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September 24, 2021

DPHSS Guidance Memorandum 2021-27

RE: DPHSS Guidance Memorandum 2021-27 Additional Guidance Relative to Screening Testing for In-Class Operation for K-12 Schools

The purpose of this Memorandum is to provide guidance on the screening testing program introduced in the Department of Public Health & Social Services (DPHSS) Guidance Memorandum 2021-23 RE: School Resumption of In-Person Learning for Pre-K to 12 Relative to Executive Order 2021-23. Following **Executive Order 2021-23, Relative to Authorizing the Resumption of In-Person Learning**, all schools shall submit a testing plan as part of school mitigation strategies.

Screening testing is part of a layered prevention strategy that involves testing asymptomatic persons without recent known or suspected exposure to SARS-CoV-2 for early identification, isolation and disease prevention. Early identification of asymptomatic cases through screening testing can ensure rapid isolation, identification and quarantine of close contacts, which will minimize disruption to in-person instruction. COVID-19 testing conducted at schools shall utilize non-invasive molecular or antigen nasal tests. As part of this screening testing plan, schools shall set a goal to test ten percent (10%) of its population every other week within 90 days of implementation of their testing plan.

All school testing plans are to be emailed to DPHSS Surveillance Branch at dphss.surveillance@dphss.guam.gov. Testing plans are subject to review by DPHSS. Schools may reference DPHSS Guidance Memorandums 2021-16, 2021-23, and 2021-26 found on www.dphss.guam.gov/covid-19-jic-releases-executive-orders for additional information relative to COVID-19.

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SCREENING TESTING AND POINT OF CONTACT

Participating schools shall designate a staff member as a School Point of Contact (School POC), herein referred to as "School POC", to ensure compliance with this Guidance. The name of the School POC should be submitted within two weeks of the implementation of this Guidance and should be updated anytime there is a change. DPHSS shall be notified immediately of the new School POC.

The School POC, or trained individual, is responsible for the following:

1. Coordinate and monitor all COVID-19 testing activities on campus;
2. Serve as a liaison between the school as a whole, to include students, teachers and staff, and DPHSS to ensure efficient communication and transmission of correspondences and pertinent data;
3. Designate staff to be trained to conduct COVID-19 testing every other week;
4. Coordinate the distribution and collection of consent forms prior to COVID-19 testing;
5. Identify testing locations that are well-ventilated, with designated points of entry/exit and chairs distanced three feet apart (may occur within respective classroom); and
6. Plan for anticipated quantity of tests needed based on a minimum of ten percent of all teachers, staff, and students; it is highly recommended to test individuals who are not fully vaccinated.

The following responsibilities are required of the schools to implement and maintain a successful screening testing program:

A. PREPARATION FOR SCREENING TESTING

1. Authorization for Testing and Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) Waiver

Existing personnel at schools can be trained by DPHSS to collect anterior nasal swabs to conduct COVID-19 tests. Training to administer COVID-19 tests may be coordinated with Guam Public Health Laboratory (GPHL). Upon completion of training, schools can obtain a CLIA waiver extension through GPHL to allow for specimens to be collected at a school site. For training information and coordination, send an email to DPHSS Surveillance Branch at dphss.surveillance@dphss.guam.gov.

2. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

All staff designated to administer COVID-19 tests must be equipped with PPE. Use of appropriate PPE significantly reduces risk of infection for staff administering COVID-19 tests. When administering COVID-19 tests, designated staff must be equipped with gloves, fitted N95 respirator, medical gowns, medical caps, shoe coverings, and face shields. To request N95 fit testing, send an email to DPHSS Surveillance Branch at dphss.surveillance@dphss.guam.gov.

3. Distribution of Consent Forms

School POC will be responsible for distributing and collecting consent forms for all students, teachers and staff; schools should consider one-time consent forms for this screening testing plan, which can be utilized throughout the academic year.

- a. The consent form shall include the purpose of testing, authorization for students, teachers and staff to be tested, information about COVID-19 testing as well as a privacy statement;
- b. The School POC will be responsible for providing a copy of the signed consent forms to parents/legal guardian/authorized representative prior to the testing of students, teachers and staff;
- c. Consent forms allow for the school health counselor or trained individual to be notified of positive results to conduct the in-school contact tracing of positive cases;
- d. In the event parents/legal guardians/authorized representatives decide to revoke consent, written documentation is required and shall be submitted immediately to the School POC.

4. Specimen Collection

Schools may opt to have trained staff conduct specimen collection or collect specimens by self-swab under the supervision of a trained staff (guided observation). All specimens collected must have a completed accompanying laboratory form.

5. Notification of Results

School POC or trained individuals are responsible for notifying all students (for minors, parents/legal guardians/authorized representatives) teachers, staff regarding test results. For positive results refer to Section III.

6. Daily Reporting

The School POC will be responsible for reporting all results to DPHSS via Simple Report database or Excel template. Schools shall request secured link access to submit reports to DPHSS Surveillance Branch via dphss.surveillance@dphss.guam.gov.

a. All lab forms, positive and negative, must be submitted via secured link to DPHSS within 24 hours of testing; and

b. The School POC must fill out all fields in the Simple Report database or Excel template.

7. Biohazard Waste Disposal

All specimens collected for COVID-19 are considered biohazardous and must be discarded in a biohazard waste bag. All biohazard waste will be disposed of in a biohazard waste bin located at Northern/Southern Regional Community Health Center or GPLH, Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Schools are to deliver biohazard waste once a week or as needed.

B. CONSIDERATIONS FOR SCREENING TESTING

1. Frequency of Testing

Schools shall set a goal to test ten percent (10%) of its population every other week within 90 days of implementation of their testing plan. Schools with larger personnel capacity are encouraged to test a higher proportion of their respective campus population.

2. Students/Staff in Interscholastic and Extracurricular Events

Unvaccinated students who participate in interscholastic and extracurricular events are recommended to be tested routinely to ensure safe competition. Refer to DPHSS Guidance 2021-20, 2021-21 and 2021-23 for additional information regarding interscholastic and extracurricular events.

3. Consideration for Persons with Disabilities

Students, teachers, or staff with disabilities may require accommodations when being tested. School administrators may offer modified job responsibilities for non-fully vaccinated staff at higher risk for severe illness while protecting individual privacy. Schools should consider taking an individualized approach for working with children and youth with disabilities consistent with the child's Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), Individualized Education Program (IEP), or Section 504 plan. School administrators should consider adaptations and alternatives to prevention strategies when serving people with disabilities, while maintaining efforts to protect all students, teachers, and staff from COVID-19.

4. Temporary Exemption to Screening Testing

Students, teachers, and staff who have received a previous positive result within 90 days should not be tested unless they exhibit new symptoms relative to COVID-19.

5. Other Considerations

Schools may consider increasing COVID-19 testing to a larger percentage of its population following an extensive break, i.e., Fall or Spring Break. Schools may also consider offering testing to individuals who are returning from off-island travel or sick leave.

C. PROTOCOL FOR IDENTIFIED POSITIVE CASES

Should schools identify a positive COVID-19 individual, the individual shall be immediately isolated. The School POC will work with DPHSS to identify close contacts of the individual within the school community. Schools will notify all students (for minors, parents/legal guardians/authorized representatives), teachers, and staff of exposure to a positive COVID-19 individual. DPHSS Containment Branch will determine if confirmatory testing is needed. For more information regarding protocol for positive cases, refer to DPHSS Guidance Memorandum 2021-26 COVID-19 Testing, Case Investigation and Contact Tracing, Isolation, Quarantine, and Monitoring of Positive COVID-19 Individuals and Contacts in Schools.

D. RELATED COVID-19 TESTING ACTIVITIES

1. Testing Symptomatic Individuals (Diagnostic Testing)

Students, teachers, and staff shall stay home if they are exhibiting any COVID-like symptoms. All students, teachers, and staff who develop COVID-like symptoms while on-campus shall be placed in an isolation room and tested for COVID-19. Individuals exhibiting symptoms with a negative test result should return to school after symptoms resolve. All students, teachers, and staff who test positive for COVID-19 should provide a clearance letter before returning to school.

2. Students and Staff with Known Exposure

Identified close contacts may be referred by the DPHSS Containment Branch to designated COVID-19 testing sites. For additional information regarding quarantine, please reference DPHSS Guidance Memorandum 2021-16 Re: Guam DPHSS Guidance for Individuals Who Are Suspected or Confirmed of Having COVID-19.

For any questions, please contact Chima Mbakwem, Chief Public Health Officer, at (671) 922-2562 or email at chima.mbakwem@dphss.guam.gov.

SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

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