



2022-2023 COVID-19 Policy Guide

This addendum to the Mountain Laurel Waldorf School (MLWS) Family Handbook contains detailed information regarding Mountain Laurel's current COVID-19 related policies and procedures.

On August 22, the [New York State Department of Health \(NYSDOH\)](#) released a letter outlining their recommended mitigation strategies for the 2022-2023 school year, which draw almost exclusively on the CDC's [Operational Guidance for K-12 Schools and Early Care and Education Programs to Support Safe In-Person Learning](#).

Mountain Laurel Waldorf School will begin the year by adopting the requirements and recommendations outlined in the CDC guidelines. We encourage you to review and reference the guidelines at their [source](#). NYSDOH has also created an [information sheet](#) specifically for parents and caregivers which summarizes their mitigation strategies.

We have a stock of at-home tests available for those who need them, though we encourage you to take advantage of free or low-cost at-home tests available through the [government](#) and through [pharmacies and local health centers](#).

We will continue to notify the community of positive cases, and will reach out individually if we believe your child has been exposed on campus.

Because this is an ever-changing situation, we will closely monitor Ulster County COVID numbers, community levels, and local/state recommendations and guidelines throughout the year, and adjust our plan as necessary.

Requirements

- **Symptoms:** Anyone who develops one or more [COVID-19 symptoms](#) must put on a well-fitting mask immediately and obtain a negative test before returning to campus. Test results should be sent to covid-confidential@mountainlaurel.org.
 - If a student develops symptoms during the school day, a parent/guardian will be called, and the student will be escorted to the reception office until they can be picked up.

- If an individual experiencing symptoms does not obtain a COVID-19 test, they must isolate for 5 full days following symptom onset.
- If we have detailed documentation from a physician that a student has a chronic condition that presents similar symptoms to COVID, we will consult with the parent/guardian to determine whether the student should be sent home.
- **Positive Test:** Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 must isolate for 5 days. On day 6, they may return to campus but must wear a well-fitting mask through day 10 or until they obtain two sequential negative tests taken 48 hours apart. Test results should be sent to covid-confidential@mountainlaurel.org.
- **Exposure (Non-Household):** Anyone exposed to COVID-19 outside of their household must wear a well-fitting mask for 10 days following exposure and get tested 5 days after exposure. Test results should be sent to covid-confidential@mountainlaurel.org.
- **Exposure (Household):** We have witnessed how COVID-19 can move through households, and believe this is an area in which to take extra precautions. Anyone exposed to COVID-19 within their household must a) wear a well-fitting mask for 10 days following the isolation period of the household member; b) test every day for the entirety of the household member's isolation; and c) test again on day 5 following the household member's release from isolation. Test results should be sent to covid-confidential@mountainlaurel.org.
- **Vaccination/Prior Infection Status:** Requirements apply regardless of an individual's vaccination status or history of COVID-19 infection. I.e. If an individual tests positive, recovers, and then develops symptoms one month later, they must follow the protocols for Symptoms. The previous 90-day immunity window is no longer applicable.
- **Masks:** With the exception of the cases outlined above, we will begin the year with masks as optional for all students and staff. We will revert to indoor masking for everyone if a) the [CDC Community Level](#) for Ulster County is escalated to High; b) there is an outbreak on campus; or c) local and/or state mandates or recommendations change. Masks must fit properly over the nose and mouth, have a nose wire, and be made of multiple layers of tightly woven breathable fabric or a non-woven material. N95, KN95, or KF94 are preferred.
- **Ventilation:** When indoors, windows will be open and students will continue to spend a good deal of time outdoors.
- **Cleaning/Disinfecting:** Restroom surfaces will be wiped down and disinfected once a day following the [CDC's Cleaning and Disinfecting](#) guidelines. Students and staff are expected to wash and sanitize their hands regularly.
- **Testing after breaks:** We will require all students and staff to submit a negative test when returning from breaks of 4 days or more (Summer Break, Thanksgiving Break, Winter

Recess, February Break, Spring Break, and Memorial Day Break). **This means all students and staff must submit a negative test on the morning of the first day of school, Wednesday, September 7.** Tests should be taken on the morning of the return to school, and results sent to covid-confidential@mountainlaurel.org.

Recommendations

- **Vaccinations:** Staying up to date on COVID-19 vaccinations continues to be a leading public health strategy to prevent serious illness. Everyone 6 months of age and older is now eligible to receive a vaccination, and children ages 5 and older are eligible for a booster.
- **When in doubt, stay home or wear a mask:** Anyone experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 is encouraged to stay home until they recover, even if they have obtained a negative test. Similarly, anyone in the same household as a positive individual is encouraged to remain at home for the duration of the positive individual's isolation, even if they test negative and are asymptomatic. If a student or staff member is experiencing symptoms but has tested negative and chooses to come to campus, we strongly recommend that that individual wear a KN95 mask until symptoms subside.
- **High-Risk Individuals:** Anyone at greater risk of becoming severely ill with COVID-19 (e.g. those who are immunocompromised or with complex medical conditions), or anyone who lives with a high-risk individual, is encouraged to wear a well-fitting mask indoors at all times.
- **Mask Type:** N95, KN95 or KF94 masks have been shown to provide the most protection in public indoor spaces, and recommended for those required to mask because of exposure or returning from isolation.
- **Travel:** Anyone returning from travel via public transportation is encouraged to test before returning to campus.
- **Reporting:** MLWS is no longer required to report positive cases to the state or county, but it is recommended that individuals who test positive with an at-home test report themselves via this [UCDOH Website Link](#).

No Longer Required

(subject to change should our Community Level increase to High or there is an outbreak on campus)

- **Quarantine:** Individuals exposed to COVID-19 are not required to quarantine at this time. There are, however, masking and testing requirements (see "Requirements," above).
- **Health Screenings:** We will not be requiring health screenings for students, staff, and visitors at this time. However, we trust that everyone will consider the following questions before coming to school each day:

- Has the student/staff member developed symptoms in the previous 48 hours?
 - Has the student/staff member been exposed to a positive COVID-19 case?
 - Has the student/staff member recently tested positive for COVID-19?
 - If the answer to any of these is YES, please make sure the criteria to return to campus have been met..
- **Screening Testing:** We will not be conducting weekly screening tests at this time, however we may reinstate if our Community Level escalates to High or if there is an outbreak on campus.
 - **Cohorts:** We will not be adhering to strict class cohorts at this time.
 - **Physical Distancing:** There are no longer physical distancing requirements, though classroom teachers may impose distancing based on their comfort level.