, and disinfect any surfaces they touched.

### **Face Coverings**

All persons, including staff, are required to wear a face covering at all times during social interactions. Face coverings may only be removed when the individual is alone in his/her work area or other isolated location where close contact, social interaction is not possible.

When a face covering is put on or taken off, only the ear strings should be contacted. Germs are more likely to be present on the portion of the mask which covers the mouth and nose. A person should wash their hands immediately after removing or otherwise touching their face covering. The face coverings should completely cover the person's nose and mouth and be secured under the chin.

Staff may want to consider implementing a 3 mask rotation: for example, mask 1 is worn on Monday, mask 2 on Tuesday, mask 3 on Wednesday and they are rotated each day in this order. This practice will allow enough time between usages for any virus carrying germs to expire.

If an employee is unable to wear a face covering for medical reasons including a physical disability, they should notify their direct supervisor and HR to begin the interactive process required under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to determine a reasonable accommodation. *Documentation may be requested by the district to confirm the presence of a bona fide medical condition.*

## **Handwashing**

TCUSD staff are required to wash their hands periodically throughout the day and at crucial times listed below when a person is likely to contract and spread germs. Hand washing should occur with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. *\* Hand sanitizer should only be used to supplement hand washing or in situations where hand washing with soap and water is not possible. Hand sanitizer should not be used as a replacement to hand washing.*

- upon arrival at school;
- after being outside for student physical activity;
- before and after eating;
- after sneezing, coughing, or blowing nose;
- after physical contact with other staff or students;
- After removing your face covering;
- All other reasonably appropriate times.

## **Cleaning and Disinfecting**

Regular cleaning and disinfecting is crucial to reducing the spread of COVID-19. The virus is viable on high touch surfaces such as paper and cardboard for up to 1 day and plastic and steel for up to 4 days.

Custodial staff will conduct regular cleaning and disinfecting throughout district facilities, with an emphasis on frequently touched surfaces such as door handles, desks, copy machines/printers, entrance ways and communal spaces. In addition, all staff have a personal responsibility to conduct regular cleaning and disinfecting of their work spaces and personal effects such as phone, water bottle, wallet, keys, etc.

Staff should notify their direct supervisor immediately if they are in need of cleaning supplies. Supplies will then be obtained through the facilities department.

*\*Staff should consider taking additional precautions when they return home including immediately changing out of the clothes worn to the workplace and washing the clothes; consider leaving shoes outside of the home.*

## Ventilation

Facilities should be properly ventilated to promote the increased flow of fresh air, including opening windows and doors when the weather permits and safety considerations have been addressed.

In buildings where it is not possible to open windows, ceiling fans should not be utilized as they may recirculate the virus if present.

Depending upon the HVAC system present in each facility, the system may be able to elevate the level of fresh air ventilated into the building from the outside. Consult the Facilities Director to determine if this is possible for your specific site.

## Travel Considerations

Before travelling ever occurs, consideration should be given to whether the task at hand could be accomplished through alternative means. (i.e. videoconferencing) If travel is determined to be necessary, the fewest number of staff possible should venture on the trip.

If more than one staff is necessary to make the trip, attempts should be made not to confine more than one person to a smaller vehicle. This may include assigning multiple vehicles or assigning a larger than normal vehicle. However, situations may still arise that require staff to travel together in a smaller, more compact vehicle.

The general principles listed above including social distancing, the use of face coverings, cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces, and ventilation should be applied as best as practically possible:

- **Social distancing:** In a compact car, maintain the greatest distance possible given the restricted size of the vehicle; (i.e. passenger sit in the back seat)
- **Ventilation:** Open windows or set the air ventilation system on non-recirculating mode to promote an increased flow of fresh air;
- **Respiratory etiquette:** direct your attention away from your travelling companion when conversing as not to project respiratory droplets directly towards the other person

## Staff Exhibiting Symptoms

If a staff member is exhibiting any symptom(s) associated with COVID-19, they should not report for on-site work and instead **report immediately for testing at the local healthcare facility.** Staff exhibiting any symptom(s) associated with COVID-19 will not be allowed back on-site until they have been either tested and cleared by a healthcare professional, or have completed the quarantine/isolation period.

A staff member who develops any symptom(s) associated with COVID-19 during the course of the work day should immediately remove themselves from the work site and make notification to their supervisor.

During the period a staff member is under evaluation for COVID-19 they should not report for on-site work and quarantine for the period directed by the healthcare provider. Further action will be dependent upon the results of the COVID-19 test.

See **Return to Work** section for additional guidance.

### **Confirmed COVID-19 Infection**

In the event a staff member is confirmed with COVID-19, the individual should immediately make electronic notification to their direct supervisor who should then provide that information to district administration.

Any other staff who were in *close contact* (see definition below) with the confirmed positive individual and who are currently asymptomatic will quarantine for a period of 3-5 days from the date of exposure before reporting for testing; the quarantine period will continue at least until test results are received and may be extended for any period of time as directed by the healthcare facility.

*Close Contact* is defined as being within 6 feet of an *infected person*\* for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period\* starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated. \**Infected person* is defined as a person confirmed with COVID-19 and may also be considered a person exhibiting symptoms consistent with COVID-19 but who has not been formally confirmed by a healthcare facility.

If the employee has been in a district facility within the past 7 days, their work area and/or any area used for a prolonged period of time will be closed off until cleaning and disinfecting can take place. The process of cleaning and disinfecting will take place at least 24 hours after the individual has vacated the area(s) for the safety of the custodial staff.

If it has been 7 day or more since the staff member was in a district facility, no additional cleaning and disinfecting is necessary.

District administration will conduct a contact assessment to determine other staff who may have been in close contact with the individual confirmed with COVID-19. Staff determined to have been in close contact will be immediately notified to report for testing.

### **Isolation & Quarantine**

*Isolation* is used to separate a person confirmed with COVID-19, whether symptomatic or asymptomatic, and also for those exhibiting symptoms consistent with COVID-19 in the absence of a confirmed positive test. The standard isolation period is 10 days, or other duration as prescribed by the local healthcare agency.

*Quarantine* is used for a person who has been in close contact with someone confirmed with COVID-19 or who feels they are at risk for any other reason. In either case, the individual should follow the guidance of the local healthcare agency to be tested. The standard quarantine period is 14 days, or other duration as prescribed by the local healthcare agency.

The beginning and end dates of an isolation/quarantine period will vary depending on the circumstances. Please consult HR who will make a determination based on the information available, including any prescribed timeframe as directed by the healthcare provider.

## **Return to Work**

A staff member who is confirmed POSITIVE will be subject to the *symptom-based strategy* for purposes of return-to-work.

Although the symptom-based strategy is for those confirmed with COVID-19, it may also be utilized as a guideline in other instances including staff who have or are exhibiting symptoms consistent with COVID-19 but have returned a negative test result from a healthcare provider.

The symptom-based strategy includes:

- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared
- At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications
- Symptoms have improved or ceased

A staff member tested for any reason who returns a NEGATIVE test result may be eligible to return to work immediately if the following criteria are met:

- The staff member is no longer exhibiting symptoms;
- The staff member is in a position determined to be “essential” by the district including but not limited to certified teaching staff. This determination will be made at the discretion of the district and may not apply to all positions.

\*Documentation of the negative test result(s) will be required as confirmation.

There is the possibility of a false negative test result. (test indicates negative but the individual is in fact positive) For this reason, any staff member exhibiting classic symptoms of COVID-19 (i.e. loss of taste or smell) will be subject to the symptom based strategy for return-to-work outlined below.

\*Note regarding testing: negative test results are not necessarily required by TCUSD for return-to-work purposes. Staff should not seek out COVID-19 testing solely for the purpose of receiving negative test results to be used for this purpose.



## **Failure to Adhere to Protocols**

Staff who refuse to abide by the established protocols may initially be provided informal consultation. If the concerns persist, the District may invoke formal disciplinary action subject to the policy statements of District policy GCQF or GDQF.