

Passing of Assembly Bill Number 5898 to Expand Summer Working Hours for Certain Minors.

Assembly Bill number 5898 was recently passed, which temporarily expands summer working hours for certain minors. This bill permits minors between 16 and 18 years of age to work up to 50 hours in a week during the summer period beginning the last day of the minor's school year and ending on Labor Day, September 6, 2021. A parent or guardian's permission is required.

The Importance of School Ventilation for Reopening Schools

The NJ Safe Schools Program reminds NJ schools of the critical importance of adequate enhanced ventilation and filtration in our public, charter and private schools serving students and adult workers in K-12.

Overall, in general, based on our field research experiences--documented in peer-reviewed journals--conducted in NJ as well as in other U.S. states and nations (Dr. Shendell), we provide the following opinion/guidance.

Without details/context of an individual school and its buildings/facilities, we recommend you do not buy expensive air cleaning equipment and UV light add-on devices to unit ventilators/mechanical HVAC systems (heating, ventilating and air conditioning systems). Instead, with available resources, please focus your resources on the maintenance of existing mechanical HVAC; on the use of the most efficient HVAC filter (highest MERV rating possible), ideally MERV 13 or higher and/or HEPA filtration units if no HVAC; and, replace the filters per manufacturer recommendations (i.e., certain number of times per year). Finally, bring in outdoor air, not just recirculate indoor air; HVAC system should have adjustable settings.

For more information, please go to:

<https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/list-carb-certified-air-cleaning-devices>

<https://ahamverifide.org/directory-of-air-cleaners/>

In addition, recently, the Johns Hopkins University Center for Health Security at the Bloomberg School of Public Health released a new report on ways to provide healthy air in schools to increase safety during the COVID-19 pandemic and potential future respiratory disease outbreaks. The report, [*School Ventilation: A Vital Tool to Reduce COVID-19 Spread*](#), reviews how improvements in building ventilation can reduce the risks of disease transmission. The report recommends six near- and long-term priorities to improve healthy air in schools:

1. Bringing in as much outdoor air as the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system will safely allow and upgrading filtration.
2. Purchase HEPA air filtration units to be placed in classrooms and common occupied spaces.
3. Use only proven technologies for improving indoor air quality: appropriate ventilation and HEPA filtration. Schools should not use chemical foggers or any "air cleaner."
4. Stop enhanced cleaning, disinfecting, "deep clean" days, and any other expensive and disruptive cleaning. Fomite (surface) transmission is not a major driver of the spread of SARS-CoV-2.
5. Upgrade mechanical ventilation systems that do not meet current standards.
6. Convene a federal task force dedicated to school air quality to develop guidance for long-term, sustainable, cost-effective improvements to indoor air quality in schools. This guidance should include accountability measures to assess improvements.

Official State and Federal COVID-19 Guidance

The State of NJ has a number of credible resources regarding COVID-19. Live updates, announcements, health information and services, and resources for at home student learning can be accessed for free online.

If you are interested in accessing official State of NJ guidance, please visit the following webpages:

- <https://covid19.nj.gov/>
- <https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/ncov.shtml>
- <https://www.nj.gov/education/roadforward/> “The Road Forward: Engage, Recover, and Reimagine Education in New Jersey” (This includes information on new initiatives, funding sources available, and standardized testing plans for the remainder of 2021.)
- <https://www.nj.gov/education/> including tips (topics, posted in fall 2020 and spring 2020) for virtual professional learning and teaching/working with colleagues, students and their families: <https://www.nj.gov/education/covid19/teacherresources/virtualproflearning.shtml>.
- <https://rutgerstraining.sph.rutgers.edu/covid19/> COVID-19 Resources for Businesses and Workplaces from the Rutgers Center for Public Health Workforce Development

NJ Governor Murphy Signs Executive Order 192 on workplace safety.

NJ Governor Murphy signed Executive Order (E.O.) 192 on 10/24/2020, effective 11/5/2020.

The same day, he signed E.O. 191 and extended the public health emergency in NJ another 30 days (again renewed original E.O. 103 of 3/9/2020, and last renewed 5/14/2021 with E.O. 240). Most recently on 6/4/2021, Governor Murphy signed E.O. 244 ending the COVID-19 public health emergency in NJ.

E.O. 192, in summary, specifies how public- and private-sector employers—including K-12 schools—must adhere to requirements including: six-foot social-distancing standards for workers to the extent possible; mandate face-masks for employees and visitors when entering the workplace, with limited exceptions; conduct daily health screenings; and, send sick employees home and comply with paid sick-leave laws.

For more information, please go to: <https://nj.gov/infobank/eo/056murphy/pdf/EO-192.pdf>

The U.S. government also provides COVID-19 guidance related to schools.

A few resources are provided below from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on latest guidelines, recommendations for protecting K-12 school staff, and cleaning and disinfection.

The link to a six-step infographic from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for safe and effective disinfectant use in schools (and homes, etc.) is also included below.

A link to a list of hand sanitizer products one should not use from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is also provided below.

The NJ PEOSH Program recommends these resources as well.

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)-Occupational Safety and Health Administration also provides a fact sheet—downloadable in English and many other languages as a PDF file—on 10 steps to reduce your exposure to SARS-CoV-2, the coronavirus causing COVID-19. And, on 4/7/2021, U.S. DOL-Wage & Hour Division launched a new version of their website, <http://www.worker.gov>, also available in Spanish (click upper right corner, “Español”); alternatively, you can go directly to it, <http://www.worker.gov/es> (click upper right corner, English, to go back).

If you are interested in accessing these federal guidance files, please visit the following webpages:

- [CDC Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools through Phased Mitigation](#)
- [CDC Strategies for Protecting K-12 School Staff from COVID-19](#)
- [CDC Cleaning and Disinfection for Community Facilities](#)
- [CDC Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes](#)
- [EPA Six Steps for Safe & Effective Disinfectant Use](#)
- [FDA List of Hand Sanitizer Products You Should Not Use](#)
- [USDOL-OSHA 10 Steps Workplaces Can Take to Reduce Risk of Exposure to Coronavirus](#) with English PDF being, <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3994.pdf>.

There are also school specific resources regarding COVID-19.

For example, below is a link to an infographic on mask guidance to use with high school students.

- <https://preventepidemics.org/covid19/resources/mask-playbook/>