

# COVID-19 guidelines for SSEN: MMH

## As at 9 September 2022

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These guidelines have been developed specifically for the **School of Special Education Needs: Medical and Mental Health** (SSEN: MMH) workforce operating across high-risk health settings.

For further information on COVID-19 safe protocols in schools, refer to [COVID-19 operating guidelines for public schools](#).

If conditions change the Chief Health Officer will advise the Department to adjust settings.

### Vaccination requirement

The vaccination mandate continues to apply to workers in high-risk settings including healthcare and health support settings in hospitals and primary health care (including SSEN: MMH), residential aged care and residential disability settings. The mandate remains in these settings to protect the most vulnerable from severe disease.

Workers captured under the mandatory vaccination directions must have their third (booster) dose administered within one calendar month of becoming eligible. Refer to: [Health Worker \(Restrictions on Access\) Directions \(No 5\)](#), [Booster Vaccination \(Restrictions on Access\) Directions \(No 3\)](#) [CEO Instruction – Entry Restrictions No 1.1 to a Health Care Facility – School of Special Educational Needs: Medical and Mental Health](#).

#### Q. Are staff still required to provide vaccination evidence to their principal or line manager?

Yes. SSEN: MMH staff are required to show vaccination evidence to their principal or line manager.

### Masks

Masks are required for staff and students (Years 7 and over) in the following situations:

- high-risk settings such as hospitals (including SSEN: MMH), correctional facilities, residential aged care and disability service facilities
- if identified as an asymptomatic close contact when attending school.

The usual [mask exemptions](#) apply. Masks are also encouraged in crowded indoor settings where physical distancing is not possible.

Mask and personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements for SSEN: MMH staff align with the [COVID-19 Framework for System Alert and Response](#).

For further information, refer to the [WA Government](#) website.

**Q. The school does not have an adequate provision of spare face masks. How do I obtain more face masks?**

Schools have been provided with an allocation of COVID-19 funding to maintain PPE supplies, including face masks. Schools should use this allocation of funds to purchase additional face masks where required. For more information, refer to [lkon](#).

### Close contact

A **close contact** is defined as:

- a household member or intimate partner of a person with COVID-19 who has had contact with them during their infectious period
- someone who has had close personal interaction with a person with COVID-19 during their infectious period, where they spent greater than 4 hours of cumulative contact with them in a residential setting in any 24-hour period, (i.e. a home, accommodation facility) where masks have been removed by both people during the period of contact
- someone who is directed by WA Health that they are a close contact.

### Testing and isolation protocols

Staff who **test positive to COVID-19** are required to isolate for a minimum of 5 full days.

- If symptoms have resolved after 5 days, staff may leave isolation but cannot return to a high-risk setting until 7 days after the COVID-19 positive result.
- If symptoms are still present after 5 days, staff must continue to isolate until symptoms resolve.
- Staff are not required to deliver a negative RAT to return to the workplace after isolating.
- There is no requirement for schools to notify families of a positive COVID-19 case.

**Close contacts** with symptoms are required to isolate for 5 days and get tested as per existing protocols.

- Staff must continue to isolate after the 5 days if they are still symptomatic, until their symptoms resolve.

**Close contacts** with no symptoms are not required to isolate and can continue working in a high-risk setting, provided they:

- notify their employer/educational facility of their close contact status
- seek oral or written confirmation from their employer to attend work
- monitor for symptoms
- immediately leave the workplace and return home if they develop symptoms or become COVID-positive
- enter or remain at the high-risk setting only for work duties
- wear a surgical mask while at work along with any PPE requirements from the employer
- maintain physical distancing and take breaks away from other people
- undertake daily Rapid Antigen Testing (RAT) and return a negative result
- wear a mask outside the home
- avoid non-essential gatherings and contact with people at risk of severe illness.

If a close contact tests positive to COVID-19, they must isolate for a further 5 days and cannot return to a high-risk setting until 7 days after the COVID-19 positive result. If a person has recovered from COVID-19, they will not be identified as a close contact for 4 weeks (28 days).

Refer to the [WA Government](#) website for further information on close contacts.

**Q. What leave is available for staff who are confirmed as COVID-19 positive?**

Refer to [Manage staff leave and absence due to COVID-19](#).

## Visitors to hospitals

For details on visitors to hospitals, refer to the [WA Government](#) website.

## COVID-19 support contacts

For further information relating to these guidelines please see below.

<b>COVID-19 Support Team</b>	coronavirussupport@education.wa.edu.au
<b>Phone support (8:00 am – 4:00 pm weekdays)</b>	1800 882 345
<b>Curriculum / Connected Learning</b>	connectedlearning@education.wa.edu.au
<b>Phone support (8:00 am – 4:00 pm weekdays)</b>	9413 3394
<b>Student Wellbeing</b>	COVID19.studentwellbeing@education.wa.edu.au
<b>Phone support</b>	9402 6428