

## **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Information for Staff**

Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools is closely monitoring the situation with Coronavirus (COVID-19). As always, staff and student safety is our top priority. Our families look to us to keep their children safe. As staff, we share the responsibility to balance a desire for safety with supportive, calm and appropriate responses to a changing situation.

We are taking guidance from Alberta Health Services and Health Canada. If necessary, we will implement emergency plans and illness outbreak protocols. We will continue to post updated information at: <https://www.gsacrd.ab.ca/>

Following Alberta Health Services' recommendations, we are stopping all large public gatherings where there may be people from different areas and congregating in close proximity for extended periods of time. Some examples of such gatherings include but are not limited to: field trips, tournaments, open houses, and parent-teacher interviews.

To keep staff, students and visitors to division schools and workplaces healthy, we expect all locations to take extra precautions such as:

- ensuring hand sanitizer is readily available at your location
- practicing and encouraging hand washing
- encouraging sick employees and students to stay home

In times like this, staff and families need accurate information. Please don't rely on second-hand information or rumours. We will do all we can to provide updated information for staff and parents, and we need all staff to help support our families with reliable, trustworthy information.

If you have any questions or concerns, please connect with your principal or Division Office.

### **Here are some steps you can take at your school or worksite:**

- Have conversations with employees and students to reduce their anxiety, and remind them about the importance of hand-washing, cough/sneeze etiquette and not touching hands to face.
- Continue to follow illness-reporting protocols, including notification of Alberta Health Services and the division office when absenteeism due to illness reaches 10%.
- Assure staff and parents they will be kept informed about COVID-19 and any outbreaks, through the division website, School Messenger and direct communication from the school.
- Encourage employees and families to report their travel locations to their supervisor or principal.
- Restrict field trips and travel. Travel outside Canada is no longer recommended at this time. If you travel, you may be asked to self-quarantine upon your return.
- Encourage staff and parents/guardians to inform their supervisor or principal if they or family members are undergoing testing for COVID-19, particularly if there has been contact with others at the school or workplace.

- Inform staff and families that some people may be at higher risk for severe illness, such as older adults or those with chronic medical conditions.
- Encourage staff and families who may be at higher risk for COVID-19 adverse health complications to inform their supervisor or principal so additional precautions can be taken.
- Remind staff and families of cyber risks related to COVID-19, including not becoming a victim of COVID-19 phishing email attacks.
- Monitor supplies of liquid soap and paper towels in washrooms at all times. If more are needed, notify Facilities Services.
- Immediately inform Human Resources of any staff that have been directed to stay home due to medical reasons or self-quarantine.
- Consider cross-training employees to perform essential functions in case of workplace absences.
- Update voicemail messages to collect information on the type of student illness being reported.
- Make sure you're using reputable sources of information and advice, such as Alberta Health Services, Health Canada and the World Health Organization. Do not rely on non-government sources, as misinformation abounds on the internet.

Here are some helpful links for more information:

**Printable hand hygiene posters for your school and office:**

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/Page14957.aspx>

**Alberta Health:**

<https://www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx>

**Health Canada:**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html>

**World Health Organization:**

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

**Psychological Coping during a Pandemic (Psychologists' Association of Alberta):**

<https://psychologistsassociation.ab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/2020-March-PAA-Psychological-Health-in-Pandemics.pdf>