



# ARENA PARK SECONDARY SCHOOL

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**STANDARD OPERATING**

## UNDERSTANDING COVID-19:

### **What is COVID-19?**

**COVID-19** is a respiratory illness caused by a novel (new) virus, and we are learning more about it every

day. There is currently no vaccine to protect against **COVID-19**. Thus, the best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes it. Stopping transmission (spread) of the virus through everyday practices is the best way to keep people healthy. More information on **COVID-19** is available from the National Institute of Communicable Diseases [www.nicd.ac.za](http://www.nicd.ac.za); the Department of Health [www.health.gov.za](http://www.health.gov.za) and the Department of Basic Education [www.education.gov.za](http://www.education.gov.za).

Schools, working together with local health departments, have an important role in slowing the spread of diseases to help ensure learners and educators have a safe and healthy learning and working environment.

### **How is the corona virus spread?**

**COVID-19** is spread by fluid droplets when coughing, sneezing or talking. It can be spread by a person who has been infected **before they have symptoms**, during illness and for a short period of time after they feel better. Researchers estimate that around 44% of infections are passed-on by people who are not showing any symptoms. Virus particles can survive in the air for a short period of time and can remain on hard surfaces such as plastic or steel for a few days, if not removed with regular cleaning. **COVID-19** is spread by contaminated hands touching the hands of others or touching things such as money, credit cards, door handles and counters. When you then touch your eyes, nose and mouth after you have touched other people's hands and things with **COVID-19** on it, then you can get infected.

**What are the symptoms of COVID 19?**

## Symptoms of Coronavirus Disease 2019

Patients with COVID-19 have experienced mild to severe respiratory illness.

Symptoms can include:

**COUGH**

Seek medical advice if you develop symptoms, and have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or if you live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19

**FEVER**

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure

**SHORTNESS OF BREATH**

Protect yourself and other from the disease

## **STANDARD PRECAUTIONS OF INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL:**

A safe environment can be achieved through elimination of infectious particles in the air and on surfaces by **always adhering to the Golden Rules:**

- 1. Prevent direct contact with persons who are sick** – encourage educators, learners and staff to stay at home when feeling sick.
- 2. Use of personal protective equipment (PPE)** – use protective face masks at all times.
- 3. Environmental cleaning and disinfection** - reduce the risk of micro-organisms in the environment by cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces such as door handles, hand rails, desks, tables, windows, etc. hourly or less frequently depending on the circumstances. An effective disinfectant is diluted bleach disinfectant (20 ml bleach per liter of clean water).
- 4. Social distancing** - Keep a distance of at least 1.5 meters between persons where possible, avoiding gatherings and contact activities outside of the classroom such as extra mural activities, contact sport, assemblies, hall gatherings and queuing at tuck-shops or for school feeding programmed meals.
- 5. Hand hygiene - Wash hands frequently with soap and water** for 20 seconds, especially after using the toilet, touching food and if hands are visibly soiled/dirty.
- 6. Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer regularly**, especially after contact with any person or after contact with frequently touched surfaces i.e. phones, door handles etc.
- 7. Avoid touching your eyes, mouth, or nose** with unwashed/un-sanitized hands.
- 8. Limit airborne transmission-** allow adequate cross ventilation in classrooms and office buildings. Limit visitors and the number of people that enter the school, office or classroom. Parents should enter the school only if absolutely necessary.

**Practice cough and sneeze etiquette** – cough in the fold of the bent elbow and sneeze in a tissue which should be discarded safely in a refuse bin with a lid. Wash hands immediately thereafter.

### **HAND HYGIENE PRACTICES:**

#### **a) When to wash hands**

Wash your hands **after visiting the toilet;**

Wash your hands **before handling food or eating;**

Wash your hands **after taking care of sick people;**

Wash your hands **after touching surfaces;**

Wash your hands **after sneezing or coughing.**

## b) How to wash hands:

How to wash your hands with soap and water

1. Wet hands and apply soap
  2. Rub palms of hands together
  3. Rub in between the fingers, back of hands and wrist
  4. Clean underneath the nails
  5. Rinse hands with clean running water
  6. Dry with clean paper towel or shake hands in the air to dry
- Do not use a cloth or share a paper towel to wipe



## c) How to sanitize hands:

1. Apply the hand sanitizer to the palm of one hand (size of a R1/or R2 coin)
2. Rub your hands together
3. Rub the gel over all the surfaces of your hands and in between fingers for at least 20 seconds until your hands are dry



### **A Note on alcohol-based hand sanitizers:**

*If you are not near a handwashing station and soap, use a hand sanitizer to clean your hands. Do not use a sanitizer after using the toilet and if your hands are visibly soiled - wash hands with soap and water.*

*Sanitizers should have alcohol content of at least 60% for maximum protection. No more than 60% is required.*

*Use a hand sanitizer only on dry hands.*

*If using gloves, sanitize hands before and after use (of the gloves).*

*Do not use a sanitizer on gloves.*

*Do not sanitize and use water at the same time – it is harsh for your skin.*

### **All learners, educators, support staff, officials, parents and communities should:**

- heed the directives issued by the President and the guidance provided by the Ministry of Health w.r.t **COVID-19**;

- avoid gatherings as the disease is spread through direct contact with the respiratory droplets of an infected person, which are generated through coughing, sneezing or talking. Regulation

11B(8)(c) of the Disaster Management Act, 2002, restricts attendees to a funeral or cremation to 50 people. All other gatherings are prohibited. As lockdown measures are revised, the Regulations regarding gatherings may be adapted;

- maintain a social distance of at least 1.5 to 2 meters with others, where possible. It is recommended that a phased approach to the arrival and departure of learners and employees should be followed to further limit social interaction. Staggering break times will prevent a concentration of learners in common areas;

- every learner, staff member and visitor must wear a cloth mask at all times.

- avoid direct contact with others e.g. shaking hands or hugging;

- frequently wash hands with water and soap. If water is not available, use a 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Resources should be available to all learners and staff to practice uninterrupted hygiene;

- avoid touching the face (i.e. eyes, nose, mouth) with unwashed hands;

- consult a healthcare facility if there is a suspected **COVID-19** infection

inform the education authorities **immediately** if a learner, educator, support staff or parent/caregiver has been in direct contact with an infected person, or if they are diagnosed with **COVID-19**; and

- eradicate all forms of stigma and discrimination as a result of **COVID-19**.

## **Learner hygiene:**

Learners should be encouraged to:

- wash their hands frequently, always with soap and water for at least 20 seconds;
- keep their nails and teeth clean;
- refrain from touching their eyes, mouth and face;
- not share cups, eating utensils, food or drinks with others;
- sneeze or cough into a bent elbow or tissue, and to discard the tissue safely in a bin with a lid, then wash their hands immediately;
- refrain from teasing anyone about being sick;
- share what they learn about preventing disease with their family, friends, and siblings; and
- tell their teacher or parents, if they feel sick, and to stay at home.

## **USE OF INFORMATION, EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION MATERIAL:**

**Advocacy material on handwashing must be available and displayed prominently in each classroom, hall, toilet facility and office building.**

**Important information messages for schools should include the following:**

- o Wash hands and sanitize hands frequently.
- o Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.
- o Cover the mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when coughing or sneezing, then dispose of the used tissue safely in a bin with a lid.
- o Maintain at least a one-and-a-half-meter distance between yourself and others.
- o Use a cloth mask or visor at all times while at school, on the way home and in public.
- o Change masks daily and wash them.
- o Do not share pencils, pens, toys and other learning objects.
- o No hugging, touching, kissing or shaking hand. Rather elbow greet or foot tap.
- o Do not share food and school lunch amongst friends.
- o Do not share eating utensils amongst learners.
- o Change clothes daily and wash them.
- o Wash daily- take a shower, bath or bathe every day.
- o Do not share tooth brushes or face cloths with anyone
- o Do not share utensils of sick people with others.

## **HOW TO PUT ON, USE AND TAKE OFF OF A MASK:**

**Note:** Masks are only effective when used in combination with the other Golden Rules of prevention. Cloth masks need to be washed with warm soapy water and dried in the sunlight and ironed daily. Communication should be distributed to parents, learners, educators and all staff on taking care of the cloth masks.

### **Steps to follow:**

1. Before touching the mask, clean hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.
2. Take the mask and inspect it for tears or holes.
3. Orient which side is the top side for the nose.
4. Ensure the proper side of the mask faces outwards (the colored side).
5. Place the mask to your face.
6. Pull down the mask's bottom so it covers your mouth and your chin.
8. Place the elastic loops behind the ears or tie at the back of the head so the mask is snug. Adjust as necessary so that the mask covers the nose and chin comfortably.
7. After use, take off the mask by removing the elastic loops from behind the ears or untie the mask while keeping the mask away from your face and clothes, to avoid touching potentially contaminated surfaces of the mask.
8. Place the mask in a safe area immediately after use.
9. Perform hand hygiene after touching or discarding the mask – Use alcohol-based hand rub or wash your hands with soap and water.
10. Wash the mask with soapy warm water and dry in sunlight. Iron before use.

### **LEARNER TRANSPORT:**

**Loading capacity of learner transport: Regulation 11C as amended by the substitution Regulation by a; b and c as below:**

- (a) All minibuses must reduce seating capacity to mitigate the spread of the virus;
- (b) Bus services, taxi services and e- hailing services shall not carry more than 50% of the licensed capacity; and
- (c) Private vehicles shall not carry more than 60% of the licensed capacity, and that all directions in respect of hygienic conditions and the limitation of exposure of persons to **COVID -19**, are adhered to.

### **Provision of improved access and hygiene, disinfection control in learner transport**

- all operators of learner transport facilities must, on regular intervals, provide adequate sanitizers or other hygiene dispenser for washing of hands for learners.
- Operators must ensure that all learners transport vehicles are clean and tidy.
- Operators must ensure that public transport vehicles are disinfected before picking up and after dropping off learners.
- Operators must ensure that all learner transport vehicle doors and window handles, armrests and handrails are sanitized before picking up and dropping of learners.
- All drivers and learners must wear a mask.
- Learners must sanitize their hands-on embarking and disembarking from transport at all times. The sanitizers used to sanitize all learner transport vehicles must have a minimum of 60% alcohol content.
- All learner transport operators must provide disinfection information materials and procedures.

## **Embarkation of learners in the vehicles**

- All operators must ensure that public transport vehicles are cleaned and disinfected before picking up and after dropping off learners.
- Operators must ensure that all learner transport vehicles' door and window handles, armrests and handrails are cleaned/wiped with a disinfectant before picking up and after dropping off learners.
- Operators must ensure that all learner transport vehicles are clean and tidy.

All drivers and passengers (learners) must wear a mask.

- Hand sanitizers with a minimum of 60% alcohol content must be available in the vehicle at all times.
- Transport coordinators must ensure that learners sanitize their hands before getting into the vehicle.
- Vehicles should be monitored for compliance by departmental officials.

## **Access control for parents and third parties**

The SMT and SGB must ensure that:

- entry by visitors, parents, and vendors is prohibited unless it is essential;
- strict access control measures are established and adhered to, including the signing of a register by all visitors. Visitors, parents and vendors should not be allowed on school premises unless essential. See also the *DBE Guidelines for Schools on Maintaining Hygiene during COVID-19*;
- all visitors must wear a face mask and sanitize their hands at the entry point;
- all visitors must report to the reception area;
- all visitors, except government officials, to make an appointment and state the nature of their visit;
- there is regular communication with parents via newsletters, telephone, bulk SMS messages, emails, etc. to minimize meetings/gatherings with parents; and
- there are very limited class-based parents' meetings.

NOTE: If it is necessary to meet parents, meetings must be limited to one parent per learner and maintain the social distance of at least two meters respecting the social gathering restrictions.

## **Screening for COVID-19**

Below is an example of a screening questionnaire from the DOH, depicting the type of questions that may be asked

Screening procedure		
Question	Yes	No
Do you have a high temperature?		
Do you have cough?		
Do you have a sore throat		
Do you have difficulty breathing (shortness of breath)		
Do you feel weak and tired today?		
Can you taste food and drinks normally?		
Can you smell normally?		

If the answer to all the questions is "No", the session can end and the learner/employee permitted to enter the school for a temperature check.

NB. If the temperature taken is higher than 38C or any one of the questions are answered "Yes", the learner/employee will become a "person under investigation" (PUI) and must be isolated and referred for testing.



## **CLEANING AND DISINFECTION:**

Routine environmental cleaning is an essential part of disinfection. Organic matter can inactivate many disinfectants. Cleaning reduces the soil load, allowing the disinfectant to work. Removal of germs such as the virus that causes **COVID-19**, requires thorough cleaning followed by disinfection.

### **1) Cleaning of minimally touched surfaces**

Minimally touched surfaces such as floors, walls, ceilings, blinds, etc. should be thoroughly cleaned and cleaned as follows;

- Detergent solution/wipes should be used as per manufacturer's instructions.
- Damp mopping is preferable to dry mopping.
- Walls and blinds should be cleaned when visibly dusty or soiled.
- Window curtains should be regularly changed in addition to being cleaned when soiled.
- Sinks and basins should be cleaned on a regular basis.

### **2) Cleaning and disinfection of high touch surfaces**

Frequently touched surfaces are a high-risk for cross-transmission by pathogens that are transferred from people's hands. Items such as **door handles, light switches, lift buttons, working surfaces, tables, railings etc. are frequently touched in public places** (shopping malls, public amenities, airports and other public places where people gather in numbers).

- High touch areas in public places should be cleaned and disinfected regularly and daily.
- Clean general surfaces and fittings when visibly soiled and immediately.
- Routine cleaning and disinfection of high touch surfaces should be done with clean water and a neutral detergent. Detergents usually have no killing ability but do remove organic matter which contain microbes and thereby reduce environmental contamination.
- Detergent solution must be used as per manufacturer's instructions. Can use, with the exact choice of detergent determined by the nature of surface and likely degree of contamination.
- Detergent-impregnated wipes may be used but should not be used as a replacement for the mechanical cleaning process.

### **3) General cleaning and disinfection of high touch surfaces**

Routine environmental cleaning is an essential part of disinfection. Organic matter can inactivate many disinfectants. Cleaning reduces the soil load, allowing the disinfectant to work. Removal of germs such as the virus that causes **COVID-19** requires thorough cleaning followed by disinfection.

The length of time that the SARS-COV-2 virus (the cause of **COVID-19**) survives on inanimate surfaces will vary from hours to days, depending on factors such as the amount of contaminated body fluid, such as respiratory droplets present and environmental temperature and humidity. In general, Coronaviruses are unlikely to survive for long once droplets produced by coughing or sneezing dry out.

Regular cleaning and disinfection in schools, scholar transport and in households is critical in controlling the spread of the **COVID-19** virus. **Surfaces should be thoroughly cleaned before applying disinfectants to further reduce bioburden.**

#### 4) Application of spray disinfectants

Because **COVID-19** infection is spread by droplets either through coughing, sneezing or from hands to surfaces, outdoor areas have less risk than crowded indoor areas, in part due to ventilation. Therefore, air spraying of outdoor environments is not essential. Focus should be on indoor crowded areas:

- Spray floors, walls and other internal surroundings in areas of high human traffic.
- Spray communal showers and toilets.

### **Cleaning Procedures**

- Perform hand hygiene before and after removing gloves;
- Use heavy duty gloves. Elbow-long gloves are recommended;
- Eye protection may be worn, such as goggles or visors;
- Clean with water and disinfectant. **Follow the instructions on the label** to ensure safe and effective use of the product.
- Gloves (if disposable), masks and other waste generated during cleaning should be placed into a waste bin with a lid and disposed of safely.

