



# PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDANCE

## Temperature Checks at School

September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020

This document gives guidance on how to check a temperature and what policies should be in place if a school chooses to do temperature screenings.

Schools may decide to do daily temperature checks or weekly checks on students, or only check a student's temperature if they are feeling unwell.

If a child is feeling unwell, a parent should be called, and the child will be placed in the school's designated isolation room with supervision until a parent is able to pick them up. It is not recommended to check a temperature if a child voices feeling unwell or has other known COVID-19 symptoms.



**It is important to consider that taking a temperature of a person who has COVID-19 symptoms increases the risk of virus transmission as the person checking the student's temperature needs to be within 2 meters of the child to take it.**

### Pros and cons of checking temperatures at schools

#### Pro

- By taking students' temperatures there is possibility of finding people who have a fever before other symptoms start.
- Knowing if a student has a fever (37.8 degrees Celsius or higher).
- By finding students who have a fever and having them return home, the school is protecting other students from possible transmission of COVID-19 or other illnesses.



#### Con

- When taking a student's temperature, physical distancing is not maintained, increasing risk of transmission to the person taking the student's temperature.
- If the school decides to document temperatures, there are important steps to take to protect this medical information.
- Personal protective equipment needs to be worn and changed between students while taking temperatures (Consider if the school has enough supplies)
- Proper hand hygiene needs to be performed before and after taking a student's temperature – consider if the school has supplies to keep up with demand and skin integrity of the people taking temperatures if this will be a daily routine check.





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## Privacy considerations

If temperatures are checked, the school will have to decide if they will be writing down students' medical information. If the choice is to write down students' temperatures, this falls under the Personal Health Information Protection Act because it is information related to the physical health of the student. This means that there are rules that need to be followed to protect this information as it is confidential. The school could also decide to only write down elevated temperatures (above 37.8 degrees Celsius), meaning there will be less information collected that will need to be protected. If you are doing occasional temperature checks and only writing down high temperatures, it would be better to secure in the student's individual file. If you need advice about keeping health information secure reach out to the Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority or the nursing station.

A parental consent form should be filled out at the beginning of the year in case a child needs to have their temperature checked during school hours if temperature checks are part of school policy.

## Preparation for temperature checks

If the policy states that any students who have COVID-19 symptoms need to have their temperature taken before going home, a staff member should escort the child to the room designated to isolate anyone who has COVID-19 symptoms and perform a temperature check in the room.

If the student was not previously wearing a mask, get them to put on a mask if it is tolerated.

Ask the child if they consent to having their temperature checked (even if you have parental consent, it is important to have consent of the child as well).

If the child consents, the staff member doing the temperature check must perform proper hand hygiene and put on PPE at least 2 meters from the student with symptoms:

- Perform proper hand hygiene, wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer of at least 70% alcohol content and rub hands together until the sanitizer is dry.
- After performing hand hygiene, the staff member will put on a surgical/procedural mask, ensuring that the mask covers their nose and chin.
- Then put on eye protection such as a face shield or goggles.
- Put on a medical gown.
- Put on gloves.

\*It is highly recommended to use a non-contact infrared thermometer. If a non-contact thermometer is unavailable, an oral thermometer with plastic sleeves to put on the probe is the next best option.

As COVID-19 is a new coronavirus we are always learning more about it. This information is accurate as of September 3, 2020



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## Temperature reading instructions

Non-contact Infrared Thermometer (Model JXB 178)



### General

- Use this device in an ambient temperature range of 10°C to 40°C.
- Keep this device in a clean and dry area.
- Do not expose the device to extreme temperatures (>55°C or <-20°C).
- The protective glass covering the lens is fragile. Handle it with care. Do not touch the infrared lens glass with fingers.
- Avoid pointing the device at an air flux (air conditioners, fans, or heaters) while using it.

### Steps

1. Before using the device, allow it to acclimate to the screening room temperature for 10-15 minutes
2. Remove hair, makeup, perspiration or clothing from forehead of individuals being scanned. If perspiration is on the forehead, the temperature may also be taken behind the ear lobe.
3. Select the “home” setting on the device.
4. From no more than 3cm to 5cm (1.2in to 2in), aim the device at the middle of the forehead of the individual being screened.
5. Press the measurement trigger to take the temperature. This will take about 1 second.
6. Allow 3 to 5 seconds between temperature measurements.
7. After 30 seconds of inactivity, the unit will shut off automatically. Press the measurement trigger to restart the device.

### Oral Thermometer

#### General

- It is important that the child did not drink anything 15 mins before checking their temperature to ensure that there is a proper reading if an oral thermometer is being used.
- If the school has an oral thermometer (to be used under the tongue), it should have plastic sleeves to cover the temperature probe.



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## Steps

1. Insert the probe into the plastic sleeve
2. Make sure the thermometer is in Celsius.
3. Ask the child to lift their tongue and insert the thermometer under their tongue, then ask the child to close their mouth until the thermometer gives a reading.

## Normal temperatures according to age

Age	Temperature Reading (°C)
0-2	• 36.4 to 38.0
3-10	• 36.1 to 37.8
11-65	• 35.9 to 37.6
>65	• 35.8 to 37.5

- Note that the temperature of the human body varies throughout the day. It can also be influenced by numerous external factors such as age, sex, type and thickness of skin.
- The device is accurate to within 0.3°C.

## If a fever is identified



- If the child has a temperature of 37.8 degrees Celsius or higher, their parent/guardian should come and pick them up. The child will stay in the isolation room with a mask on if tolerated until their parent/guardian arrives.
- A staff member who is wearing droplet precaution personal protective equipment should continue to supervise the child until the parent arrives while staying 2 meters/ 6 feet from the child while wearing a medical mask and eye protection (face shield or goggles).
- Schools should have necessary arrangements in place to support continuity of education for students who are required to be in isolation at home.