



# ARP ESSER Health and Safety Plan Guidance & Template

Section 2001(i)(1) of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires each local education agency (LEA) that receives funding under the ARP Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund to develop and make publicly available on the LEA's website a *Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan*, hereinafter referred to as a *Health and Safety Plan*.

Based on ARP requirements, 90 percent of ARP ESSER funds will be distributed to school districts and charter schools based on their relative share of Title I-A funding in FY 2020-2021. **Given Federally required timelines, LEAs eligible to apply for and receive this portion of the ARP ESSER funding must submit a Health and Safety Plan that meets ARP Act requirements to the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) by Friday, July 30, 2021, regardless of when the LEA submits its ARP ESSER application.**

Each LEA must create a Health and Safety Plan that addresses how it will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff, and which will serve as local guidelines for all instructional and non-instructional school activities during the period of the LEA's ARP ESSER grant. The Health and Safety Plan should be tailored to the unique needs of each LEA and its schools and must take into account public comment related to the development of, and subsequent revisions to, the Health and Safety Plan.

The ARP Act and U.S. Department of Education rules require Health and Safety plans include the following components:

1. How the LEA will, to the greatest extent practicable, implement prevention and mitigation policies in line with the most up-to-date guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the reopening and operation of school facilities in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning;
2. How the LEA will ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address the students' academic needs, and students' and staff members' social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services;
3. How the LEA will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff and the extent to which it has adopted policies, and a description of any such policy on each of the following safety recommendations established by the CDC:
  - a. Universal and correct wearing of masks;
  - b. Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding);
  - c. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette;

- d. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation;
- e. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with State and local health departments;
- f. Diagnostic and screening testing;
- g. Efforts to provide COVID-19 vaccinations to school communities;
- h. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and
- i. Coordination with state and local health officials.

The LEA's Health and Safety Plan must be approved by its governing body and posted on the LEA's publicly available website by July 30, 2021.\* The ARP Act requires LEAs to post their Health and Safety Plans online in a language that parents/caregivers can understand, or, if it is not practicable to provide written translations to an individual with limited English proficiency, be orally translated. The plan also must be provided in an alternative format accessible, upon request, by a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Each LEA will upload in the eGrants system its updated Health and Safety Plan and webpage URL where the plan is located on the LEA's publicly available website.

The ARP Act requires LEAs to review their Health and Safety Plans at least every six months during the period of the LEA's ARP ESSER grant. LEAs also must review and update their plans whenever there are significant changes to the CDC recommendations for K-12 schools. Like the development of the plan, all revisions must be informed by community input and reviewed and approved by the governing body prior to posting on the LEA's publicly available website.

LEAs may use the template to revise their current Health and Safety Plans to meet ARP requirements and ensure all stakeholders are fully informed of the LEA's plan to safely resume instructional and non-instructional school activities, including in-person learning, for the current school year. An LEA may use a different plan template or format provided it includes all the elements required by the ARP Act, as listed above.

\* The July 30 deadline applies only to school districts and charter schools that received federal Title I-A funds in FY 2020-2021 and intend to apply for and receive ARP ESSER funding.

### **Additional Resources**

LEAs are advised to review the following resources when developing their Health and Safety Plans:

- [CDC K-12 School Operational Strategy](#)
- [PDE Resources for School Communities During COVID-19](#)
- [PDE Roadmap for Education Leaders](#)
- [PDE Accelerated Learning Through an Integrated System of Support](#)
- [PA Department of Health - COVID-19 in Pennsylvania](#)

## **Health and Safety Plan Summary: Berks Career and Technology Center**

**Initial Effective Date: June 23, 2021**

**Date of Last Review: June 28, 2023**

**Date of Last Revision: December 14, 2023**

**1. How will the LEA, to the greatest extent practicable, support prevention and mitigation policies in line with the most up-to-date guidance from the CDC for the reopening and operation of school facilities in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning?**

The Health and Safety of the Berks Career and Technology Center (BCTC) staff and students remains, as always, the top priority for the organization. The BCTC Administrative Team continues to take critical steps and make decisions that protect the health and safety of our organization in the ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our goal is to collaboratively ensure that you continue to feel safe and secure so together we can successfully navigate into the 2023-2024 school year. Included in this plan are the protocols we expect of all students and staff members as we transition forward. The Governor's Office and Department of Education (PDE) believes decisions involving COVID-19 protocols that affect our students, their families, our staff, and the community in general are most appropriately made at the local level. Local school officials are able to make the most informed decisions based on local trends and data and can more easily react as local conditions indicate. We will continue to monitor communications and keep you informed. As conditions change related to COVID-19, protocols are subject to change.

**2. How will the LEA ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address the students' academic needs, and students' and staff members' social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services?**

Recognizing the impact to children who were out of school and relying solely on remote instruction, including academic progress, student mental health, and food insecurity, BCTC is committed to continue full-time in-person instruction safely and to the greatest extent possible for the 2023-2024 school year. This strategy was supported by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) which stated, "It is critical for schools to open as safely and as soon as possible, and remain open, to achieve the benefits of in-person learning and key support services."

Much has been learned about how COVID-19 is transmitted, and its effects have become much better understood. COVID-19 is mostly spread by respiratory droplets released when people talk, cough, or sneeze. Though much more unlikely, the virus may spread to hands from a contaminated surface and then to the nose or mouth, causing infection. That is why personal prevention practices, such as staying home when sick, proper hand washing, and appropriate cleaning of commonly used surfaces are important practices in mitigating the spread of COVID-19.

We are learning more every day about the COVID-19 risk in school settings. Research indicates children generally experience milder symptoms with COVID-19 than adults, and, to date, have not been found to contribute substantially to the spread of the virus. BCTC will collaborate with the other 16 Berks County sending schools.

Should COVID rates of transmission rise, BCTC will have the capability of adding additional Nursing personnel, as was done during the 2020-2021 school year. BCTC will follow all State/Federal mandates regarding food services.

**3. How the LEA will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff and the extent to which it has adopted policies, and a description of any such policy on each of the following safety recommendations established by the CDC.**

Symptoms of COVID-19 may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with the symptoms of COVID-19 or another contagious illness should stay home from school / work in accordance with established BCTC policy.

BCTC recognizes COVID-19 is a serious disease and the Pandemic Team continues to be deliberate and systematic with the singular goal of safeguarding health and safety. As it relates to schools and the health and safety of our students and staff, it is important to note there is minimal evidence that schools have contributed to increased rates of community transmission.

The BCTC Health and Safety Plan below outlines the protocols we expect all staff members to follow. Expectations are based on the latest mandates provided by the Governor’s Office, the Department of Health (DOH), the Department of Education (PDE), the Department of Human Services (DHS), the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

**Masking, Face Coverings and Contact Tracing for BCTC**

**Masking Optional-** Masks will be available upon request.

**Universal Masking-** When in effect, students, staff, and visitors are required to wear masks in all school settings including on all BCTC school transportation while the Federal masking mandate is in effect, with the exceptions listed below.

- When outside and able to maintain 3ft distance
- While eating
- At times designated as mask breaks by staff

As conditions change and/or new orders / mandates are issued related to COVID-19, protocols are subject to change. We will continue to monitor communications and keep you informed. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your supervisor. Thank you for your continued commitment.

ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Universal and correct wearing of <u>masks</u>;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As of February 25, 2022, masks/face coverings are recommended when community transmission level is high, but not required for all individuals (staff, students, parents, and visitors), regardless of vaccination status.</li> <li>• Staff who travel to other locations to provide service must adhere to the Health and Safety Plan of the location of service.</li> <li>• BCTC will comply with any face covering mandates initiated by the State or Federal government. -</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modifying facilities to allow for <u>physical distancing</u> (e.g., use of cohorts/podding);</li> </ul>	<p>Physical distancing means keeping space between yourself and other people outside of your household and using this strategy can help decrease the spread of COVID-19.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BCTC will comply with any physical distancing mandates implemented by the State or Federal government.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Handwashing and respiratory etiquette</u>;</li> </ul>	<p>Personal hygiene practices such as proper hand washing during important times such as before, during, and after preparing food, before eating, after using the toilet, after blowing one’s</p>

	<p>nose, coughing or sneezing, and after play reduces the risk of infection. Buildings will be provided adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors (e.g., soap, hand sanitizer for safe use by staff and students.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expectations to handwashing and respiratory etiquette are contained in the BCTC Health and Safety Plan which will be emailed to each staff member and posted on the BCTC website.</li> <li>• Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.</li> <li>• If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer).</li> <li>• Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.</li> <li>• Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or cough or sneeze into your elbow. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash can and hands should be washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Again, hand sanitizer may be used if soap and water are not available.</li> <li>• Increase monitoring to ensure adherence among students.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation;</u></li> </ul>	<p>The risk of being infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 through contaminated surfaces or objects is considered to be low. However, regular cleaning with an approved solution reduces the amount of germs on surfaces and further decreases risk of infection from surfaces.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure your desk / workspace is clean and clear of files / folders to allow for cleaning of surface areas by the custodial staff.</li> <li>• Clean high touch surfaces such as your telephone, computer keyboard, and doorknob / switches at the end of each workday.</li> <li>• Share in the cleaning and disinfecting of shared equipment and / or furniture / items within your office / shared work area, i.e., copier / printer, file cabinet handles, doorknobs, light switches, etc.</li> <li>• Follow additional cleaning and disinfecting measures / protocols required within your program.</li> <li>• Adhere to appropriate personal protective equipment guidelines.</li> <li>• Hand sanitizer to be made available at all entrances.</li> <li>• Disinfectant wipes will be available in classrooms and common areas where staff and students can clean surfaces throughout the school day when requested. (Gloves will be available, if requested.)</li> <li>• Classrooms and common areas may be ventilated with additional circulation of outdoor air when possible, using windows.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BCTC will comply with any cleaning and ventilation mandates implemented by the State or Federal government.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Contact tracing</u> in combination with <u>isolation</u> and <u>quarantine</u>, in collaboration with the State and local health departments;</li> </ul>	<p>BCTC discontinued local contact tracing starting April 29, 2022. Students should stay home if ill and staff who feel ill should notify their supervisor per the usual procedures and not report to work.</p> <p><i>* Isolation/quarantine protocols for individuals who are exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms or have a positive case of COVID-19 will be determined by PA Department of Health recommendations.</i></p> <p>The Pennsylvania DOH considers COVID-19 a communicable disease. As such, it is among DOH's listing of reportable diseases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are required to report a suspected or known case of COVID-19 to your supervisor within 24 hours.</li> <li>Follow the recommendation of your attending physician and / or DOH directive and report an absence in accordance with standard procedures.</li> <li>As required, BCTC will continue to report to local health authorities any suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases among children and staff to allow for appropriate contact tracing. When applicable, BCTC will coordinate with health officials to provide contact information for close contacts of a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case among staff, students, and families while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with FERPA and all other state and federal laws.</li> <li>BCTC will follow DOH guidance which may include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disease information;</li> <li>The distribution of appropriate letters and communications;</li> <li>Identification of high risk individuals;</li> <li>Appropriate action and treatment; and</li> <li>Ongoing support and assistance.</li> </ul> </li> <li>BCTC will comply with any contact tracing mandates initiated by the State or Federal government.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transportation</li> </ul>	<p>Students who become sick during the school day will not be permitted to use group transportation to return home.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diagnostic and screening testing;</li> </ul>	<p>BCTC will rely on local agencies or medical establishments to service and provide COVID testing. For in school situations, BCTC nurses can provide screening should someone show symptoms at BCTC.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efforts to provide <u>vaccinations to school communities</u>;</li> </ul>	<p>BCTC has no current plans to offer in-school vaccinations.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and</li> </ul>	<p>BCTC will collaborate with sending schools/LEAs to determine specific student needs and follow all appropriate accommodations, following guidance from PDE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special accommodations or health care needs of students with disabilities will be addressed through the IEP/504 process.</li> <li>• Accommodations may include, but not limited to adapted service delivery models, (i.e. teleintervention, individualized services, when appropriate) and / or other health and safety precautions as outlined in an individualized health plan.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination with state and local health officials.</li> </ul>	<p>BCTC will continue to follow all guidance and direction from PDE, the Department of Health, and the BCTC Joint Operating Committee.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor Communication and Confidentiality</li> </ul>	<p>The COVID-19 pandemic has been and continues to be challenging and ever-evolving, resulting in a complex situation.</p> <p>While it is important to remain informed with the most accurate, up-to-date information, if you are feeling overwhelmed or distressed seek resources and supports available through the Human Resources Department. Remember to plan time for self-care strategies such as eating healthy, exercising, getting an appropriate amount of sleep, and finding time to unwind.</p> <p>You can access news and stay informed of the latest information and resources available by visiting the following sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at <a href="http://www.cdc.gov">www.cdc.gov</a>. This website contains information related to healthy living and updates on diseases and conditions, such as learning about flu season and taking action to prevent the flu.</li> <li>• <a href="http://Vaccines.gov">Vaccines.gov</a> to find a COVID-19 vaccine near you. For assistance finding a vaccine, call 1-800-232-0233 (TTY 888-720-7489).</li> <li>• QUEST's work/life services website at <a href="http://www.worklifeservices.net">www.worklifeservices.net</a> or contact QUEST directly at 1-800-364-6352 for confidential counseling and resources.</li> </ul> <p>Contact your supervisor or the Human Resources Department with any questions.</p>

## Health and Safety Plan Joint Operating Committee Affirmation Statement

The Joint Operating Committee of the Berks Career and Technology Center reviewed and approved the Health and Safety Plan on **December 14, 2023**.

The plan was approved by a vote of:

13 Yes

0 No

By:



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*(Signature of Joint Operating Committee Chairperson)*

C Friedlander

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*(Printed name of Joint Operating Committee Chairperson)*