



## Interim Guidance for School Health Services Programs Regarding Students Returning from Ebola Affected Areas

October 2014

---

### Background:

Ebola outbreaks are occurring in several countries in West Africa (currently Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone). Check the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website (<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/2014-west-africa/distribution-map.html#areas>) for the most up-to-date information since affected areas may change. Ebola poses little risk to the US general population. It is spread through direct contact with body fluids (blood, urine, feces, saliva, semen, and other secretions) of an infected person, or with objects like needles that have been contaminated with body secretions.

Ebola is not contagious until symptoms appear therefore, people returning from the affected areas who do not have symptoms are not infectious. There should be no restrictions on their school attendance or normal activities. Fever in people who traveled to the affected areas is most likely due to more common infectious diseases in West Africa (e.g. malaria), but should still be checked by a doctor.

It is always good to avoid contact with anyone who is sick and to wash your hands regularly. Use soap and water if available, or use hand sanitizer. Doing so can help you prevent getting sick from many different illnesses.

### For students who are NOT sick:

- Should not be restricted from normal activities.
- Should be advised to follow instructions according to parent letter.

### Recommendations for students who are or become sick:

- Students who get sick more than 21 days after returning from an Ebola-affected area **do not** need to be checked for Ebola and are not at risk for Ebola.
- If a student gets a fever during the school day, he or she should be seen by the school nurse. The school nurse should ask about travel within the last 21 days to affected areas. If there is no nurse, the student should be asked about travel within the last 21 days to affected areas by the appropriate staff person (who would routinely deal with health-related issues).

- If determined to have had travel within 21 days to an affected area, school health services staff should be notified and the parent instructed to have the student assessed by a healthcare provider **right away**. Notify the local health department of any of these situations.
- Identified students should stay in a private room/separated area until parent pick-up, and the parent should be told to tell the healthcare provider about the recent travel history **before** going to the doctor's office or emergency room to decrease the chance of spreading possible infection.