



**Letter No.28024/D.M.IV(2)/2021-1, dated 26.08.2021**

**From**

Thiru. Kumar Jayant, I.A.S.,  
Principal Secretary to Government.

**To**

The Principal Secretary,  
School Education Department, Chennai - 600 009.

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The Commissioner of School Education, Chennai.

**Sir,**

**Sub:** Disaster Management Act, 2005 – COVID-19 – Re-opening of Schools for 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Standards - Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) – Regarding.


- Ref:**
1. G.O.(Ms).No.504, Revenue and Disaster Management (DM4) Department, Dated 07.08.2021.
  2. From the Commissioner of School Education, Letter No.23430/K/E3/2020, Dated 09.08.2021
  3. G.O.(Ms).No.522, Revenue and Disaster Management (DM4) Department, Dated 21.08.2021.


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In the reference first cited, while issuing orders permitting re-opening of schools for 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> standards with effect from 01.09.2021 with 50% of students at a time by duly following the appropriate standard operating procedures, it has also been directed that School Education Department shall take necessary preparatory action and prescribe appropriate standard operating procedures for conducting classes regularly.

2. As prescribed by the School Education Department, Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for health, hygiene and safety protocols for re-opening of schools for 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Standards is issued herewith as per the **Annexure** attached.

Yours faithfully,

  
26/8/2021

 For Principal Secretary to Government.

**Copy to:**

The Additional Chief Secretary and Commissioner of  
Revenue Administration, Chennai -5.

The Commissioner,  
Greater Chennai Corporation, Chennai.  
All the District Collectors.  
The Hon'ble Chief Minister Office, Chennai-09.  
The Private Secretary to Chief Secretary to Government, Chennai-9.

## ANNEXURE

Letter No.28024, Revenue and D.M [D.M4(2)] Dept, dated 26.08.2021

### Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Health, Hygiene and Safety Protocols for re-opening of Schools for 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Standards from 01.09.2021.

Schools may be opened for Classes 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> from 01.09.2021. The schools shall be allowed to function six days a week. Classes & sections have to be split into batches of not more than 20 students per class room. However, if there is additional space available in large classrooms to accommodate more students following strict physical distancing norms, more students can be accommodated by adding additional benches. If however, no additional classrooms are available, then students shall be asked to come to school on a rotational basis on alternate days.

#### **I General:**

1. Online/distance learning will continue to be an alternate mode of teaching.
2. Where schools are conducting online classes, and some students prefer to attend online classes rather than physically attend school, they may be permitted to do so.
3. Students willing to study from home with the consent of the parents may be allowed to do so.
4. Follow-up on the progress of the learning outcomes of all such students shall be planned appropriately.
5. **All students and teachers/staff shall wear face masks compulsorily inside and outside the school premises.**
6. Schools when allowed to open, shall mandatorily follow this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) issued by the Government.
7. All teachers and non-teaching staff must get themselves vaccinated.

#### **II Health, Hygiene and Safety protocols before opening of schools.**

##### **A. Precautionary measures and sanitization:**

1. Prior to re-opening of schools , the school premises along with furniture, hand rails, doors, windows etc. shall be cleaned and disinfected properly and following the Government guidelines already issued for the same.

2. Provision of hand wash facilities with soap and running water which is the most preferred mode of disinfection for hands shall be made adequately. **In addition, hand sanitizers shall be provided in all classrooms (Health Department will provide sanitizer in all Government schools).**
3. Suitable hand wash with soap /sanitization provisions with alcohol based sanitizers shall be made at the entry and exit points of the schools or wherever required. Hand washing should be encouraged as an effective tool.
4. CEOs shall communicate the **Government guidelines** for sanitization of public places to all schools / local bodies/health department officials for strict compliance by all concerned.
5. Toilets and wash areas shall be cleaned and disinfected properly and maintained with cleanliness.
6. Instead of biometric attendance for teachers/staff, alternate arrangements for contact less attendance shall be made by the school administration as a temporary alternative during the pandemic.
7. The school should display State helpline numbers and also numbers of local health authorities, mobile medical teams, etc. to teachers / students / employees to contact in case of any emergency.
8. The management of every school shall be responsible for the clean and tidy upkeep of their school premises according to these standards.

#### **B. Social Distancing norms**

1. On all working days, proper social distancing norms shall be followed to avoid crowding at the entrance, exit, and inside the school premises.
2. The students shall not be allowed to linger outside the schools in groups.
3. Physical/social distancing norms should be followed during arrival and departure time.
4. Assemblies, sports and other events and cultural activities that can lead to overcrowding shall be avoided. Swimming pools (wherever applicable) shall remain closed.
5. No period shall be allowed for Physical Education and Games. NSS and NCC activities shall not be allowed.
- 6. Staggering the timing of entry and exit for students of different classes may be followed.**

7. Students shall be encouraged to come to schools by bicycles or parents shall be encouraged to drop / pick up students from schools.
8. Earmarking different lanes for coming and going is to be done to maintain physical distance.
9. At the time of entry and exit, all the gates shall be opened; in case school has more than one gate, earmarking classes for each gate may be done to avoid crowding.
10. Proper boxes must be marked on the floor / ground to ensure social distancing in queues wherever required.
11. Students / staff in containment zones and quarantine area shall be asked to come to school only after the quarantine period / containment period is over or the containment zone is declared normal. These students may be contacted over phone by the teachers to provide guidance or put on alternate / online mode of teaching.
- 12. Sufficient physical distancing is to be followed while making seating arrangements in class rooms.**
13. Physical distancing shall also be maintained in staff rooms, in office areas (including reception areas) and in all other places inside the school.
14. If weather permits, outdoor spaces may be utilized for conducting teacher - student interactions, keeping in view the safety and security of the students and physical distancing protocols.
15. Posters/messages/stickers and signage shall be displayed at appropriate places in the school reminding students about maintaining physical/social distancing such as inside the classroom, libraries, outside washrooms, hand washing stations, drinking water areas, school kitchen, halls, classrooms, buses/ cabs parking, entry and exits.
16. Doors and windows should be kept open.

**C. Sensitization of students, parents, teachers, community members and hostel staff on COVID - 19 related challenges and their role**

1. Prior to reopening of schools, arrangements shall be made for sensitization of teachers, parents, staff, and members of School Management Committee through online/offline modes such as pamphlets , letters, public announcement systems in villages, urban wards etc. on COVID appropriate behavior such as:

- i. Required do's and don'ts including maintenance of hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene and disinfection of frequently touched surfaces
  - ii. Maintaining physical distance (social distance)
  - iii. Hygienic practices necessary for the prevention of COVID-19
  - iv. Removing Stigmas attached to COVID-19
  - v. Avoiding attending school if having symptoms and seeking medical care
  - vi. Students should not sit together in groups during snack breaks or lunch breaks.
  - vii. Group activities/discussions should be avoided.
  - viii. Students from containment zones should not come to School.
  - ix. No schools in any zones declared as containment zones will be allowed to function.
2. Students and staff shall be advised not to visit areas falling within containment zones.
  3. Parents shall be sensitized about personal hygiene, personal health, and cleanliness of uniforms and this information may be circulated well in advance through letters, e-mails, or any other social media.
  4. Parents shall be sensitized that they must not send their wards to school if the child or any family member living in the same household suffers from fever/cough/ breathlessness etc. Similarly, children with underlying medical conditions are to take appropriate precautions as advised by their respective medical practitioners.
  5. Parents shall not send children having COVID related symptoms to schools. Instead appropriate test and treatment without any delay should be taken and usual precautions followed.

### **III. Health, Hygiene and Safety protocols after opening of schools.**

#### **A. Health Profiling and screening of students/staff**

1. The first step on reopening of the schools will be health profiling and screening of students/staff. Information from students, teachers and other staff (Health Profiling) shall be collected in the form of a self-declaration regarding their

health condition, etc. A health check up by a team of doctors shall also be arranged as per a schedule, to screen the students and teachers for diseases/ailments/co-morbid conditions, if any and cases may be referred to the nearest Government Hospitals for necessary treatment and follow up.

2. The Health profiling and screening of students/staff shall commence immediately after opening the school and shall be completed within a week.
3. Every school shall designate a teacher to oversee the implementation of COVID related precautions by schools, teachers and staff. He/She shall counsel the students in case of any difficulty arising due to COVID situation.

#### **B. Precautionary measures and Sanitization on daily basis**

1. The school premises along with furniture, hand rails, doors, windows etc especially the commonly touched surfaces like door knobs, latches etc shall be cleaned properly. **The expenses for this can be met by local bodies for Government schools.**
2. Students should not be involved in any of the cleaning activities for health and safety reasons.
3. All teaching learning material such as teaching aids, sports materials, swings, desks, chairs, computers, printers, laptops, tablets etc. focusing particularly on frequently touched surfaces/objects shall be disinfected properly.
4. All garbage should be disposed in dustbins and must not be allowed to pile up anywhere else in the school premises.
5. All dustbins must be cleaned and covered properly. Protocols must be in place for the final safe disposal of waste.
6. Mandatory hand washing for all students and staff at regular intervals as per the planned protocol following physical/social distancing norms shall be ensured. Hand washing time should be a minimum of 20 seconds.
7. Availability of safe and clean drinking water for students shall be ensured. Bringing their own water bottles by students shall be encouraged.
8. Teachers and students shall only be allowed to enter the premises after washing their hands with soap /sanitizing. Suitable hand wash with soap/ sanitization provisions with alcohol based sanitizers shall be made at the entry and exit points of the schools

and wherever required. This shall be monitored by the designated staff.

9. Air-conditioning should be avoided to the extent possible. Wherever, absolutely necessary, for air-conditioning/ ventilation, the GOI guidelines shall be followed which emphasizes that the temperature setting of all air conditioning devices should be in the range of 24-30°C, relative humidity should be in the range of 40-70%, intake of fresh air should be as much as possible and cross ventilation should be adequate. **Air circulation system should allow fresh/treated fresh air with fresh air level more than 50%.**
10. No outside vendor should be allowed to sell eatables inside the school premises or at the entry gate/point or exit.

### **C. Social behaviour for pandemic prevention**

1. The Head Master/ Principal shall ensure that a clean face mask is used by all teachers/students/ personnel.
2. Wearing of mask shall be compulsory in all areas of the school premises by everyone. Touching the mask should be kept to minimum.
3. Children should be educated not to exchange masks with others.
4. Touching the face or any part of the face should be avoided.
5. Touching any surfaces of furniture/fixtures/railings/lifts/ handles and other surfaces should be kept to the minimum.
6. Spitting should be strictly prohibited except in wash areas where the same should be washed away in running water immediately.
7. Respiratory etiquette should be strictly followed. This involves strict practice of covering one's mouth and nose while coughing/ sneezing with a tissue paper/ handkerchief/ flexed elbow and disposing off used tissue papers properly.
8. Teachers shall monitor and ensure that all the above are followed by the students strictly.
9. Self-monitoring of health by all and reporting any illness at the earliest shall be done.
10. Any student/teacher/staff displaying symptoms shall be immediately isolated and sent for testing.

### **D. Safety norms in classrooms and other places**

1. Proper crowd management inside and outside the school premises shall be ensured.



2. Teachers shall ensure that students sit at marked/allocated seats maintaining physical/social distancing and wearing face covers /masks in the classes, laboratories, libraries, playground or any other part of school premise.
3. Practical work should be done maintaining physical distance.
4. Sharing of any material (Textbooks, Notebooks, Pen, Pencil, Eraser, Tiffin Box, Water Bottles, etc.) by students with each other shall be discouraged.
5. Different break times shall be provided for different classes.
6. No sharing of food among students should be allowed.
7. Students who do not take mid-day meals may be encouraged to bring and eat home cooked food.
8. Windows and doors of the classrooms and other rooms to be kept open for ventilation.
9. Number of people in the elevators and passages shall be restricted. Use of stairs with one person on alternate steps may be encouraged.
10. Over-crowding in washrooms should be prevented.
11. Students shall be encouraged to wash their hands before and after lunch/snacks, each time they use the washroom and any other outdoor activities. Hand sanitizers with 70% alcohol can be an alternative.

#### **E. Conduct of training in High Tech labs/other laboratories**

1. For practical activities in laboratories, maximum capacity per session based on redesigned spaces shall be planned and scheduled accordingly duly following physical distancing norms.
2. The equipments shall be disinfected properly, particularly the frequently touched surfaces before and after each use.
3. All staff/students shall sanitize their hands before and after using training equipment. For such purpose hand sanitizers should be provided at workstations/Hi tech labs etc.

#### **F. SOP to be followed in case a student/teacher/ employee develops symptoms (fever, cough difficulty in breathing)**

1. Place the ill person in a room or area where they are isolated from others. Inform parents/guardians as the case may be. Immediately inform the nearest medical facility(hospital/clinic) and arrange for COVID test immediately.

2. Patient shall remain isolated while wearing a mask/face cover till such time they are examined by a doctor/health worker.
3. A risk assessment shall be undertaken by the designated public health authority and accordingly further action be initiated regarding management of case, his/her contacts and need for disinfection.
4. Disinfection of the premises to be taken up if the person is found positive.
5. For a suspect or a case detected in school/hostel, the student/staff shall not be sent back to his/her home as it may lead to spread of the disease. He/She should be isolated and State/district health officials shall be informed for suitable follow- up.
6. Persons who were in close contact with the positively tested student or person shall remain in home quarantine for self monitoring.

#### **G. Other instructions**

1. All employees/teachers/students in the school premises must compulsorily wear their Identity card at all times.
2. Employees/ teachers/students should be strictly instructed not to have any gathering inside the school premises.
3. The Head Master/Principal shall be held responsible for adherence of guidelines in school and should carry out compliance checks frequently.
4. Entry of unnecessary visitors shall be strictly prohibited.
5. If transportation facility is being managed by the school, proper physical distancing, sanitization of buses/other transport vehicles shall be ensured as per the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Private school buses and vans issued in **G.O.Ms.No.279, Revenue and Disaster Management (DM-II) Department dated 06.06.2020.**
6. It shall be ensured that regular counseling is done for students and teachers reporting mental health issues such as anxiety and depression.
7. Teachers, school counselors and school health workers should work in unison to ensure emotional safety of the students.
8. Task Teams such as, Emergency Care Support/Response Team, General Support Team for all stakeholders, Commodity Support Team, Hygiene Inspection Team, etc. with earmarked responsibilities may be formed in schools.

9. Teachers, students and other stakeholders deemed fit for being the members of these task forces may be identified to work collaboratively to take strategic and immediate actions.
10. **Ensure availability in school or at contactable distance a full-time trained health care attendant / nurse / doctor and counselor to take care of physical and mental health of the students.**
11. **Regular health check-up of students and teachers may be organized by schools.**
12. **Health Department to arrange for Medical Teams to conduct Health Camps in schools initially for health screening of students/ staff before opening and regular check up after opening.**
13. **Health Department to keep mobile medical teams ready at block levels for quick response to the need in the schools.**
14. **Contact numbers of the mobile medical teams shall be kept readily available in the schools.**
15. **Health Department shall bring awareness among school students / staff on various preventive measures to be taken with regard to COVID-19 pandemic by issuing pamphlets, etc.,**

#### **IV. Standard Operating Procedure for all private school hostels**

1. Temporary partitions may be erected to separate boarders as far as possible.
2. Physical / Social distancing must be maintained at all times in hostels. Signage and messaging at prominent places will be important.
3. Alternative spaces may be arranged to accommodate students to enable physical / social distancing.
4. Screening of every boarder needs to be done before they start staying at the hostel. Only asymptomatic boarders should be allowed to join.
5. Since students may be coming from different locations by using public transport such as buses, trains, etc., it is important that they minimize their contact and interaction with other on arrival at hostel. Their health status should be monitored periodically.
6. Arrangement for a regular visit of Counsellor Teacher or a Counsellor needs to be ensured for the mental and emotional well-being of the students.
7. Hostels should be out of bounds for all persons except essential staff with known health status.

8. Appropriate authorities shall inspect kitchen and mess regularly to ensure maintenance of hygiene.
9. Training of hostel staff should be undertaken on physical / social distancing norms, health and hygiene, clean and nutritious food, etc., for the hostellers and other aspects.
10. In addition to the above, the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for hostels maintained by Private Managements issued by the Government in **G.o.Ms.No.279, Revenue and Disaster Management (DM-II) Department dated 06.06.2020** shall be followed by all hostels. The hostels run by various departments of Government shall also follow the guidelines issued by the respective departments.

**KUMAR JAYANT**  
**PRINCIPAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT**

**//TRUE COPY//**

ಶ್ರೀಮತಿ/ಶ್ರೀ 26/8/2021  
**SECTION OFFICER**

26/8/21