



May 12, 2021

PLEXIGLASS USE IN SCHOOLS

Consistent with its existing policy, DHEC is providing further information regarding use of plexiglass barriers between students. As noted in the *COVID-19: Frequently Asked Questions for School Officials* from August 14, 2020, appropriate plexiglass use, combined with other measures, allows for shorter distances for social distancing.

In scenarios in which students are seated closer apart than six feet, the students would not be considered close contacts when:

1. appropriate plexiglass is utilized, and
2. distance between students is at least three feet apart, and
3. the exposed student is wearing a cloth face covering or face mask that covers the nose and mouth (the plexiglass does not serve as a substitute to mask-wearing) regardless of the infected student's mask status.

- **Note:** The same exposed student **would be** considered a close contact and **would** need to quarantine if **not** wearing a cloth face covering or face mask that covers the nose and mouth and was exposed to the positive student by less than six (6) feet apart for greater than fifteen (15) minutes regardless of the infected student's mask status.

Plexiglass is considered appropriately sized and utilized if it surrounds three sides (the front and two sides) of the edges of the student's desk and extends at least a foot above each child's head when seated at the desk and at least a foot beyond the end of the desk on either side.

There may be acceptable other configurations based on classroom setup. Schools should measure the distance with individuals occupying the seats to ensure students will be three (3) feet apart when seated and that the barrier will provide appropriate separation during school activities. If it is not possible to cover a side with plexiglass, schools can prevent individuals from being considered close contacts by ensuring the seating arrangement provides at least six (6) feet of distance on the exposed side.