

# SBCEO Transition Plan & FAQs

Updated August 10, 2021

Throughout the pandemic, four leading principles have guided SBCEO's approach:

- Protecting the health and safety of our staff and their families.
- Supporting the wellness of our employees.
- Maintaining excellent service and leadership throughout the county, for schools and districts, and programs, staff, and employees.
- Being responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars.

These FAQs are intended to provide general guidance for all SBCEO employees. Guidance may change based on individual circumstances, recommendations, or orders from federal, state, or local authorities.

## RESOURCES & REFERENCES

[CDC](#) – U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[CDC K-12 Updated Guidance](#)

[CDC COVID-19 Symptoms](#)

[CDC At-Risk Groups](#)

[CDC Cleaning & Disinfecting](#)

[CDC Face Covering](#)

[CDC Handwashing](#) - *CDC COVID-19 related videos available [here](#).*

[CDC Physical Distancing](#)

[CDC Travel Guidance](#)

[CDPH](#) – California Department of Public Health

[CDPH K-12 Guidance updated 7-12-21](#)

[CDPH Guidance for Child Care and ECE](#)

[CDPH Travel Guidance](#)

[SBCPHD](#) – Santa Barbara County Public Health Department

[Link for local vaccine providers](#)

[Link for FAQs about the Vaccine](#)

[SBCPHD COVID-19 Community Dashboard](#)

State Resources

[CDE](#) – California Department of Education

[Safe Schools For All Dashboard](#)

[California Dashboard of COVID-19 Metrics](#)

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# PREVENTING THE SPREAD

## What is my role in preventing the spread?

*If it is medically possible for you, it is strongly recommended that you get vaccinated. Click [here](#) for information on receiving free vaccination in Santa Barbara County for anyone over 12 years old.*

*As members of the Santa Barbara County community and part of the SBCEO family, we are each responsible for our own actions. At this time SBCEO does not require employees to be vaccinated, however, we encourage each employee to please consider how your actions at and away from work may affect your colleagues. The expectation is that SBCEO employees follow the state and local health orders and guidance. These include:*

- *Staying home if you are sick.*
- *Wearing a face covering while indoors around others according to state and local guidance and orders.*
- *Washing hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.*
- *Following SBCEO cleaning protocols for frequently touched surfaces when you are at work.*
- *Not touching eyes, nose, or mouth.*
- *Covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue or your elbow and washing hands afterwards.*
- *Avoiding close contact with people who are sick. (Close contact is defined as a cumulative 15 minutes or more within 6 feet over a 24-hour period, regardless of face coverings.)*

*If you are in an environment in which you are in close contact (within 6 feet for a cumulative 15 minutes or more within a 24-hour period, regardless of face coverings) with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, contact your supervisor immediately about the appropriate action to take, if any, prior to returning to work. In some cases, isolation or quarantine may be necessary. If you are experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19 that are not related to a chronic or known condition or an alternative diagnosis, please stay home and contact your health provider for direction.*

**What actions should I take before coming to work?** *All employees are required to complete the Wellness Check Affirmation, which includes the agreement to perform a daily self-evaluation for symptoms of COVID-19 before you come to work. Do not come to work if you are experiencing [symptoms associated with COVID-19](#) (fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea). Stay home if you are experiencing any of those symptoms not due to a chronic or known condition.*

*Employees should utilize established call-in procedures if they need to stay home due to having any of these symptoms. Individuals experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 should contact their healthcare provider. Employees may use sick leave, vacation or compensatory time (classified only), off-contract time (management), and/or other entitlement/differential pay as available, consistent with leaves policy. Employees may be eligible for other federal, state, or local leaves, should they be available, and should contact Human Resources to discuss individual circumstances.*

**What is the [guidance on travel](#)?** *Per CDPH, delay travel (both domestic and international) until you are fully vaccinated, get tested before and after travel if you are not vaccinated and you choose to travel, and always wear a mask on public transportation, regardless of vaccination status.*

### **Fully Vaccinated Individuals**

*If you are fully vaccinated, you can travel safely within the United States (no need to test or quarantine but it is recommended you wear a mask when traveling and self-monitor for symptoms after travel). When*

traveling internationally, follow CDC testing guidelines for international travel before and after your return to the US. Please follow all CDC and California masking guidelines and stay informed of CDC Destination Travel Alerts that will warn you about high transmission rates in an area.

### **Not Fully Vaccinated Individuals**

If you are not vaccinated, but choose to travel domestically, get tested with a viral test 1–3 days before travel and 3–5 days after travel. Even if you test negative, stay home and self-quarantine for a full 7 days after travel. If you don't get tested, stay home and self-quarantine for 10 days after travel. If you choose to travel internationally, follow CDC testing guidelines for international travel before and after your return to the US. Please follow all CDC and California masking guidelines and stay informed of CDC Destination Travel Alerts that will warn you about high transmission rates in an area.

Always wear a mask on public transportation (regardless of your vaccination status). Everyone shall wear masks at all times on public transportation (including airports, planes, trains, buses, stations, etc.) into, within, or out of the U.S.

## **AT-WORK: PROCEDURES**

**Do I need to wear a [face covering](#)?** Wear face coverings according to the strictest state and local guidelines or orders, SBCEO program decisions, and with the school site procedures adopted where they are assigned to work. Effective August 6, 2021, at 5:00 p.m., the [Santa Barbara County Public Health Department \(SBCPHD\) issued an order that requires face coverings indoors](#) regardless of vaccination status unless alone in a room. Face coverings are not required outdoors, however they are recommended for unvaccinated persons outdoors where six feet of physical distancing cannot be maintained.

[CDPH Guidance](#) does not require that a face covering be worn outside the home, but consistent with [CDC Guidance](#), it is strongly recommended, regardless of vaccination status, unless one of the below circumstances apply.

- Persons who are working in an office (alone) or in a room alone.
- Persons who are actively eating or drinking
- Persons who are alone in a vehicle.
- Persons who are specifically exempted from wearing face coverings as approved by SBCEO.

Exemptions include persons younger than two years old; persons with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that prevents wearing a mask; persons who are hearing impaired, or communicating with a person who is hearing impaired, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication; or persons for whom wearing a mask would create a risk to the person related to their work, as determined by local, state, or federal regulators or workplace safety guidelines. All exemptions must be approved by your division lead or human resources.

### **In K12 school settings**

- Wear face coverings according to the strictest state and local guidelines or orders, SBCEO program decisions, and with the school site procedures adopted where they are assigned to work.
- Masks are optional outdoors.
- K-12 students are required to mask indoors, with exemptions per [CDPH face mask guidance](#).
- Adults in K-12 school settings are required to mask when sharing indoor spaces with students. CDPH requires all individuals wear masks indoors, regardless of vaccination status when in a [high transmission area](#).
- Persons exempted from wearing a face covering due to a medical condition, must wear a non-restrictive alternative, such as a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge, as long as their condition permits it.
- In limited situations where a face covering cannot be used for pedagogical or developmental reasons, (e.g., communicating or assisting young children or those with special needs) a face shield with a

drape (per [CDPH guidelines](#)) can be used instead of a face covering while in the classroom as long as the wearer maintains physical distance from others.

#### ***In child care and early education settings***

- *Wear face coverings according to the strictest state and local guidelines or orders, SBCEO program decisions, and with the school site procedures adopted where they are assigned to work.*
- *Providers must ensure compliance with the current [CDPH Guidance for the Use of Masks](#). As of June 15, 2021, the use of face coverings is required by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) in child care indoor settings regardless of vaccination status.*
- *Never place face coverings on babies or children under 2 years of age because it poses a danger and risk for suffocation.*
- *Children should not wear face coverings while sleeping.*
- *Child care providers and licensees must ensure the use of face coverings does not cause children to overheat in hot weather.*

**Is there a limitation on the number of times I can leave and come back in one day?** *No, you may leave for appointments, lunch, and to perform work duties at another site consistent with your responsibilities and schedule. Please make sure to follow all health and safety protocols when you leave and return.*

**How should I be handling office supplies, equipment, and other tools?** *Avoid sharing office supplies and tools, if possible. If you must touch equipment, such as a copy machine, please sanitize the item after use. SBCEO-provided sanitizing materials are available in communal areas. Please contact your supervisor if you need additional sanitizing materials.*

**Will I need to wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)?** *Anyone working at a school site is required to wear face coverings and, depending on the duties of the position, one or more of the following: gloves, face shields with a cloth drape, safety coveralls, booties, or aprons. SBCEO will provide PPE for staff who work with students and others upon request. If you are not vaccinated and would like to request an N95 respirator, please contact Debbie Breck or Debra Hood for assistance.*

**What physical changes have been made to our worksites due to COVID-19?** *Reception counters and areas identified as having high traffic at our three main campuses now have plexiglass shields. Doors and windows should be kept open to promote ventilation and minimize the need to touch door handles. Additional signage has been posted around our three main campuses and approved signage is available. Please contact Reprographics to obtain the necessary signage. Please do not create your own signage as we must ensure that signage is consistent with worksite policies and protocols.*

**What are our cleaning and disinfecting procedures?** *SBCEO custodians are following the guidance of SBCPHD/CDPH. At our three main office campuses, they are cleaning and disinfecting restrooms, employee break rooms, and high-contact surfaces such as door handles and light switches, a minimum of once per day. Workspaces should remain clutter-free to aid in the efficient cleaning processes.*

*SBCEO will work closely with school districts and any other organizations who manage the spaces in which classrooms and sites are located to ensure that routine cleaning procedures have been established in accordance with state and local Public Health guidance. For any sites where it has been determined that procedures for cleaning cannot otherwise be established by the host site in accordance with state and local Public Health guidance, SBCEO shall arrange for cleaning service.*

Staff are expected to sanitize common areas and equipment they use during the day as needed. Cleaning supplies for sanitizing are available from your department. Please contact Human Resources if you need more information about staff training requirements.

**Are in-person meetings permitted?** *In-person meetings are allowed, however, virtual meetings are encouraged whenever possible to minimize exposure to people outside your regular work cohort. It is recommended that meeting organizers provide a method for participants to attend virtually even when other attendees are in-person.*

**Can I reserve a meeting or conference room?** *Meeting rooms at our three main campuses can be reserved on the Intranet. You must be on campus or logged in through the Citrix server to access the reservation forms while off campus. Reservations for the Multimedia Training Center (MTC) can be made by contacting Pat Noronha at [pnoronha@sbceo.org](mailto:pnoronha@sbceo.org).*

**Are our offices open to visitors?** *Our offices and campuses are open to visitors. We encourage staff to conduct business with non-employees remotely or electronically whenever possible. Some situations that require in-person short-term visits by non-employees may be handled through pre-arranged appointments.*

### ***In K-12 school settings***

- *Schools should review their rules for visitors and family engagement activities.*
- *Schools should limit nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations with people who are not fully vaccinated, particularly in areas where there is moderate-to-high COVID-19 community transmission.*
- *Schools should not limit access for direct service providers but can ensure compliance with school visitor policies.*
- *Schools should continue to emphasize the importance of staying home when sick.*
- *Anyone, including visitors, who have symptoms of infectious illness, such as flu or COVID-19, should stay home and seek testing and care.*

**What are the expectations for independent contractors or non-public agency staff working on campus or with SBCEO students?** *Individuals whose scope of work brings them on campus must follow the same protocols as employees. Managers are responsible for sharing the SBCEO protocols with the agencies and individuals whose services they engage.*

**Will there be different guidance for staff working with students?** *Yes. [CDC](#) and [CDPH](#) released guidance on K-12 schools as well [childcare and early care settings](#). Your department or program supervisor will provide you with details specific to your program.*

## **EMPLOYEE ILLNESS & CONTACT TRACING**

**What is the appropriate course of action if an employee at work has visible symptoms associated with COVID-19?**

*As a public employer, we are required to maintain safe and healthy working conditions for employees and use reasonable care to provide for the safety of other employees and students by furnishing a safe work and learning environment.*

*The employee's supervisor should be involved in determining whether an employee may remain at or return to work when symptomatic. If an employee experiencing symptoms has evidence that the symptoms are due to a chronic or known condition, the employee may remain at work. If the symptoms are not due to a chronic or known condition, the employee will be asked to go home.*

If a staff member, regardless of their vaccination status, has symptoms that could indicate COVID-19 infection and COVID-19 exposure is unknown, the employee shall follow this strategy for preventing the spread of COVID:

- Get tested for COVID-19 when symptoms are consistent with COVID-19 to help with rapid contact tracing and prevent possible spread.
- Do not return to the worksite until they have met CDPH return criteria for individuals with symptoms:
  - At least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; **AND**
  - Other symptoms have improved; **AND**
    - they have a **negative test for COVID-1**; **OR**
    - a healthcare provider has provided documentation that the symptoms are typical of their **underlying chronic condition** (e.g., allergies or asthma); **OR**
    - a healthcare provider has confirmed an **alternative named diagnosis** (e.g., Streptococcal pharyngitis, Coxsackie virus); **OR**
    - at least **10 days have passed since symptom onset**.

If a co-worker has concerns about another employee's symptoms, they should report their concerns to their own supervisor and/or the other employee's supervisor so the supervisor(s) can take appropriate action.

**What actions should I take if I develop symptoms during the workday?** If you develop symptoms during your workday that are unusual and are not related to chronic or known conditions, let your supervisor know and immediately return home or go to a healthcare facility as needed. As a public employer, we are required to maintain safe and healthy working conditions for employees and use reasonable care to provide for the safety of other employees and students by furnishing a safe work and learning environment.

**When can I return to work after having symptoms?** Contact your supervisor to discuss the return-to-work policy when you are experiencing or have been experiencing symptoms. Do not return to the worksite until you have met CDPH return criteria for individuals with symptoms:

- At least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; **AND**
- Other symptoms have improved; **AND**
  - they have a **negative test for COVID-1**; **OR**
  - a healthcare provider has provided documentation that the symptoms are typical of their **underlying chronic condition** (e.g., allergies or asthma); **OR**
  - a healthcare provider has confirmed an **alternative named diagnosis** (e.g., Streptococcal pharyngitis, Coxsackie virus); **OR**
  - at least **10 days have passed since symptom onset**.

**How will contact tracing be handled should an employee or student contract COVID-19?** If you have a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 or have been in close contact with someone with a confirmed diagnosis, inform your supervisor immediately. Your supervisor will work closely with the division lead and/or human resources to determine who may have had exposure and the proper communication and action that need to follow. If you are informed of the need to isolate or quarantine, you must remain away from SBCEO campuses for the duration of the period specified. If you are not at one site 100% of the time, please keep track of your worksite locations and individuals with whom you have had contact in the event our SBCEO Workplace Infection Control Coordinators or Public Health needs information for purposes of contact tracing. If a student has a confirmed case of COVID-19, SBCEO will work closely with Public Health as needed to

determine the appropriate course of action for employees and/or other student/s or individual/s who may have been in close contact with the student.

## INDIVIDUAL CONCERNS

### **What if I am age 65 years or older or have a medical condition that may put me at-risk for more severe illness from COVID-19?**

Individuals 65 years and older and/or those who have medical conditions that put them [at-risk](#) for more severe illness may continue to work at our worksites. Please speak to your supervisor and/or Human Resources to initiate an interactive process meeting if your healthcare provider indicates that being in a high-risk group restricts your ability to perform your work duties.

### **What if I am pregnant?**

According to the CDC, [pregnant people](#) might be at increased risk for severe illness. Pregnant SBCEO employees are advised to consult with their healthcare provider.

## WHAT IS MY PAY STATUS IF...

### **I am placed under an isolation?**

For individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19, if fully paid personal sick leave has exhausted, Isolation Leave is available for at least ten days. Medical evidence confirming the infectious period may be required. This leave will be available through December 31, 2021. Appropriate documentation will be required. This leave is specifically being offered by SBCEO and may not be available to other school district employees unless a similar policy has been adopted.

### **I am quarantined due to close contact with an individual diagnosed with COVID-19?**

An unvaccinated employee who has had close contact with an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 shall inform SBCEO promptly and follow the prescribed quarantine guidance, as necessary.

Please contact Human Resources to discuss your individual eligibility for personal, federal, state, or local paid leaves because of a quarantine.

### **My worksite is temporarily closed in response to COVID-19?**

During any closure of an SBCEO facility and/or curtailment of any SBCEO operations due to the COVID-19 pandemic, employees will not suffer any loss of pay or benefits relative to their regular schedule and assignment for the period of closure or curtailment so long as they are ready and available to work during regularly assigned work hours.

During a closure, employees must be reachable during their regular work hours, abstain from alcohol and other substances, and be available to report to work within one hour of notification to perform assigned duties as needed, whether on-site, remote, or a combination thereof. During a closure, pre-approved vacation (classified), off contract (certificated and management), and sick leave shall continue to be used as originally planned, and the employee will not be expected to be available or on-call to work during those leaves. The employee may request to amend pre-approved sick leave under extenuating circumstances such as the cancellation of a surgery or medical appointment.



**I am sent home due to visible signs of illness?**

*An employee sent home from work due to visible signs of illness with any of the COVID-19 symptom/s (not due to a known or chronic condition) shall remain home until cleared by a healthcare provider or return-to-work criteria have been met. Employees should contact their supervisor or division lead to discuss their individual circumstances. Personal sick leave, vacation, compensatory leave, off contract time, and differential or other entitlement leave are available to employees, as applicable, as needed. Supplemental Paid Sick Leave is available in specific COVID-19 related circumstances through September 30, 2021.*

**I need to care for an ill or quarantined individual?**

*Please contact Human Resources to discuss your individual eligibility for personal, federal, state, or local paid leaves when caring for an ill or quarantined individual.*

## OTHER BENEFITS

**What is the Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act (EFMLEA)?**

*This leave expired on December 31, 2020, and is no longer available. Please contact Human Resources to discuss your individual eligibility for personal, federal, state, or local paid or unpaid leaves.*

**What is the Supplemental Paid Sick Leave (SPSL)?**

*This is a federal leave available to employees through September 30, 2021, for specific situations related to COVID-19. Please contact Human Resources to discuss your individual eligibility for personal, federal, state, or local paid or unpaid leaves.*

**Can I get paid leave under the new Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act?**

*This leave expired on December 31, 2020 and is no longer available. Please contact Human Resources to discuss your individual eligibility for personal, federal, state, or local paid or unpaid leaves.*

**Are employees who lose pay due to COVID-19 eligible for unemployment benefits?**

*The California Employment Development Department determines whether workers are eligible for unemployment benefits; please refer to the EDD's [COVID-19 FAQs](#) for additional information. Employees who wish to file unemployment claims may do so on the [EDD website](#). Employees who need wage history information to file with their unemployment claim should contact SBCEO Payroll ([payroll@sbceo.org](mailto:payroll@sbceo.org)).*

**Are employees who lose pay due to COVID-19 eligible for Paid Family Leave benefits through the California Employment Development Department?**

*Because public schools do not participate in the State Disability Insurance (SDI) system, SBCEO employees are not eligible for Paid Family Leave benefits, which are paid from SDI contributions.*

## DISASTER SERVICE WORKERS

**I signed the Oath of Office when I was hired, and I am wondering what that means given the COVID-19 situation?**

*Pursuant to the California Emergency Services Act, any person employed by a county, city, state agency, or public district in California is a public employee and therefore considered a Disaster Service Worker. This means that in the event of an emergency, you may be called upon to aid in the response and recovery phases of a disaster or emergency, including approved and documented training necessary or proper to engage in such activities. As a Disaster Service Worker, you may be asked to carry on with your work as usual, or you may be asked to do something different from your everyday job.*