



**LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
POLICY BULLETIN**

TITLE: Reporting Communicable Diseases

NUMBER: BUL-1937.2

ISSUER: Debra Duardo, Ed.D., Executive Director
Student Health and Human Services

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Office of Educational Services

ROUTING
All Employees
All Locations

DATE: August 31, 2015

POLICY: “It shall be the duty of anyone in charge of a public or private school, kindergarten, boarding school, or day nursery to report at once to the local health officer the presence or suspected presence of any of the communicable diseases.” [CA Code of Regulations, Title 17, §2508](#)

MAJOR CHANGES: This Bulletin replaces BUL-1937.1 of the same title dated April 7, 2008. This update includes parent notification letters for additional communicable diseases and updates personnel and phone numbers to call for assistance.

GUIDELINES: The following guidelines apply:

I. POLICY

- A. Cooperation with the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health CA Education Code §49403: (a) “Notwithstanding any other law, the governing board of a school district shall cooperate with the local health officer in measures necessary for the prevention and control of communicable diseases in school age children...”
- B. Notification of Communicable Disease to County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health CA Code of Regulations, Title 17, §2508, indicates it shall be the duty of anyone in charge of a public or private school, kindergarten, boarding school, or day nursery to report at once to the local health officer the presence or suspected presence of any of the communicable diseases.
- C. Exclusion of Students for Communicable Disease
 - 1. “A pupil while infected with any contagious or infectious disease may not remain in any public school.” ([CA Code of Regulations, Title 5, §202](#))
 - 2. “If a pupil is excluded from attendance pursuant to Section 120230 of the Health and Safety Code or Section 49451 of this code, or if a principal or his or her designee determines that the continued presence of the child would constitute a clear and present danger to the life, safety, or health of



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a pupil or school personnel, the governing board is not required to send prior notice of the exclusion to the parent or guardian of the pupil. The governing board shall send a notice of the exclusion as soon as is reasonably possible after the exclusion.” ([CA Education Code 48213](#))

II. REPORTING AND NOTIFICATIONS

A. Reporting Communicable Disease by School

The following figure identifies the appropriate sequence for reporting issues of communicable disease outbreaks in schools. This sequence is recommended to avoid unnecessary reporting and to ensure that all appropriate parties are notified in the case of serious disease outbreak.

Who notifies:

School Nurse Administrator	<i>notifies</i> →	District Communicable Disease Nurse
District Communicable Disease Nurse	<i>notifies</i> →	Director, District Nursing Services
	<i>notifies</i> →	Local District Nursing Administrator
District Communicable Disease Nurse / Director, District Nursing Services	<i>notifies</i> →	Director, Student Medical Services
	<i>notifies</i> →	County Department of Public Health
	<i>notifies</i> →	Other District Offices

In outbreaks of any illness affecting over 10% of students enrolled, the school nurse must telephone the office of the Director, District Nursing Services, before 4:00 p.m. on the day of occurrence. The Director, District Nursing Services/CD Nurse will in turn notify the Director, Student Medical Services (SMS), and the County Department of Public Health. SMS Director may intercede to expedite the process by liaising with the County Department of Public Health and/or student’s physicians, as deemed necessary.

Problems related to tuberculosis control in *students* are reported to District Nursing Services, Communicable Disease Nurse, at (213) 202-7575. The District Nursing Services in turn relates to the Director, Student Medical Services, on a real-time basis. Problems related to tuberculosis control in *employees* are referred to Employee Health Services, Personnel Division, at (213) 241-6326.



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Reporting requirements in the event of possible food poisoning are addressed in the most recent version of Business Services Division, [Bulletin No. C-32 \(Rev.\)](#), “[Emergency Procedures – Possible Food Borne Illness or Contamination](#),” February 14, 2001.

B. Notification of Parents and School Employees

The school’s responsibility to notify school employees and the parent/guardian of children exposed to a communicable disease is based on several factors determined by school health personnel such as:

1. Is the disease likely to be spread by school contact?
2. Is the disease serious enough to warrant investigation or prophylactic treatment by the student’s private physician or the County Department of Public Health?
3. Is there an action the parents or school employees should or could be taking?

The Director, Student Medical Services, and the Director, District Nursing Services, must be consulted before any notification (written or oral) to parent/guardian or school employees regarding possible exposure to any communicable disease (exceptions: first case of chickenpox, lice, or hand, foot and mouth each semester and every case of scabies or fifth disease using approved template letters).

General guidance on reporting and notification of specific diseases and conditions is addressed in the current communicable diseases reference guide ([Communicable Diseases in Schools, 3rd Edition, 2005](#)). Request for support services for employees is available on the request of the administrator. Requests should be made to the Director, Student Medical Services, (213) 202-7584 or the Director, District Nursing Services, (213) 202-7580.

III. SPECIFIC CONDITIONS AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

A. Incomplete Immunizations

In the case of exposure to a vaccine-preventable disease, students with incomplete immunization status may be excluded from school at the discretion of the County of Los Angeles-Department of Public Health. These may include exposures to pertussis, measles, and mumps. Refer to [BUL-1660.7, “Immunization Guidelines for School Admission,” dated April 13, 2015](#).

B. Chickenpox

Informational letters are to be sent to parent/guardian of all students (Attachments A and A-1) and to all employees (Attachment B) when chickenpox is first identified in the school, for each new semester.



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The treating physician and the parent/guardian of each student for whom chickenpox presents a particular hazard (i.e., students with immune system defects, or those taking certain medications for leukemia, organ transplants or steroid dependent asthma, etc.) are to be notified promptly by telephone whenever school exposure to chickenpox occurs.

Outbreaks of chickenpox, (5 cases during a 3-week period) must be reported to the District's Communicable Disease Nurse (213) 202-7575. The school nurse should review the immunization record of each of the children and note the date of varicella immunization (if immunized) before reporting the outbreak.

C. Head Lice

The informational fact sheet for head lice (Attachments C and C-1) should be sent to the parents/guardians of students in classrooms with two or more identified cases with the first case each semester (subsequent letters are not necessary unless there is an outbreak). Students may be excluded for head lice at the end of the school day, but readmitted after appropriate treatment is instituted. The presence of nits alone (after treatment) is not an absolute indication for exclusion and children should not be absent from school for extended periods of time due to this treatable condition.

D. Hand, Foot and Mouth

The informational fact sheet for hand, foot and mouth (Attachments D and D-1) should be sent to the parents/guardians of students in classrooms with two or more identified cases with the first cases each semester. Students with the HFMD do not need to be excluded unless they meet other exclusion criteria (see "General Exclusion Criteria")

E. Scabies

Informational letters are to be sent to parent/guardian/teachers of all students in the affected classroom (Attachments E and E-1) with each identified case. An exclusion criterion for the affected child is outlined in the [*Communicable Disease In Schools, 3rd Edition, 2005*](#).

F. Fifth Disease

Although Fifth Disease is benign for most individuals, there are some precautions for pregnant women. Informational letters should be sent to parent/guardian/teachers of all students in the affected classroom (Attachments F and F-1) with each identified case. No exclusion/treatment is necessary ([*Communicable Disease in Schools, 3rd Edition, 2005*](#)).



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AUTHORITY: “A pupil while infected with any contagious or infectious disease may not remain in any public school.” ([CA Code of Regulations, Title 5. Education, Division 1. CA Department of Education, Chapter 2. Pupils, Subchapter 1. General Provisions, Article 1. Admission and Exclusion of Pupils, §202: Exclusion of Pupils with a Contagious Disease](#))

RELATED California Education Code
RESOURCES: California Code of Regulations
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

ASSISTANCE: For assistance or further information, please contact Director, Student Medical Services, at (213) 202-7584 or Director, District Nursing Services, at (213) 202-7580.



Student Chickenpox Notification Letter

(USE SCHOOL LETTERHEAD)

Date

Dear Parent/Guardian:

This letter is to inform you that your child may have been exposed to chickenpox in the school.

Chickenpox is caused by a virus that leads to an itchy rash. The rash begins with small, red spots that develop into blisters which become scabs in 4-5 days. The rash may be the first sign of illness, sometimes coupled with fever. The virus spreads from person to person by direct contact or through air. Although chickenpox is usually mild, it may be a serious illness in infants, adults and persons with weak immune systems, such as those on medications for leukemia or organ transplant.

The chickenpox (varicella) vaccine is effective in preventing the illness or it can help lessen the disease if given within 3-5 days of exposure. If you have any children or adults in your home with a weak immune system or who are not immunized against chickenpox disease, please talk to your physician regarding this exposure. If your child develops chickenpox, he/she will be excluded from school until the rash has completely scabbed over and there are no new blisters appearing (usually 6 days after the start of the rash for healthy children). Please do not let him/her expose other persons in the neighborhood.

Thank you for your continued cooperation.

Sincerely,

Principal

School Nurse



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ATTACHMENT A-1

Student Chickenpox Notification Letter - Spanish

(USE SCHOOL LETTERHEAD)

Fecha

Estimado padre, madre o tutor:

El motivo de esta carta es informarles que su niño(a) puede haber estado en contacto con el virus de la varicela en el plantel escolar.

La varicela se contrae a través de un virus y se caracteriza por síntomas tales como fiebre durante 3 a 4 días y un sarpullido que pica, el cual luego se transforma en ampollas que se secan y se convierten en costras al cabo de 4 a 5 días. El sarpullido puede ser la primera señal de la enfermedad, a veces junto con la fiebre. El virus se transmite de una persona a la otra por contacto directo o a través del aire. A pesar de que la varicela es generalmente leve, puede ser grave en los bebés, los adultos y las personas con inmunodeficiencia tales como aquellas que reciben medicamentos para la leucemia y/o el trasplante de órganos, entre otros.

La vacuna contra la varicela es eficaz para prevenir la enfermedad o reducir la gravedad de la misma si se administra dentro de los 3 a 5 días de haber sido expuesto a la enfermedad. Si usted tiene niños o adultos en su casa con inmunodeficiencia o que no están vacunados contra la enfermedad de la varicela, por favor consulte a su médico en lo que concierne al contacto. Si su niño(a) contrae varicela, el/ella será dispensado de clases hasta que las ampollas hayan completamente secado (esto ocurre usualmente en 6 días). Por favor evite que esté en contacto con otras personas en su vecindario. Muchas gracias por su constante colaboración.

Atentamente,

Director(a)

Enfermero(a) escolar



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ATTACHMENT B

Employee Chickenpox Notification Letter

(USE SCHOOL LETTERHEAD)

Date

Dear Employee:

This letter is to inform you of the presence of chickenpox in this school.

Chickenpox is caused by a virus and is characterized by an itchy rash, which then forms blisters that dry and become scabs in 4-5 days. The rash may be the first sign of illness, sometimes coupled with fever. Chickenpox develops within 10-21 days after contact with an infected person and is contagious 1-2 days before the rash appears and until all blisters have formed scabs. The virus spreads from person to person by direct contact or through air. Although chickenpox is usually mild, it may be severe in infants, adults and persons with impaired immune systems such as those on medications for leukemia and/or organ transplant.

The varicella vaccine is effective in preventing illness or reducing the severity of the disease if administered within 3-5 days of exposure to the disease. If you have any children or adults in your home with an impaired immune response or who are not immunized against chickenpox disease, please consult your physician regarding this exposure.

Thank you for your continued cooperation.

Sincerely,

Principal

School Nurse



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ATTACHMENT C

Sample Head Lice Notification Letter

(USE SCHOOL LETTERHEAD)

Date

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Infestation with head lice is a common occurrence in the school and community. School nurses check children for lice and exclude those who are infested. Your support is very important and highly appreciated in helping to control this problem. We highly recommend that you check your child's hair, clothes, and bedding every day for any signs of lice or nits. Adult lice are tan or grayish-white and the size of a sesame seed. The nits (eggs) are silver-gray in color and are attached to the hair. They cluster around the hairline at the back of the neck, around the ears, and across the front and top area of the head.

Infestation by lice causes frequent itching of the scalp. If you suspect that your child or any family member has been infested with head lice, you may contact your physician. There are several over-the-counter treatments for head lice available from your pharmacist. It has been found that it may take more than one treatment to destroy the infestation. Carefully follow the directions given on the package to ensure proper treatment. Do not use insecticides, gasoline or other home preparations on your child's hair. Shaving the hair is not necessary. Children with lice infestation may return to school after appropriate treatment.

After treatment, a special nit removal comb should be used to remove all nits (eggs) from the hair. One inch of hair should be combed at a time for successful removal of the nits. A long absence from school is not necessary.

If you would like to consult the school nurse during school hours for screening or checking, please feel free to call.

Sincerely,

Principal

School Nurse



Sample Head Lice Notification Letter - Spanish

(USE SCHOOL LETTERHEAD)

Fecha

Estimado Padre de Familia/Tutor:

Un hecho que ocurre con frecuencia en la escuela y en la comunidad es la aparición de piojos que infestan la cabeza. La enfermera escolar examinará la cabeza de los niños para comprobar si están infestadas y excluirá a quienes tengan piojos. Su colaboración es muy importante y sumamente apreciada para ayudarnos a controlar este problema. Le recomendamos encarecidamente que revise el pelo, las ropas y la ropa de cama de su hijo todos los días por cualquier indicio de piojos o liendres.

Los piojos adultos son de color tostado o entre grisáceo y blanco y del tamaño de una semilla de sésamo. Las liendres (huevos) son de color entre plateado y gris y están agarradas al pelo. Se amontonan alrededor de la raíz del pelo en la parte posterior del cuello, alrededor de las orejas, y en la parte de la frente y la parte de arriba de la cabeza.

La infestación causa frecuente picazón en el cuero cabelludo. Si sospecha que su hijo o algún miembro de su familia tiene la cabeza infestada con piojos, puede contactar a su médico. Hay varios tratamientos que se pueden comprar sin receta en la farmacia. Se ha descubierto que podría necesitarse más de un tratamiento para destruir la infestación. Siga las instrucciones del paquete cuidadosamente para asegurarse que aplica el tratamiento como es debido. No use insecticidas, gasolina u otra preparación casera en el pelo de su hijo. No es necesario que le afeite la cabeza. Los niños que han tenido la cabeza infestada con piojos pueden regresar a la escuela después de haber recibido un tratamiento apropiado.

Después del tratamiento, debe usarse un peine especial para despegar todas las liendres (huevos) que están agarradas al pelo. Hay que peinar una pulgada de cabello a la vez para eliminar con éxito las liendres. No es necesaria una ausencia prolongada a clases.

Puede llamar a la enfermera durante horario escolar si desea consultarla sobre una revisión.

Atentamente,

Director(a)

Enfermero(a) escolar



Sample Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease Notification Letter

(USE SCHOOL LETTERHEAD)

Date

Dear Parent/ Guardian:

Your child may have been exposed to a case of Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease.

Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease is a viral disease with fever and painful lesions in the mouth and on the hands and feet. This infection is spread by both the fecal-oral and respiratory routes. To prevent the spread of this disease encourage hand washing and ill students should remain at home until they are symptom free.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Principal

School Nurse



Sample Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease Notification Letter - Spanish

(USE SCHOOL LETTERHEAD)

Fecha

Estimado Padre de Familia/Tutor:

Su hijo/a podría haber estado expuesto a una enfermedad de Fiebre Aftosa (Síndrome de pie – mano – boca).

Fiebre Aftosa es una enfermedad causada por un virus con fiebre y una lesión dolorosa en la boca en las manos y los pies. Esta infección puede ser transmitida por la vía respiratoria o fecal-oral. Para prevenir que esta enfermedad sea transmitida los estudiantes deben lavarse las manos y los estudiantes enfermos deben quedarse en casa hasta que no tengan ya los síntomas.

Gracias por su cooperación.

Atentamente,

Director(a)

Enfermero(a) escolar



Sample Scabies Notification Letter

(USE SCHOOL LETTERHEAD)

Date

Dear Parent / Guardian:

This is to inform you that your child may have been exposed to scabies in the classroom.

Scabies is an infestation of the skin by small insects called "mites". Scabies is spread by direct and prolonged skin-to-skin contact with a person that is infested. It may also spread by sharing clothes, towels, and bedding. An infestation of scabies causes severe itching and a rash that looks red and bumpy.

If your child becomes ill with any of these symptoms, you should call your private physician or go to the nearest County Health facility to have your child examined. There are several creams and lotions available for treatment which can be prescribed by your Health Care Provider.

If you have questions please call District Nursing Services at (213) 202-7580.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Principal

School Nurse



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ATTACHMENT E-1

Sample Scabies Notification Letter - Spanish

(USE SCHOOL LETTERHEAD)

Fecha

Estimado Padre de Familia/Tutor:

La presente es para informales que su niño(a) ha estado expuesto a la sarna en el plantel escolar.

La sarna es una infección de la piel, causada por pequeños insectos que se llaman "Ácaros". La sarna se propaga a través del contacto directo y prolongado con la piel de una persona que esta infestada. También puede propagarse al compartir la ropa, las toallas de baño y la ropa de cama. La infestación de la sarna causa una picazón muy fuerte y una erupción en la piel que se ve como bultitos rojos.

Si su niño se enferma con cualquiera de estos síntomas, debe llamar a su doctor particular o ir al Centro de Salud del Condado para que examinen a su niño. Hay varias cremas y lociones disponibles para el tratamiento que pueden recetadas por la persona que le proporciona atención médica.

Si tiene alguna pregunta, por favor llame a la Oficina de Servicios de Enfermería del Distrito al (213) 202-7580.

Gracias por su cooperación.

Atentamente,

Director(a)

Enfermero(a) escolar



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ATTACHMENT F

Sample Fifth Disease Notification Letter

(USE SCHOOL LETTERHEAD)

Date

Dear Parent/Guardian:

This letter is to inform you of the presence of Fifth Disease at your child's school.

Fifth Disease is a communicable disease, caused by the human parvovirus B19. Some children may have only mild signs of illness, a low grade fever, cold or flu like symptoms and rash. The rash generally appears on the cheeks, giving a "slapped face" appearance. People with fifth disease can spread the illness during the week before the rash appears. By the time the rash is seen, the virus probably can no longer be spread to others.

Most adults have already been infected during childhood. Pregnant women and people with (chronic) blood disorders, such as sickle-cell disease should contact their private physician if they have been exposed.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Principal

School Nurse



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ATTACHMENT F-1

Sample Fifth Disease Notification Letter - Spanish

(USE SCHOOL LETTERHEAD)

Fecha

Estimado Padre de Familia/Tutor:

Esta carta tiene como fin informarle sobre la presencia de Quinta Enfermedad (Eritema infeccioso) en nuestra escuela.

Quinta Enfermedad es una enfermedad infecciosa, causada por el parvovirus humano B19. Algunos niños pueden presentar solamente leves síntomas de enfermedad, una fiebre no muy alta, síntomas parecidos a los del catarro o de la gripe y un sarpullido. Dicho sarpullido por lo general aparece en las mejillas y da el aspecto de una "cara abofeteada". Esta enfermedad se puede propagar durante la semana antes de que aparezca el sarpullido. Para cuando ya se ve el sarpullido, es probable que el virus ya no se pueda propagar o tras personas.

La mayoría de los adultos han sido infectados durante la infancia. Las mujeres embarazadas y la gente con trastornos (crónicos) de la sangre como la drepanocitosis (anemia de células falciformes) deberían comunicarse con su médico personal si han estado expuestos a este padecimiento.

Gracias por su cooperación.

Atentamente,

Director(a)

Enfermero(a) escolar