



Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy

Community Guidelines for COVID-19

Revised 3.1.21

As we continue our 2020-21 academic year in person, we have compiled the following guidelines and procedures to support the health and well-being of our entire community. Every SJCA student/family/school employee must adhere to these guidelines to ensure minimal disruption to our school year and for the common good of our community. These guidelines were developed in consultation with:

- Centers for Disease Control - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>
- PA Department of Health
- Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown
- Geisinger Medical Physician and SJCA Board of Trustee member, Dr. John Pagnotto
<https://www.geisinger.org/coronavirus/news-and-resources/educationresources>

These guidelines follow the CDC recommendations being used by both Geisinger Medical and Mount Nittany Health. To help keep students and school employees safe and healthy, we will focus on 4 main areas:

- **Masking**
- **Social distancing**
- **Handwashing / Hand Sanitizing**
- **Personal responsibility**

Masking

- Students, faculty and staff must wear masks when inside SJCA.
- Students will be allowed to step outside for mask breaks if needed

Social Distancing

- Maintain social distancing when possible and wear a mask.
- Lunchroom capacity has been reduced with additional seating added in other classroom locations as well as outside
- No hugging, high-fives, handshakes, or any other behavior that compromises distancing.

Handwashing/Hand Sanitizing

- Hand sanitizer dispensers are located throughout the building and their frequent use will be encouraged
- Hand sanitization will be required upon entry into the school building and prior to eating lunch
- Avoid touching your face with your hands
- If you have to blow your nose, immediately wash your hands or use sanitizer

Personal Responsibility

- No sharing of school supplies (pens, scissors, etc.), eating utensils and/or beverages. Every student should bring their own school supplies and a water bottle to school.
- Cleaning supplies will be available in each classroom and students will be asked to clean their desk/chair area in each class.
- We need all community members to take a conservative approach to illness this year, meaning that if you do not feel well, **STAY HOME**.
- Any member of our community who becomes ill needs to truthfully disclose their illness.
- Please do everything you can to minimize exposure to illness by wearing masks, maintaining physical distance when you are able to and frequent handwashing / hand sanitizing
- Avoid situations that carry increased risk such as gathering in large crowds, traveling to areas with a high rate of COVID infections, etc.

Continued SJCA COVID-19 Procedures

Communication between families and our school will be essential this year to maintain the health and well-being of our community. Please call the main office or email admin@stjoeacad.org with detailed information about all health issues and COVID-related concerns. Please know that the administration will be handling all illness reports – including reports of COVID-related symptoms and/or testing – with confidentiality to maintain student/family privacy.

If a student/school employee has any symptoms of illness – but especially fever, cough, shortness of breath, lost of taste or smell, diarrhea – they should:

1. Stay home and self-quarantine.
2. Call your family physician to determine if a COVID test is needed.
3. If a COVID test is needed, continue to self-quarantine until the test results are returned.
4. If the test results are negative, the student/school employee may return to SJCA when they have been symptom free (particularly fever free without the use of any fever reducing medications) for 48 hours.

If a student/school employee begins to feel unwell during the school day:

1. They will be immediately isolated and sent home.
2. Call your family physician to determine if a COVID test is needed.
3. If a COVID test is needed, continue to self-quarantine until the test results are returned.
4. If the test results are negative, the student/school employee may return to SJCA when they have been symptom free (particularly fever free without the use of any fever reducing medications) for 48 hours.

If a student/school employee has had close contact with a known COVID-infected individual, they should:

1. Stay home and self-quarantine. Close contact is defined as within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes.
2. Call your family physician to discuss the length of self-quarantine and determine if a COVID test is needed. CDC guidelines recommend self-quarantine for 14 days after exposure to the infected individual. Quarantine can end at day 10 without testing if you have had no symptoms during the 10 day monitoring period. Quarantine can end at day 7 if you have had no symptoms for the 7 day monitoring period, tested 48 hours before the end of quarantine (day 5), and receive negative test results.
3. If a COVID test is needed, continue to self-quarantine until the test results are returned.
4. If the test results are negative and they have remained symptom-free, the student/school employee may return to SJCA.

If a student/school employee tests positive for COVID-19, they should:

1. Stay home and self-quarantine
2. Immediately notify the school of the positive test result so contact tracing can begin. The confidentiality of the student/family will be maintained.
3. Follow CDC guidelines about returning to school, which includes waiting a minimum of 10 days from the onset of symptoms, must be fever free without the use of any fever reducing medications for 48 hours, and COVID symptoms have improved (cough, shortness of breath, etc.)
4. The student/employee must have a doctor's note to return to SJCA.

If a household family member tests positive for COVID:

1. The SJCA student/school employee should stay home and self-quarantine.
2. Call your family physician to discuss the length of self-quarantine and determine if a COVID test is needed.
3. Contact the school office to arrange for virtual instruction for the student during their quarantine period. The confidentiality of the student/family will be maintained.
4. The student/employee must have a doctor's note to return to SJCA.

Travel

As of March 1, 2021 the Order of the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health for Mitigation Relating To Travel is no longer in effect. Travelers should still practice appropriate public health measures to slow the spread of COVID-19 such as masking, physical distancing, and hand hygiene.

Contact Tracing for SJCA

If a student/school employee tests positive, everyone who has been in close contact (within 6 feet with no mask for more than 15 minutes) or prolonged proximity (lunch, clubs, athletics, etc.) with that student/school employee will be notified. Based on the situation, a determination will be made regarding moving specific courses, grades or a school-wide temporary transition to virtual learning. Also, while the school is thoroughly cleaned and disinfected each evening, additional cleaning measures will take place.

Each contacted family will self-monitor and if they have symptoms, they will continue online until they are three days without symptoms and provide a physician's note clearing their return to school.

Please note that if it is determined that it is in the best interest of the larger SJCA community to go 100% virtual for a brief period of time, we will pivot as we did last spring. We will return to in-person instruction when it is safe to do so. Adjustments to athletics and other extra-curricular activities will be made as needed.

Attendance: Sick Days vs. Self-Quarantine

- If a student/school employee does not feel well, they should call in sick as usual and will be marked for a sick day. They are not expected to attend or complete schoolwork when out sick. Teachers will submit substitute teacher/virtual plans for students.
- If a student/school employee is in self-quarantine out of an abundance of caution but otherwise feels well, they should call in their physical absence from school as usual, but should engage in virtual instruction for the day.

Questions

Please know that we take the health and safety of each student/school employee and family member seriously. While this year will be different, with everyone's cooperation we should be able to have a great year. Any questions about these guidelines should be directed to Jennifer Mallett, SJCA Head of School.