

School Overview

There is no reason for Texas schools to close, cancel classes or cancel extracurricular activities due to risk of Ebola. No Ebola patients have been present at a Texas school. There is no reason to close or clean a building or bus beyond routine cleaning procedures for schools. For more information, [read the department statement regarding schools](#).

Important Facts about Ebola

- Ebola is spread through direct contact with a person with Ebola. People only become contagious after they begin to have symptoms.
- Direct contact (through broken skin or mucous membranes in, for example, the eyes, nose, or mouth) includes contact with blood, secretions, or other bodily fluids, or exposure to contaminated objects, such as needles. Body fluids include saliva, mucus, vomit, feces, sweat, tears, breast milk, urine, and semen.
- Ebola cannot be spread simply by being near someone who is infected. Ebola is not spread through the air or by water.
- There is no evidence that mosquitos or other insects can transmit Ebola virus.
- The Ebola outbreak is concentrated in three countries in West Africa (Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone). Only a very small number of cases of Ebola have been diagnosed in the United States although additional cases may occur in the future.
- Ebola is a disease caused by the Ebola virus that can lead to severe and often fatal disease in humans who become infected. Symptoms of Ebola include:
 - Sudden fever
 - Severe headache
 - Joint and muscle aches
 - Nausea
 - Weakness
 - Diarrhea
 - Vomiting
 - Stomach pain
 - Lack of appetite
- Symptoms usually appear 8 to 10 days after exposure, but may appear anywhere from 2 to 21 days after exposure.
- The key point to consider is whether there has been any direct contact with a person who is ill with Ebola and showing symptoms.
- Once someone recovers from Ebola, they can no longer spread the virus except via breast milk and semen, which can contain detectable virus for up to three months.
- The best way to prevent any infectious disease is to practice good hygiene. Avoid contact with blood and body fluids of any person, particularly someone who is sick. Wash your hands frequently using soap and warm water. If you cannot wash your hands, use an alcohol-based sanitizer.
- Everyone six months and older should receive a flu vaccine now. Because flu has symptoms similar to those of Ebola, getting vaccinated and avoiding the flu will help reduce unnecessary anxiety about Ebola. Visit www.texasflu.org for more information.

For more information about Ebola:

- Texas Department of State Health Services
www.dshs.state.tx.us/preparedness/ebola-outbreak.aspx
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola