

UH Charter School COVID-19 Guidelines

This document is to provide the UH Charter School community with the guidelines that will be in place for the re-opening of school in August. When developing these guidelines UH Charter School considered the recommendations from the University <https://www.uh.edu/covid-19/>, the Texas Education Agency <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/health-safety-discipline/covid/coronavirus-covid-19-support-and-guidance> the America Academy of Pediatrics <https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/>, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>, the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/>, and the Harris County Public Health Department <https://publichealth.harriscountytexas.gov/Resources/2019-Novel-Coronavirus>.

UH Charter School also surveyed parents and staff to gather information to help in making final decisions regarding the re-opening of the school for the 2020-2021 school year.

UH Charter School staff also attended a number of training sessions specifically addressing re-opening of school procedures and protocols.

Changes to this guidance may occur should we receive additional information or direction from the University, the State of Texas, the Texas Education Agency and/or state of local health authorities. The guidance provided in the handbook is in effect unless you are notified in writing of added guidance and/or changes to the practices outlined in this document.

We know that the education and safety of your child is your main concern and it is ours as well. We want to provide you with information on the instructional program for the 2020-2021 school year and the protocols in place to ensure safety of all. The intent is to help you in making decisions for your child's educational program as we begin the 2020-2021 school year.

Should you have any questions about the guidance outline here please contact Patricia Paquin at ppaquin@uh.edu or 713-743-8538.

Our guiding principles for the document are:

Health and Safety of all (students, staff and the school community)

High quality instruction for all students - identify and meet the needs of all students

Provide mental health and wellness supports

Understanding the need for adjustments during the year

Health and safety:

As recommended by health authorities the wearing of face covering helps to mitigate the spread of germs. All students and staff will be required to wear face coverings.

- Facemasks will be worn by all staff
- Facemasks will be worn by students entering and exiting the building and any time 6 feet distancing is not possible
- Face shields will be worn by students in the classrooms (provided by the school)
- Office staff will wear facemasks when they are outside of their office or when someone is in the office.
- Desk dividers will be used in the classrooms during all classroom activities
- There will be no shared materials each student has their own supply case (provided by the school) with the needed supplies for classroom use

- Distancing of students will take place in the classroom to the extent possible
- Students will be assigned seats to minimize contact of surfaces and materials
- Students will remain in cohorts to minimize movement and contact. Students will remain in the classroom and teachers/staff will move into classroom (ancillary, grades 3-5)

As recommended by health authorities limiting access to the building helps in mitigating the spread of COVID 19. The following are procedures to reduce building access.

- Students will be dropped off curbside at the sidewalk by the red canopy
- Staff will be available to clear the student for check in
 - Students must wear a face mask when entering and exiting the building and at all time when 6 feet distancing is not possible
 - A daily self-check before coming to school is required for all students.
 - Student temperatures will be checked daily. A staff member will conduct the temperature check.
 - Students with a temperature of 100 + will be sent home and not allowed in the building and any student exhibiting COVID 19 symptoms will be excluded for the building (a list of Symptoms can be found at the end of this document in Appendix A)
- Any student who has been sick must have a doctor's note to return to school
- Students with fever must be fever free for 48 hours before returning to school with a doctor's note
- Staff must self-screen daily (a list of Symptoms can be found at the end of this document in Appendix A)
- Staff temperature check will be conducted daily
- Any staff member that has been sick must have a doctor's note to return to school/work
- Only staff and students will have access to the building
 - Parents will not enter the building for drop off or pick up
 - Parents will only be allowed access in an emergency situation (determined by administration) If early pick up is needed please follow these guidelines: contact the front desk at 713-743-9111 to notify the school on the early pick up to include day and time, when you arrive at school call the front desk and your child will be brought to you. Parents are to wait at the curb by the canopy for your child to be brought to you. (This procedure is outlined in the parent/student handbook page ?)
- Gathering of the school will not occur (assemblies, field trips, etc.)
- Parent meetings and conferences will be conducted virtually – parents wishing to schedule a parent meeting can follow the procedures outlined in the parent/student handbook on page ?)
- Meals will be provided in classrooms not in the café – meals will be delivered to the classroom by school personnel
- Student movement will be limited to restrooms and outdoor recess. Students will remain in their cohort group during the school day
- Movement in the school will be redirected with an entrance door and an exit door. The entrance door will be the first door on the hall to the right and the exit doors will be the door by the main office.
- Teachers will move to classroom to provide instruction (PE, Art, Music, grades 3-5)
- Stagger dismissal time to reduce numbers at dismissal. Dismissal schedule can be found in the parent/student handbook on page?

As recommended by health authorities handwashing and other sanitary procedures can help to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. UH Charter will conduct instructional activities to remind students of the ways to stop the spread of germs.

- Students will be instructed in proper handwashing techniques.

- Students (and staff) will be trained on proper health and disease transmission prevention measures.
- Signage for proper hygiene practices will be posted throughout the building, in the restrooms, at the sinks and at the entrance.
- Hand sanitizers are available at school entrances, in all classrooms and throughout the school.
- Disinfect wipes are available in all classrooms and throughout the school. Surfaces will be wiped between each activity.
- Increased cleaning by UH Facilities will take place throughout the day. The CDC has provided guidance on cleaning buildings to prevent COVID-19 spread. (the building was deep cleaned before the start of the school year)
- High touch areas will be cleaned frequently throughout the day (door knobs, light switches, sinks, restrooms).
- Prior to the first day of school UHCS staff will participate in the Texas Agri-Life Extension online course on Special Considerations for Infection Control During COVID-19
<https://agrilifelearn.tamu.edu/product?catalog=COFS-256>

UH Charter School has an Emergency Operations Plan in place. This plan includes strategies to reduce the spread of all infectious diseases (seasonal flu, colds and COVID-19). The following procedures will be in place for each of the following scenarios dealing with COVID-19:

(These procedures would be in place for the school day and aftercare program)

No cases of COVID 19 in the school community:

- Review and keep abreast of CDC, university and state guidance (adjust plans as necessary)
- Daily reminders of preventive actions: stay at home when sick, cover coughs/sneezes, frequent hand washing
- Teach and reinforce healthy hygiene practices (ex: washing hands after each activity – sinks in each room, cleaning tables after each activity)
- Intensify cleaning and disinfection efforts
- Require sick students and staff to stay at home.

Confirmed case of COVID-19 in the school community:

- Coordinate with the university and local health officials
- Communication to parents through Bloomz and email
- Dismiss students and staff for 3-5 days (deep cleaning requires 3 days)
 - Initial short-term dismissal allows time for local health officials to gain a better understanding of the situation
 - Allows the local health officials to determine appropriate next steps
 - Communicate with staff and school community – closing decisions and COVID 19 exposure
- Clean and disinfect the school thoroughly
 - Coordinate with UH Emergency Management and UH Facilities
- All students would engage in remote instruction during this short term closure. UH Charter School would implement strategies to continue education and related supports for students
 - Ensure
 - continuity of instruction

- meal programs
 - communication with the school community
- Make decisions about extending the school closure if necessary
- If after cleaning and disinfecting local health officials allow the instructional staff to return to the building bring students back

Substantial community transmission:

- All of the above and extended school closure
- Notification to Texas Education Agency of the expected extended closure.

Identifying Possible COVID-19 Cases on Campus

- We will immediately separate any student/staff who shows COVID-19 symptoms while at school until the student can be picked up by a parent or guardian. (We are using a small room on campus for this purpose)
- The areas used by the individual who shows COVID-19 symptoms while at school (student, teacher, or staff) will be cleaned as soon as is feasible.
- Any student who report feeling sick will be given an immediate temperature check to determine if they are symptomatic for COVID-19.
- Student/staff will not be allowed back to school with-out a doctor's note

Individuals Confirmed, Suspected or Exposed with COVID-19

Any individuals who themselves either: (a) are lab-confirmed to have COVID-19; or (b) experience the symptoms of COVID-19 (listed in Appendix A) must stay at home throughout the infection period, and cannot return to campus until the school system screens the individual to determine any of the below conditions for campus re-entry have been met:

In the case of an individual who was diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual may return to school when all three of the following criteria are met:

- At least three days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications)
- The individual has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and
- At least ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

In the case of an individual who has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and who is not evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19, such individual is assumed to have COVID-19, and the individual may not return to the campus until the individual has completed the same three-step set of criteria listed above.

- If the individual has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to school before completing the above stay at home period, the individual must either (a) obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis or (b) receive two separate confirmations at least 24 hours apart that they are free of COVID via acute infection tests at an approved COVID-19 testing location found at <https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/>.

Individuals with confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19 must inform the school.

Individuals with Lab-Confirmed Cases Who Have Been in the School

- If an individual who has been in the school is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19, the UHCS must notify the University, its local health department, in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations, including confidentiality requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- UHCS will close off areas that are heavily used by the individual with the lab-confirmed case (student, teacher, or staff) until the non-porous surfaces in those areas can be disinfected, unless more than 3 days have already passed since that person was on campus.
- Consistent with school notification requirements for other communicable diseases, and consistent with legal confidentiality requirements, UHCS will notify all teachers, staff, and families of all students in a school if a lab-confirmed COVID-19 case is identified among students, teachers or staff who participate on any on campus activities.

Instructional Programming

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) are the standards that are at the foundation of the school curriculum. While UH Charter School is re-opening for face to face instruction on August 17, 2020; we understand that all parents may not be comfortable with sending their child to school when school opens. UH Charter School will provide face to face instruction and a remote instructional model beginning August 17, 2020. Planning for instruction has begun and parents will be provided with the students expectations and expectations will be posted on our website.

In planning for instruction UHCS will need to know who is returning to school for face to face instruction and who will participate in remote instruction. Parents will receive a survey on August 3, 2020 to make that commitment. Once a students has been committed to face to face instruction or remote instruction they remain in that instructional program through the 9 week grading period. Two weeks prior to the 9 week grading period parents may opt to change instructional programs by notifying Patricia Paquin at 713-743-8538 or ppaquin@uh.edu to request the change.

Face to face instruction:

- Students report to school from 8 am to 3:45 pm Monday – Friday (except for the last Friday of each month) which is a professional development day for teachers)
- Students will follow the established school schedule (which can be found at the end of this document in Appendix B)
- Teachers and assistant teachers will support classroom instruction
- Students participating in face to face instruction will participate in a blended instructional platform; which involves in-person instruction and the use of the remote platform for some instructional activities. *This will ensure that students are familiar with the virtual platform in the vent we have to quickly shift to an all-virtual setting.*
- Students will participate in recess, ancillary classes and the school breakfast and lunch program
- Lesson plans for the week will be posted on the school's website
- Students will be held accountable for their learning
- Teachers will provide feedback through formative and summative assessments

- Grades will be posted in the GradeBook and parents will have access to the parent portal to monitor student's academic progress
- Students will be held accountable for the Academic Achievement Promotion and Retention policies (the policies can be found on the UHCS website <https://uh.edu/charter-school/about-us/policies/>) and UH Charter School grading procedures (the procedures can be found in the UHCS Parent/Student Handbook on page ???).
- Attendance policies for UHCS for students participating in face to face instruction remain in effect (the attendance policies can be found on the UHCS website <https://uh.edu/charter-school/about-us/policies/>)
- All school policies and procedures outlined in the Parent/Student handbook are in effect unless otherwise noted.

Remote Instruction:

- UHCS will provide remote instruction via the asynchronous model
 - The asynchronous model does not require all students to be virtually present at the same time
 - Asynchronous instruction will address the state required curriculum (TEKS) in the same way face to face instruction does
 - Students engage in instruction and learning materials on their own time, interacting intermittently with the teacher via computer, the phone or other electronic devices
 - Students participation will take several forms:
 - On-line course work with intermittent teacher instruction
 - Self- paced work paper and pencil work assignments/packets
 - Assignments to be completed on-line through a Learning Management System
 - Watching pre-recorded videos of instruction with guided support
- Lesson plans will be posted weekly with student learning expectation clearly stated
- Instructional meetings time will be posted weekly – students are expected to participate
- Teacher “office hours” will be posted and information on how to reach teachers during “office hours” will be outlined in weekly lesson plans.
- Students will be held accountable for their learning
- Teachers will provide feedback through formative and summative assessments
- Grades will be posted in the GradeBook and parents will have access to the parent portal to monitor student's academic progress
- Students participating in remote instruction will be held accountable for the Academic Achievement Promotion and Retention policies (the policies can be found on the UHCS website <https://uh.edu/charter-school/about-us/policies/>) and UH Charter School grading procedures (the procedures can be found in the UHCS Parent/Student Handbook on page ???).
- Attendance policies for UHCS remain in effect for students participating in remote instruction. Student must be in attendance 90% of the instructional time to receive academic course credit (the attendance policies can be found on the UHCS website <https://uh.edu/charter-school/about-us/policies/>)
 - Attendance for students in “engaged” in remote instruction will be calculated daily using one of the following measures
 - Engaged students are defined in the following ways:
 - Progress in the Learning Management System made each day (assignment expected to be completed during a given day are completed. Teachers will check assignment each day)
 - Progress from teacher/students interactions made that day
 - Turning in of assignment(s) that day

- UHCS plan for asynchronous instruction is be posted on the school website (For the board: plan is not complete so it is not posted, finalized plan with teachers August by August 7th. A waiver will submitted TEA and final plans must be submitted by October 1, 2020. All schools have a grace period of the first three, six weeks of the FSP period to complete the plan for approval).
- All school policies and procedures outlined in the Parent/Student handbook are in effect unless otherwise noted.

Health and Wellness Supports:

Along with the implementation of the health and safety procedures outlined in the document UH Charter School will also address the social and emotional needs of students and staff.

- Staff will participate in professional development opportunities in social emotional learning (SEL) and trauma informed care
- UHCS will implement SEL in Health and Physical Education through the SHAPE platform (training from TEA and Region 4, July 29, 2020)
- Develop and implement mental health supports for students and staff

The Charter School understands this is an ever-changing situation and as new information is made available we will determine if adjustments will need to be made in this guidance. All changes will be presented to the school community in writing and posted on the school website <https://uh.edu/charter-school/>

APPENDIX A – COVID 19 SYMPTOMS

COVID-19 affects different people in different ways. Most infected people will develop mild to moderate illness and recover without hospitalization. People with COVID 19 have had a wide range of symptoms – ranging from mild to severe illness. ***Symptoms may appear 2 – 14 days after exposure to the virus.***

Most common symptoms include:

- Fever
- Dry cough
- Tiredness

Less common symptoms:

- Aches and pains
- Sore throat
- Diarrhea
- Conjunctivitis
- Headache
- Loss of taste or smell
- A rash on skin, or discoloration of fingers or toes

Very Serious Symptoms:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Chest pain or pressure
- Loss of speech or movement

Seek immediate medical attention if you have serious symptoms. Always call before visiting your doctor or health facility.

On average it takes 5–6 days from when someone is infected with the virus for symptoms to show, however it can take up to 14 days