



Providence Public Schools Updated Mask Guidelines - April 6

Mask requirements

Beginning April 11, 2022, masks will be optional for staff members and students. An individual may choose to continue wearing a mask or not wear a mask. This updated mask guidance also applies on school buses. Mistreatment of another individual for choosing to wear or not wear a mask will not be tolerated.

Positive cases

People who have, or develop, symptoms must isolate at home for at least 5 days from when symptoms first appeared, and wear a well-fitting mask for 5 more days regardless of vaccination status.

Close contacts

Per RIDOH guidance, PPSD has shifted away from contact tracing and is focused on outbreak response.

For elementary schools, schools will notify students in the student's homeroom of a potential exposure, and recommend that non-vaccinated students in the classroom wear masks for 10 days from date of first exposure.

For middle and high schools, schools will notify all students that there was a positive case in the school, and recommend that non-vaccinated students wear masks for 10 days from date of first exposure.

Situations in which schools or the district may return to mask requirements

A school may require a class, grade, or the entire school to wear masks for a period of 10 days if there is suspected extensive in-school transmission occurring. While there is no one threshold that would trigger this occurring, this would generally be done if more than 3 students or staff members in an individual class develop COVID-19 over a 5 day period or 5% of student/faculty population test positive or are suspected to have COVID-19 over a 5 day period.

The district will shift to requiring masks if advised by RIDOH or other state officials. Additionally, if Providence County shifts from a low to a medium or high Community Risk level, PPSD may return to mask requirements for all individuals.

Additional mitigation strategies

PPSD will continue with its other mitigation strategies including weekly asymptomatic testing and air purification. In addition to weekly asymptomatic testing and rapid testing for symptomatic individuals, PPSD will be increasing the availability of rapid tests at schools to provide additional tests to students and staff members if they were a potential exposure for COVID-19.