

## **M.O.R.E of Baltimore Co-op Protocol for COVID-19 Prevention**

**UPDATED 9/1/2022**

**Effective September 1, 2022, instructors, students, parents and visitors have the option to remove their masks in M.O.R.E of Baltimore Homeschool Co-op. However, we continue to support and strongly encourage the use of masks if unvaccinated.**

Every person deserves to feel safe, healthy and comfortable in M.O.R.E of Baltimore spaces, and masks will always be welcome without question or concern. People may choose to mask at any time. People with symptoms, a positive test, or exposure to someone with COVID-19 should wear a mask.

Throughout the pandemic, M.O.R.E of Baltimore Homeschool Co-op continues to follow data, metrics and guidelines from county, state and national experts, particularly when it comes to emerging variants of the COVID-19 virus. M.O.R.E of Baltimore is also in constant consultation with our local Department of Health, making necessary adjustments based on the most updated information and its impact on our immediate community.

We will continue to require handwashing and respiratory etiquette, staying home when sick, and regular cleaning to help reduce transmission risk. Below is an outline of how M.O.R.E of Baltimore Co-op will work to maintain a safe learning environment for students, staff and parents.

### **The Top 5 Key Prevention Strategies**

1. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette
2. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities
3. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine when a student or staff member becomes sick

**Staff Training will include:**

- Proper use, removal and washing of PPE/face coverings
- Knowing when to stay home
- Identifying and reporting symptoms in self and others
- Cleaning and Disinfection(classroom/non-classroom spaces)
- Contingency plans
- Hand hygiene
- Testing (when & where)
- How COVID-19 is spread

**Student Training will include:**

- Proper use, removal and washing of PPE/face coverings
- Identifying and reporting symptoms
- Hand hygiene
- Knowing when to stay home
- Daily reminders on hand hygiene, and physical distancing
- How COVID-19 is spread

**Cleaning & Disinfection**

- Cleaning and disinfection protocols will be updated in accordance with CDC Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting in Schools.
- Frequency of cleaning and disinfection will increase. At least daily, more frequently if possible, clean and disinfect high-touch hard surfaces, such as:
  - Door handles, handrails, sink handles
  - Chairs, tables, desks
  - Light switches
  - Restroom surfaces
  - Toys, games, art supplies, instructional materials
- After known or suspected illness, areas used by the affected person will be closed off for 24 hours (or as long as is practical) before cleaning and disinfecting.

### **Handwashing and Cough Etiquette**

Hands should be washed for at least 20 seconds with soap and water when available, and students/staff should use fragrance free 60% (minimum) ethyl-alcohol hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available. If hands are visibly dirty, soap and water must be used.

- There is increased access to hand sanitizer and handwashing stations throughout campus.
- At minimum, students/staff will have the opportunity to perform handwashing before and after eating, after coughing or sneezing, after being outside and before and after using the restroom.
- Routines will be developed enabling students/staff to regularly wash and/or sanitize their hands at staggered intervals.
- Students and staff will be required to sanitize hands upon entering campus.
- Students and staff will be trained in effective handwashing, including washing hands for 20 seconds with soap and warm water, rubbing thoroughly after application, and using paper towels to dry hands thoroughly.
- Students under 9 will only use hand sanitizer under adult supervision.
- Students and staff will be regularly reminded to cover their cough/sneeze with a tissue or cough/sneeze into their upper sleeve/elbow.

### **Health Screening**

Ongoing health monitoring of students and staff is critical to decreasing the rate of transmission in schools and the community. Common symptoms of COVID-19 include a newly developed cough (i.e. not related to asthma or allergies), fever over 100.4, chills, muscle pain, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, sore throat, headache, and new loss of taste or smell. Seek immediate medical attention if someone displays emergency warning signs of COVID-19: Trouble breathing, persistent chest pain or pressure, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, bluish lips or face.

### **Staff Screening**

- Staff will be instructed to self-monitor for common symptoms of COVID-19.
- Staff will be instructed to stay home if they feel sick, have experienced any of the symptoms listed above within the past 24 hours, or if they have had close contact with anyone suspected or known to have COVID-19.
- Staff who are sick will be actively encouraged to stay home and those who have had close contact with COVID-19 positive patients will be instructed to quarantine for 5 days or longer (up to 14 days) if symptoms persist.

### **Student Screening**

- Parents will be asked to conduct daily monitoring of students for symptoms of illness, including but not limited to those listed above, with a daily temperature check if feasible.
- Each student will get a visual wellness check as they enter school grounds, including
  - A visual and/or verbal symptom review
  - Students exhibiting symptoms will use a face covering and be separated to wait in an isolation area until able to be transported home.
  - Students who are sick will be actively encouraged to stay home and those who have had close contact with someone with COVID-19 will be instructed to quarantine for 5 days.

### **Handling Suspected or Confirmed Cases**

Seek immediate medical attention if someone displays emergency warning signs of COVID-19: Trouble breathing, persistent chest pain or pressure, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, bluish lips or face.

#### **A. Suspected Cases**

(Student/Staff is exhibiting common symptoms of COVID-19) When there is a suspected COVID case, the co-op are to follow the basic steps outlined below:

1. Any students or staff exhibiting common COVID-19 symptoms will remain in an isolation area until they can be transported home or to a healthcare facility.

2. If the student/staff person is sent home, they will be provided with options for local testing sites, including their primary care provider. The number and location of testing sites changes rapidly. For the most up-to-date information, visit: Finding a Testing Site on <https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/>.
3. If the student/staff is sent home, designated staff will document the close contacts of that patient within the co-op for later reference, should they test positive.
4. Based on the severity of symptoms and staff discretion, areas used by the patient will be closed off for 24 hours (or as long as is practical) before cleaning and disinfecting.

## **B. Confirmed Cases**

When there is a confirmed COVID Case, the co-op is expected to follow the basic steps outlined below:

1. Upon notification from a student/family of a positive case, M.O.R.E co-op and all close contacts within the co-op will be notified immediately, while maintaining confidentiality as required by state and federal laws.
2. Close contacts (as defined below) will be asked to quarantine.
3. The classroom and all communal spaces where the patient spent significant time will undergo thorough cleaning and disinfection.
5. All co-op families will then be notified of the presence of a positive case, without disclosure of the patient's identity.
6. COVID confirmed cases will not return to school/work until it has been at least 5 days since their COVID-19 test, symptoms have improved, and there have been at least 24 hours since the resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.

## **Close Contacts**

Close contact is defined as being within 6 feet or more for longer than 15 minutes. In some school situations, it may be difficult to determine whether individuals have met this criterion and an entire cohort, classroom, or other group may need to be considered exposed, particularly if people have spent time together indoors.

## **Returning to Work/Co-op**

COVID confirmed cases will not return to school/work until it has been at least 5 days since their COVID-19 test, symptoms have improved, and there have been at least 24 hours since the resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.

### **Contingency Plans – School and Community Surge**

The co-op closure will be recommended based on guidance by the local, state or federal health department and/or number of cases, the percentage of the teacher/students/staff that are positive for COVID-19 within the co-op.

#### **A. Preparing for a Closure**

- Co-op leadership will check state and local health orders daily to determine level of community transmission and prepare for mandated or upcoming closures.
- Develop a plan for continuity of education, including the option of virtual learning or workbook packets “sent home”.
- Email communication will be implemented to notify students, parents, teachers, staff, and the community of the closure.

#### **B. Preparing for Reopening After a Case**

The co-op will reopen after advice from the local/state and/or federal health departments and/or a significant decrease of cases within the co-op.