

(use this document with appropriate parent, teacher or student communications)

Public Health Instructions During a Pandemic Flu

Throughout a pandemic flu, people may be asked or required to do things to help hold back the spread of the disease in our community.

Public health authorities will be communicating with all of us during a Pandemic. Here are some examples of what public health authorities may ask people to do:

STAY HOME

People who are sick should stay home. Children should not go to school if they are sick. Staying home will be absolutely necessary during a pandemic flu to limit the spread of the disease.

AVOID LARGE GROUPS

People, even those who are well, should stay away from gatherings of people such as sporting events, movies and festivals. During a pandemic flu these kinds of events could be cancelled because large gatherings of people help spread the flu virus.

Isolation and quarantine are public health actions used to contain the spread of a contagious disease. If asked, it will be important to follow isolation and/or quarantine instructions. These actions will likely be used rarely, if they are used at all. In some cases, public health authorities might ask for voluntary or self-directed isolation and/or quarantine like staying at home.

ISOLATION is for people who are already ill. When someone is isolated, they are separated from people who are healthy. Isolating the sick person from family members who are well can help to slow or stop the spread of disease. People who are isolated can be cared for in their homes, in hospitals, or other healthcare facilities. Isolation is usually voluntary, but local, state and federal authorities have the power to require the isolation of sick people to protect the public.

QUARANTINE is for people who have been exposed to the disease but are not sick. When someone is placed in quarantine, they are also separated from others. Even though the person is not sick at the moment, they were exposed to the disease and may still become infectious and then spread the disease to others. Quarantine can help to slow or stop this from happening. Local public health officers generally have the power to enforce quarantines within their borders.