

COVID-19 & Physical Distancing FAQ

What is physical distancing?

- Physical distancing is a way to reduce the risk of catching COVID-19 and other respiratory diseases.
- Physical distancing means putting space between yourself and others.
- Physical distancing is a prevention strategy that works best when layered with other prevention strategies such as staying home when sick, masking, handwashing, contact tracing, ventilation and cleaning and disinfecting.

Why is physical distancing important?

- The highest risk of spread of COVID-19 is between people who are in close contact when an infected person coughs, sneezes, talks or eats.
- Some people without symptoms may be able to spread the virus.

Who should practice physical distancing?

- Best practice is for everyone to maintain physical distance between themselves and others.
- It is recommended that students, who are wearing masks, maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance between each other when possible.
- Adults, and students not wearing masks, should maintain 6 feet of physical distance between themselves and others when possible.

Why have experts recommended 3 and/or 6 feet of distancing?

- COVID-19 is passed between people mostly by droplets that come from a person when they cough, sneeze, talk, or eat.
- Based on studies of other contagious diseases, being 6 feet apart lowers the amount of virus you are exposed to. The less virus you are exposed to, the lower your chances of becoming infected.
- Studies conducted in the fall of 2020 showed infrequent spread of COVID-19 between students who were 3 feet apart.

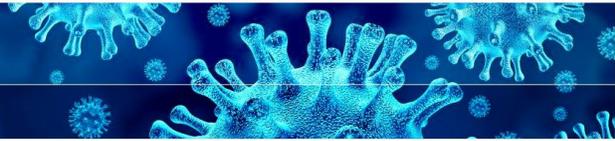
Why is outdoors safer?

- Being outdoors will dilute the infected virus particles and lower the amount of virus exposure.



COVID-19 Information

Office of Health Services 443-809-6368



What can we do indoors to be safer?

- **Wear your face mask.**
- Be in as large of a room as possible. This will provide more room to spread out and increase air flow and dilution of particles.
- Keep the number of persons as small as necessary. The fewer people in the space, the better the ventilation.
- Avoid clusters of students in areas like the bathroom and hallway.
- Be sure that the air handling system is operating. Report any concerns about the heating/air conditioning system to BCPS Maintenance.

If I must be closer than 6 feet with another person, how can I protect myself?

- If you are eligible, get the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Wear your face mask.
- Keep the amount of time you are in close contact as short as necessary.
 - Spending more time with people who may be infected increases your risk of becoming infected.
 - Being within 6 feet of a person for 15 or more minutes, is considered a higher-risk exposure.
 - If you have a higher-risk exposure to a person with COVID-19 while they are contagious you will need to quarantine for 10 days unless you are fully vaccinated.
- Be sure to wash your hands regularly.

Are there other types of physical distancing that can keep me safer?

- Minimize the number of people you interact with.
- Try to stay with the same small group (“contact circle” or “pod”) of people.
- Interacting with more and different people raises your risk since some people may have the virus and not know it since they have mild or no symptoms.

Do you ever need to physically distance in your own home?

- You should maintain physical distance from any household member who is sick or if you are sick.