

Corona Hygiene Plan for Schools in Rhineland-Palatinate

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Preliminary note

According to § 36 in conjunction with Section 33 Infection Protection Act (IfSG) all schools have a school hygiene plan, in which the most important cornerstones are regulated according to the Infection Protection Act in order to contribute to the health of the pupils and all those involved in school through a hygienic environment.

The present hygiene plan corona serves as a supplement to the model hygiene plan and must be applied in accordance with the current version of the corona control ordinance. On special topics such as sports and music lessons there will be supplementary guidelines.

School management and pedagogues set a good example and ensure that the students take the hygiene instructions seriously and implement them.

All employees of the schools, the school authorities, all pupils and all other people who work regularly at the schools are also required to carefully observe the hygiene instructions of the health authorities and the Robert Koch Institute.

The staff, the pupils and the legal guardians are to be informed of the hygiene measures in a suitable manner.

A. RESTORE REGULAR OPERATION

In the area of conflict between the right to education and state care for children and adolescents and their families on the one hand, and measures to protect against the spread of the coronavirus on the other hand, the school closings had to give priority to infection protection first.

Thanks to numerous infection protection and hygiene measures, the number of new infections in Rhineland-Palatinate has dropped to a low level. Despite the gradual reopening of schools over the past few weeks, it has stabilized at this level. Taking into account the above-mentioned objectives, it is therefore possible and necessary to resume regular operations in schools at the beginning of school year 2020/21.

It should be noted here that essential hygiene and infection protection measures must continue to be observed by everyone involved in school life. In addition, it is important to identify emerging infection chains early on and prevent them from spreading.

1. HYGIENE MEASURES:

Personal Hygiene

- Persons with symptoms of illness (e.g. runny nose, fever, sore throat, dry cough, headache and body aches, diarrhea, loss of taste/smell, breathing problems) are not allowed to enter the facility. If symptoms occur during class, the pupils concerned must be isolated and the parents informed. In this case, the date, the name of the child and an assignment of the illness to the categories "cold symptoms", "abdominal pain/nausea", "general pain", "other" must be noted down, kept safe with the school director and destroyed after four weeks.
- Avoid physical contact such as hugs and shaking hands.
- Thorough hand hygiene (hand washing or hand disinfection).
- Comply with cough and sneeze etiquettes.
- Wear a nose and throat covering in the hallways, corridors and stairwells, in the assembly hall, when shopping at the school kiosk and in the cafeteria (this does not apply at the table).

Room Hygiene

The measures refer not only to classrooms, but to all rooms. For example, to also take organizational measures for teachers' rooms, offices or meeting rooms that enable the best possible implementation of hygiene rules.

- **Ventilation:** Make sure that the rooms are intensively ventilated. At least every 45 minutes, blast ventilation or cross ventilation should be carried out through fully opened windows for several minutes, if possible more often during the lesson. Tilting windows is largely ineffective since it barely exchanges air. Windows closed for security reasons must therefore be opened for ventilation under the supervision of a teacher. However, the opening limitations on swing windows must not be overridden due to the high risk of accidents.
If windows cannot be opened permanently in a room due to structural conditions, it is not suitable for teaching unless there is an effective ventilation and air conditioning system.
- **Cleaning:** DIN 77400 (cleaning services for school buildings - cleaning requirements) must be observed. Routine surface disinfection in schools is also not recommended by the RKI in the current COVID pandemic. Adequate cleaning is completely sufficient here.

Sanitation Area Hygiene

- Provide sufficient liquid soap dispensers and disposable towels and fill them up regularly. Cloth towel rolls from retractive dispenser systems are also suitable.
- Have a container for disposable towels available.
- At least daily cleaning of the sanitary area.

2. MINIMUM DISTANCE AND GROUP SIZES

Insofar as it is necessary for teaching in the regular class and course setting, compliance with the minimum distance can be deviated from, in particular between students in all school types and grades.

Wherever possible, a minimum distance of 1.50 m should be maintained, especially for meetings or conferences.

3. PERSONNEL USE

In view of the current infection situation, there are no restrictions on staffing. In every situation there is the possibility of observing the above measures, hygiene and infection protection measures as well as maintaining the minimum distance from the pupils and other persons. This basically applies to all school staff.

Depending on specific risk factors, additional protective measures must be taken if necessary:

a) A general assignment to a risk group is not possible according to the RKI. Rather, this requires an individual risk factor assessment by the treating physicians. Regardless of whether you belong to a risk group, given the current infection situation and the associated low probability of infection, it is fundamentally possible to be employed in classroom instruction.

Equipping with mouth-nose protection and/or facial visor or a temporary exemption from classroom instruction can be done in individual cases on request if

- a medical certificate proves that you belong to a risk group¹ and
- if there is a COVID-19 case or a specific suspected case confirmed by the health authority at school and
- as part of an occupational medical consultation based on an activity-related pandemic-specific risk assessment by the Institute for Teacher Health, the need for which is confirmed.

b) Pregnancy is generally not associated with an increased risk. In the event of a proven infection at school, the pregnant woman must be released from attendance of classes until the 14th day after the illness. If the pregnant woman would like to be used in classroom instruction at her own request, this should be decided on the basis of an individual risk assessment and after consultation with the Institute for Teacher Health.

For pregnant students, the same applies as for pregnant teachers. The affected pupils receive a distance learning offer that is equivalent to face-to-face teaching.

c) Teachers and pedagogical specialists at special schools and in inclusive classrooms are provided with the personal protective equipment according to the needs.

4. STUDENTS WITH UNDERLYING ILLNESSES

Schoolchildren with underlying illnesses are also subject to compulsory schooling.

A general assignment to a risk group for a severe COVID-19 disease course is not possible from a medical point of view, especially for children and adolescents. The German Society for

Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine (DGKJ) assumes that children and adolescents with chronic diseases that are well compensated or well treated do not have to fear a higher risk for a more severe COVID-19 disease than it does to the general risk of life. In this respect, the parents/guardians in consultation with the treating doctor must critically examine and weigh up to what extent the possible significant health risk requires a longer absence from classroom instruction and thus isolation of the student makes necessary. If an exemption from classroom attendance is considered medically necessary, this must be demonstrated by a medical certificate and submitted to the school. The pupils concerned receive a distance learning offer that is equivalent to face-to-face teaching.

5. DOCUMENTATION AND TRACKING

Interrupting the chains of infection is central to combating every pandemic. In order to enable consistent contact management by the health authority in the event of an infection or suspected case, the following must be observed in particular:

- regular documentation of attendance in the class and course records,
- daily documentation of the presence of the staff regularly employed in the school,
- documentation of individual support with close contact to pupils (e.g. integration staff),
- daily documentation of the presence of other people via name and telephone lists in the school office (e.g. craftsmen, representatives of the school inspectorate, specialists, extracurricular partners, legal guardians). Their presence must be reduced to the bare minimum.

Corona Warning App

The Corona Warning app can help mitigate the pandemic by identifying and notifying people who have had an epidemiologically relevant encounter with a corona-positive person faster than with traditional follow-up. It also helps to reduce the time lag between a person's positive test and the identification and information of their contacts.

The use of the app should be expressly recommended to everyone involved in school life.

6. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SCHOOL MANAGER / HYGIENE SUPERVISOR/REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

According to the Infection Protection Act, the management in schools is responsible for ensuring hygiene. To assist you, it appoints a person responsible for hygiene or a hygiene team. In preparation for this activity, online seminars are offered in cooperation with the Mainz University Medical Center; their use is strongly recommended.

Due to the Coronavirus Notification Regulation i. V. m. § 8 and § 36 IfSG, both suspected illness and the occurrence of COVID-19 cases in schools must be reported to the health authority. The Rhineland-Palatinate State Examination Office has provided a registration form for this purpose, which is available for download at <https://lua.rlp.de/de/service/downloads/infektionsschutz/>.

The responsible school inspectorate must also be informed at the same time.

B. ADJUSTMENT OF MEASURES TO THE INFECTION

The still very dynamic development of the corona pandemic makes it necessary to continue to monitor the infection process locally, regionally and nationwide. Every new outbreak of the Corona virus must be dealt with consistently with the local authorities and the local health authorities and the necessary measures must be taken on the basis of the “level concept” as part of the state government's test strategy.

Level 1: Detect & Contain - testing and quarantine (occurrence of a COVID-19 case in a school)
From the first case of COVID-19 in a school, it is important to identify possible infections, enable early treatment and break the chain of infection. For this purpose, the health authority orders event-related tests as well as the quarantine of:

- People with symptoms
- close contacts (from 15 min "face to face"); Category I
- People without symptoms in the unit (class, course, study group)

Level 2: Local restrictions (multiple COVID-19 cases in one school)

Depending on the number, context and distribution as well as the risk of transmission, if several COVID-19 cases occur at a school, the primary goal is to contain the infection process.

In addition to the level 1 measures, the health authority decides on its own responsibility whether individual classes, courses or entire schools are closed.

Level 3: Large-scale restriction of public life

If it is no longer possible to contain the infection process on a regional basis (at the latest with an incidence of 50 per 100,000 inhabitants or infection chains that are no longer traceable), further uncontrolled transmission of the virus must be avoided.

For this purpose, in coordination with the highest state health authority, additional measures are taken regionally or nationwide in addition to levels 1 and 2 (for the school area, this may mean maintaining a minimum distance of 1.50 m, reduced group sizes, exemption from classroom instruction for high-risk individuals, comprehensive school closings) .