

The NYC Department of Education and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOH) are working together to ensure that you have the most up-to-date guidance to share. The facts below are important to help parents and staff understand how low the risk of Ebola exposure is:

- There are no confirmed Ebola cases in New York City
- Ebola is spread by direct contact with the bodily fluids of an infected person. You cannot be infected simply by being near someone who has Ebola
- The Ebola outbreak is concentrated in only three countries – Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone
- If someone has traveled to Liberia, Guinea, or Sierra Leone in the past 21 days but does not have any symptoms, they cannot infect anyone else with Ebola

New York City is collaborating closely with its state and federal partners to protect New Yorkers. The risk to your staff and students is very small, and we hope you can assist us in providing accurate information to assuage concerns that parents might have:

- Reassure staff, parents, and students that school nurses and all medical providers in New York City have been prepared by the Health Department to look for signs of Ebola and take immediate steps to respond and isolate people who may be infected
- Direct staff, parents, and students to the Health Department's website at [nyc.gov/ebola](http://nyc.gov/ebola) or to the school nurse for accurate information about Ebola

The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has developed the following guidance specifically for schools and daycare centers. It is important to emphasize that these measures only pertain to staff or students who have recently traveled to one of the three Ebola-affected areas. Please help families and staff who have not undertaken such travel understand how minimal their risk of exposure truly is.

- Fever in people who traveled to the affected areas is most likely due to more common infectious diseases in West Africa, such as malaria, but should still be checked by a doctor
- Early Ebola symptoms can include fever, headache, muscle pain, vomiting, diarrhea, and stomach pain
- Fever in people who traveled to the affected areas is most likely due to more common infectious diseases in West Africa, such as malaria, but should still be checked by a doctor
- If, within 21 days of returning from an area affected by the outbreak, a student or staff member gets a fever or another early symptom of Ebola, he or she must not come to school and should call 911 immediately, identifying their symptoms and travel history. Health care will be provided across the City with no questions asked about immigration status and regardless of ability to pay.
- The staff member or parent, in the case of a student, should tell the emergency room staff about the symptoms and recent travel upon entering the facility.

Updated guidance for schools regarding staff members and/or students who have traveled to an affected area or have refused to provide their travel history and are showing symptoms of Ebola are noted below:

- If, within 21 days of returning from an affected area, a **staff member** develops fever or another symptom of Ebola while at school, the staff member must be isolated within the school; the school principal or school nurse must contact 911 and inform the EMS operator and medical personnel about the sick person's recent travel.
- If, within 21 days of returning from an affected area, a **student** develops fever or another symptom of Ebola while at school or daycare, the student must be isolated and seen immediately by the school nurse if one is available. The school principal or school nurse must call 911 and inform the EMS operator and medical personnel about the student's recent travel. The parent must also be contacted.
- If a student or staff member presents with symptoms of Ebola while in school after returning from abroad and the school is unable to identify where the individual traveled, the school must follow the same protocols as above, including contacting 911.
- Out of an abundance of caution, schools should close classrooms and shared spaces occupied by individuals who have recently arrived from an affected area and who are currently showing symptoms while DOH evaluates the situation and makes a determination as to the health status of the individual showing symptoms.
- In the event of a confirmed case, DOE and DOH will work with the CDC to issue guidance to school leaders and the school community about steps to be taken

Your leadership is key to reassuring our school community that our city and schools are safe.

Thank you,

Carmen Fariña  
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