



Dear Members of the Darien Community:

We hope this finds your family in good health as you face the challenges of living life during a pandemic. As COVID-19 cases increase across the state and in the town, the Town of Darien and the Darien Public Schools wish to share some reminders and practices designed to keep our community safe, to keep schools open, and to support our local businesses.

It will take a conscious town-wide effort to keep our community healthy, and in turn allow our schools and businesses to remain open. Achieving these goals requires a collective commitment to adhere to public health and safety recommendations. These recommendations can help guide safe decision-making regarding participation in gatherings, sporting or recreational activities, and travel. We acknowledge COVID-19 fatigue is setting in and recommendations made through public health messaging are largely difficult and limiting, but they continue to be necessary.

Transmission

When speaking with individuals, both adults and children, who test positive for COVID-19, we are noting the following trends leading to exposure and infection:

- Social events, such as parties and gatherings (all ages)
- Exposure to individuals hired for childcare, home improvement or other in-home services who may have increased contact points with many communities, including those where infection rates are higher
- Youth sports “club” teams comprised of children from different communities
- Youth “travel” teams where teams compete with children from other communities
- Carpooling and gatherings associated with activities

We urge everyone to be mindful about the modes of transmission when assessing the risks of participating in activities and travel. Increasing the number of personal contacts and duration of time spent with those contacts can exponentially increase the risk of acquiring and spreading COVID-19.

Recommendations

Gatherings

Hosting or attending any gatherings, especially those held indoors, that do not adhere to State guidelines, are strongly discouraged. Time spent with asymptomatic, or pre-symptomatic, non-household contacts increases the risk of unknowingly transmitting COVID-19. Should you host or attend a gathering, indoor or outdoor, limit guests (be aware of current state guidance and local ordinances), wear a mask at all times, perform frequent hand hygiene, and maintain a physical distance of at least six (6) feet when interacting with individuals who live outside of your home. You may consider ordering individual take-out meals and avoid shared food or beverage items. Use disposable plates and utensils. Be sure all guests are aware of pandemic rules! Too much work? Consider hosting a “virtual party” online instead.

Sports and Other Organized Activities

If sports and other after school activities are important to your family, please adhere to adequate mitigation strategies, such as distancing and masking when not playing. Traveling to out-of-state tournaments where teams gather from other areas subjects your athlete to unknown risks, not to mention the travel quarantine rules.

Further, consider minimizing interactions with team members - avoid carpooling, team meals and celebrations. Coaches should also maintain daily logs of all team players present, and include a “Daily Health Check” entry in the log. Current State guidance recommends all members of a team, and those on any opposing team, be quarantined if there is a positive case. Leagues, coaches and staff must notify the local Health Department if there is a positive COVID-19 case of any team member.

Travel

The Connecticut Department of Public Health is discouraging all non-essential out-of-state and international travel. If you must travel, please be aware of and follow [Connecticut's Travel Advisory](#). Anyone traveling or returning to Connecticut from a state, other than New York, New Jersey, or Rhode Island, or from a country for which the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) has issued a Level 3 Travel Health Notice](#), are directed to self-quarantine for a 14-day period from the time of last contact within the identified state or country. You may also provide a negative COVID-19 RT-PCR test to the Commissioner of Public Health via email. See "*Frequently Asked Question 17*" for further information about the testing option on the CT Travel Advisory webpage. Any Darien Public School staff member or student who travels to or from a location on the Connecticut Travel Advisory for more than 24 hours, must either quarantine for 14 days upon return or until they provide a copy of a negative RT-PCR test to the nurse at the school they attend (rapid antigen tests are NOT ACCEPTABLE). It is important to note, as of the writing of this letter, Massachusetts is included in the State Travel Advisory.

Symptoms, Contacts, Quarantine and Testing

We urge persons with symptoms or exposure to consult your primary care physician, get tested, and remain home, in isolation, while awaiting results. If you have symptoms and tested positive, make sure to contact the school and the Health Department, and enter a 10-day isolation period, or if you have been informed that you are a close contact, you must enter a 14-day quarantine.

If you or your child have been instructed to quarantine, you must remain home from school and all outside activities, except to obtain necessary medical care. You can not test out of quarantine. Please be advised that ALL students on a bus with a positive COVID case will be considered a close contact and directed to quarantine.

Contact Tracing and Close Contacts

When an individual has tested positive for COVID-19, they will receive a call from a public health official in order to begin the process of contact tracing. According to the CDC, "contact tracing is the subsequent identification, monitoring, and support of a confirmed or probable case's [close contacts](#) who have been exposed to, and possibly infected with, the virus. The infected patient's identity is not discussed with contacts, even if asked." If you test positive for COVID-19, your cooperation and participation in the contact tracing process is an important step containing and preventing the spread of COVID-19.

What counts as a [close contact](#)?

- You were within 6 feet of someone who has COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24 hour period
- You provided care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19
- You had direct physical contact with the person (hugged or kissed them)
- You shared eating or drinking utensils
- They sneezed, coughed, or somehow got respiratory droplets on you

Testing

Appointments for testing can be made at a drive thru test clinic www.coronatestct.com, located at Leroy West train station parking lot (59 Leroy Avenue). Other test locations may be found at www.211ct.org/covidtesting.

For up-to-date information from the State of Connecticut on COVID-19, including guidance and other resources, please visit www.ct.gov/coronavirus. Individuals who are not sick but have general questions not answered by information on the state's website, or who are seeking COVID-19 Testing information can also call 2-1-1 for assistance or visit the [2-1-1 website](#). Information about local efforts is available on the [Town of Darien](#) webpage. School information can be found by visiting the [Darien Public Schools Reopening](#) webpage.

Undoubtedly, the virus continues to take a toll on our lives and we appreciate the burden all citizens are shouldering on behalf of our town. We thank healthcare providers, first responders, essential businesses, educators, students and every resident for their commitment during this difficult time. Likewise we extend our sympathy to those individuals and families that have suffered sickness and loss.

Thank you for partnering with us in our collective efforts to keep our town citizens' safe and our critical services open.

Jayme Stevenson, First Selectman
Tara Ochman, Board of Education Chairman
Dr. Alan Addley, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Timothy Kenefick, District Medical Advisor
David Knauf, Director of Health
Alicia Casucci, Director of Nursing Services

For more information, please refer to the CDC Coronavirus Web Pages linked below for your convenience.

[Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)

[Symptoms of Coronavirus](#)

[If You are Sick or Caring for Someone Who Is Sick](#)

[If You are Sick: Isolation](#)

[Close Contact and When to Quarantine](#)

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