



# Notifying Families and Staff: COVID-19 Cases in Schools and Early Care and Education Programs

Although contact tracing is no longer required, families of children, teachers, and staff should be aware of cases and outbreaks of COVID-19 in schools and early care and education (ECE) programs. This helps individuals and families make appropriate decisions to protect their health and the health of their children.

**Families of children, teachers, and staff should be notified when there is a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 in their classroom or when there is a confirmed or suspected facility-wide COVID-19 outbreak.** Notifications can be provided by phone call, email, letter, or through updates shared on facility webpages.



**Notifications should include the following information so families, teachers, and staff can make informed decisions to stay safe and healthy:**

- ✓ **Outline of the current situation** at the school or ECE program.
- ✓ **List of signs and symptoms of COVID-19** and when to seek medical attention.
- ✓ **Description of which interventions are already in place**, and what actions the facility will be doing next to prevent additional cases.
- ✓ **Reminders for children, parents/guardians, teachers, and staff to stay home when they are sick or diagnosed with COVID-19.** Notify them if they had contact with a case at school or the program.
- ✓ **Recommendations for staff and parents/guardians of children who are at increased risk of severe illness** to discuss with the school or ECE program administrators potential options for how to safely continue instruction.
- ✓ **Request for children, parents/guardians, and staff to remain in contact with** and follow the recommendations of the school, ECE program, and/or the local or Tribal health department.
- ✓ **Point of contact** at the school, ECE program, or local or Tribal health department for questions.



**Notifications should not include the names of the people who are sick.**

Confidentiality is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

# Template Letter to Parents/Guardians: COVID-19 Case(s)

[date]

Dear parent or guardian,

This letter is to notify you that [a] child[ren] or staff member[s] at [insert facility name] has tested positive for COVID-19. We are providing you this notification so you may take appropriate actions to stay safe and healthy. We are also cleaning and disinfecting the facility to control the spread of illness.

## About COVID-19

COVID-19 is an illness caused by a coronavirus. It spreads from person to person through droplets created when we cough, sneeze, talk, sing or laugh. Most people—especially young people—who get COVID-19 have mild illness, similar to having a cold or the flu. However, in others it can cause severe illness, such as pneumonia. Symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- Fever (temperature 100.4°F or higher)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Chills
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Fatigue
- Muscle/body aches
- Congestion or runny nose
- Headache

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website has good information about COVID-19: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus).

## What to Expect

Someone from the [insert Tribal/county/city] Health Department may reach out to you with questions. Please assist them as they work to investigate and control COVID-19 in our school.

## Prevent Further Spread

The following guidelines will help to prevent further spread of illness at [school/program]:

- Notify the [school/program] if your child is diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Keep children home from the [school/program] if they are sick.
- Get yourself and your child vaccinated as soon as you are able to do so.
- Encourage good habits (frequent handwashing, covering coughs and sneezes, using masks in indoor public spaces in areas of high COVID-19 community levels).

If you have any questions, please call [full name and position] at [phone #].

Sincerely,  
[Print name, Title]