

# Frequently Asked Questions

Heritage Academy Charter Schools follows the guidance and expertise of national and local health officials to help protect our students and staff from all communicable diseases. We are aware that The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is monitoring an outbreak of respiratory illness caused by a novel (new) coronavirus (COVID-19) first identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. Families are encouraged to visit the [CDC website](#) for more information and travel guidance regarding COVID-19.

Please be assured that Heritage Academy will continue to be in communication with our local partners and stands ready to take all appropriate measures. Our District Office Team is closely monitoring all developments and is in communication with public health officials.

Our professional custodial partners will also continue to disinfect campuses each day with hospital-grade products to help offset the spread of communicable illnesses, but it takes all of us to ensure healthy school environments.

As a reminder, we are still in the midst of cold and flu season, and it's important for families to take preventative measures to safeguard themselves from the spread of communicable diseases. As such, Heritage Academy would like to provide you with answers to the following frequently asked questions (FAQ):

## What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China. Currently, the CDC reports several cases in the United States, including Texas.

## What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

## How is the COVID-19 virus spread?

According to the CDC, the virus that causes COVID-19 belongs to a family of viruses called "coronavirus." There are other viruses in the coronavirus family that can cause illness in both humans and animals. These viruses can cause either mild illness like a cold or can make people very sick with pneumonia. This particular coronavirus has not been seen previously in humans. The virus is likely to be spread from person to person. Since the virus is very new, health authorities continue to carefully watch how this virus spreads.

## How will I know if I or my children have the flu or COVID-19?

While both these illnesses are respiratory viruses with symptoms of fever and a cough, it is recommended that anyone experiencing these symptoms visit a healthcare provider for diagnosis and treatment.

## What can I do to prevent being infected or spreading the virus?

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Wash your hands frequently.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.

- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a covered trash can.
- If you do not have a tissue, use your sleeve (not your hands).
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

## **Can staff or students attend school if they traveled internationally OR via cruise line recently?**

We encourage families to follow the CDC's travel advisories. A Level 2 or 3 Travel Health Notice is one that recommends that travelers practice enhanced precautions or avoid all non-essential travel to that particular country. View the CDC traveler's [health notices](#) for up-to-date guidance and recommendations related to travel to specific countries.

We ask for any students or employees to stay home for 14 days after they (or a family member living in the same household) return from travel to:

- China, Iran, Italy, South Korea, Japan, or any additional countries added to the CDC Level 2 and 3 [lists](#)); or
- any location via [cruise ship](#) if a case of COVID-19 was reported on your ship during the cruise.

Heritage Academy will work with each family or staff member impacted during this extended absence period to resolve any attendance issues. Documentation of travel to an impacted area will be required.

## **What is being done to keep schools clean and protect students?**

Heritage Academy is following the guidance of the CDC to prepare for and respond to the evolving COVID-19 situation.

Custodial staff will perform extra cleaning of schools and Home Office. During Spring Break (and as needed thereafter), Heritage Academy will conduct additional cleaning and disinfection in accordance with [CDC guidelines](#).

Heritage Academy District Office Team has issued guidance for campus staff to use in identifying and assessing the health status of students or staff who are experiencing flu-like symptoms. Please contact Dana Herrera if you have additional questions related to preparation on your campus [dherrera@heritageacademy.net](mailto:dherrera@heritageacademy.net).

## **What will be done if someone at a school or local ISD is diagnosed with COVID-19?**

If both exposure and symptoms of fever or respiratory illness are present, employees are instructed to inform the principal, isolate the individual, and contact Health Services for additional guidance.

Where necessary, additional cleaning and disinfection will take place in accordance with [CDC guidelines](#).

In addition, school closures are one of several options available to control the spread of COVID-19 if recommended by the CDC or other health authorities. Heritage Academy will continue to monitor the progress of the illness and communicate with parents and staff on an ongoing basis.

## **Should I or my children wear masks?**

The CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19. You should only wear a mask if a healthcare professional recommends it. A facemask should be used by people who have COVID-19 and are showing symptoms. This is to protect others from the risk of getting infected. The use of facemasks also is crucial for health workers and other people who are taking care of someone infected with COVID-19 in close settings (at home or in a healthcare facility).

If you are not sick and are around someone who is sick, maintaining proper infection control such as frequent hand washing and cough etiquette is the best form of protection.

## Where can I find additional resources?

[FAQ – What You Need to Know About COVID-19](#)

[FAQ: COVID-19 and Children](#)

[Flyer \(English\) – Stop The Spread of Germs](#)

[Flyer \(Spanish\) – Stop The Spread of Germs](#)

[Flyer – Symptoms of COVID-19](#)

[COVID-19 Information for Travel](#)