



ARP ESSER Health and Safety Plan  
Guidance & Template

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Section 2001(i)(1) of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires each local education agency (LEA) that receives funding under the ARP Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund to develop and make publicly available on the LEA's website a *Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan*, hereinafter referred to as a *Health and Safety Plan*.

Based on ARP requirements, 90 percent of ARP ESSER funds will be distributed to school districts and charter schools based on their relative share of Title I-A funding in FY 2020-2021. **Given Federally required timelines, LEAs eligible to apply for and receive this portion of the ARP ESSER funding must submit a Health and Safety Plan that meets ARP Act requirements to the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) by Friday, July 30, 2021, regardless of when the LEA submits its ARP ESSER application.**

Each LEA must create a Health and Safety Plan that addresses how it will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff, and which will serve as local guidelines for all instructional and non-instructional school activities during the period of the LEA's ARP ESSER grant. The Health and Safety Plan should be tailored to the unique needs of each LEA and its schools and must take into account public comment related to the development of, and subsequent revisions to, the Health and Safety Plan.

The ARP Act and U.S. Department of Education rules require Health and Safety plans include the following components:

1. How the LEA will, to the greatest extent practicable, implement prevention and mitigation policies in line with the most up-to-date guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the reopening and operation of school facilities in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning;
2. How the LEA will ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address the students' academic needs, and students' and staff members' social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services;
3. How the LEA will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff and the extent to which it has adopted policies, and a description of any such policy on each of the following safety recommendations established by the CDC:

- a. Universal and correct wearing of [masks](#);
- b. Modifying facilities to allow for [physical distancing](#) (e.g., use of cohorts/podding);
- c. [Handwashing and respiratory etiquette](#);
- d. [Cleaning](#) and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving [ventilation](#);
- e. [Contact tracing](#) in combination with [isolation](#) and [quarantine](#), in collaboration with State and local health departments;
- f. [Diagnostic](#) and screening testing;
- g. Efforts to provide COVID-19 [vaccinations to school communities](#);
- h. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and
- i. Coordination with state and local health officials.

The LEA's Health and Safety Plan must be approved by its governing body and posted on the LEA's publicly available website by July 30, 2021.\* The ARP Act requires LEAs to post their Health and Safety Plans online in a language that parents/caregivers can understand, or, if it is not practicable to provide written translations to an individual with limited English proficiency, be orally translated. The plan also must be provided in an alternative format accessible, upon request, by a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Each LEA will upload in the eGrants system its updated Health and Safety Plan and webpage URL where the plan is located on the LEA's publicly available website.

The ARP Act requires LEAs to review their Health and Safety Plans at least every six months during the period of the LEA's ARP ESSER grant. LEAs also must review and update their plans whenever there are significant changes to the CDC recommendations for K-12 schools. Like the development of the plan, all revisions must be informed by community input and reviewed and approved by the governing body prior to posting on the LEA's publicly available website.

LEAs may use the template to revise their current Health and Safety Plans to meet ARP requirements and ensure all stakeholders are fully informed of the LEA's plan to safely resume instructional and non-instructional school activities, including in-person learning, for the current school year. An LEA may use a different plan template or format provided it includes all the elements required by the ARP Act, as listed above.

\* The July 30 deadline applies only to school districts and charter schools that received federal Title I-A funds in FY 2020-2021 and intend to apply for and receive ARP ESSER funding.

## **Additional Resources**

LEAs are advised to review the following resources when developing their Health and Safety Plans:

- [CDC K-12 School Operational Strategy](#)
- [PDE Resources for School Communities During COVID-19](#)
- [PDE Roadmap for Education Leaders](#)
- [PDE Accelerated Learning Through an Integrated System of Support](#)
- [PA Department of Health - COVID-19 in Pennsylvania](#)

## Health and Safety Plan Summary: Vida Charter School

**Initial Effective Date:** July 15, 2021

**Date of Last Review:** July 15, 2021

**Date of Last Revision:** July 15, 2021

1. How will the LEA, to the greatest extent practicable, support prevention and mitigation policies in line with the most up-to-date guidance from the CDC for the reopening and operation of school facilities in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning?

As we have done for the entirety of the 2020-2021 school year, prevention and mitigation policies will be reviewed monthly, at minimum, by the Pandemic Team to ensure their compliance with the most up-to-date guidance from the CDC. This team will be made up of school administrators, the school nurse, school personnel, Board members, and community health practitioners. Individuals with expertise beneficial to evaluating or amending the Health and Safety Plan will be invited to participate and/or to provide feedback, as appropriate. The individuals who will support in this plan, as well as their roles, are listed below.

The Health and Safety Plan will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees at minimum every six (6) months.

Individual(s)	Stakeholder Group Represented	Pandemic Team Roles and Responsibilities (Options Above)
Christine Miller	Executive Director	Plan Development and Response Team
Melissa Turner	Business and Operations Director	Plan Development and Response Team
Kathy Logothetis	School Nurse	Plan Development and Response Team
Elana Nashelsky	Assistant Principal	Plan Development and Response Team
Belinda Ray	Reading Specialist/Union president	Plan Development
Melissa Sandoe	Board of Trustees	Plan Development
Brenda Reyes-Lua	Board of Trustees	Plan Development
Melissa Rosenberger	Board of Trustees	Plan Development
Darren Glass	Board of Trustees	Plan Development
Dr. George Logothetis	Medical Doctor	Plan Development
Sally Powell	Board of Trustees	Plan Development
Pasky Kabongo	School Custodian	Plan Development
Monica Forsythe	School Custodian, employed by Gettysburg Area School District	Plan Development

2. How will the LEA ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address the students' academic needs, and students' and staff members' social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services?

The three strategies by which Vida Charter School will ensure continuity of services to address the students' academic, social, emotional, and health are:

**1. Multi-tiered Systems of Support**

- a. The Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) is the systematic screening of students' academic and social, emotional and mental health to determine appropriate supplemental supports. The MTSS Leadership Team, which includes the Spanish and English reading specialists, Learning Support teacher, School Counselor, the English Learner Teacher, and the administration, meets periodically with teachers to analyze all benchmark data and intervention plans to identify school-wide trends. Classroom teachers establish "SMART GOALS" to ensure that students who are well below benchmark are matched with appropriate Tiered supports, with progress monitoring. Students will not be considered for retention or special education evaluation unless they have been supported with fidelity through research-based and targeted supports through our MTSS process.

**2. The Continuity of Education Plan**

- a. This plan defines what distance learning entails, if it is temporarily required due to a required period of isolation or quarantine due to Covid-19. Under this plan, support services, therapies, and direct instruction for English Language Learners, students with Individualized Education Plans, and those in need of tiered instructional support in accordance with our Multi-tiered Systems of Support are prioritized. This plan was developed in collaboration with the Lincoln Intermediate Unit #12, and undergoes periodic review by the Board of Trustees.

**3. Biliteracy Curriculum Implementation**

- a. Vida Charter School will implement a scope and sequence for instruction from kindergarten through 5th grade in the 2021-2022 school year to ensure that students receive rigorous, standards-based instruction which aids their grade-level academic progress.

**4. Social and Emotional Support**

- a. Vida Charter School is a Responsive Classroom school. This means that school-wide expectations for student and adult behavior are clear, consistent, and developmentally appropriate. Setting and maintaining high standards for behavior starts in the classroom. Responsive Classroom™ provides a structure and common language for everyone at Vida.
- b. Vida's mission includes a desire for all students to be "healthy in body and mind." Our core instruction and practices incorporate multiple opportunities for students to engage in healthy practices including physical education, yoga, mindfulness, tasting fresh fruits and vegetables, and learning about healthy cooking and nutrition.

**5. Distribution of Meals to all Students**

- a. Throughout the 2021-22 school meal, all students will continue to be eligible for

free breakfast and lunch through the National School Lunch program. Vida Charter School contracts with Gettysburg Area School District (GASD) Food Service to plan menus, prepare and serve breakfast and lunch to our students. GASD also makes free meals available to Vida students throughout the summer, and as needed, distributes free meals as a “drive-through” option in cases of school closure due to COVID-19. Vida communicates these opportunities to our families and assists them with taking advantage of the meals for their children.

- b. Vida has a partnership with Ruth’s Harvest, a local non-profit organization that provides a bag full of food every Friday that we send home with all interested students/families. These distributions help to provide food security and ensure nutrition for our students.
- c. Vida partners with other local organizations including Gettysburg College Center for Public Service and South Central Community Action Program, to distribute fresh food boxes to our families as available.
- d. Vida has partnered with our local Panera to collect the bakery items left at the end of the day every Monday, and distributes those items free of charge to our students, families and staff on Tuesdays.
- e. Vida’s Business and Operations Manager works with GASD Food Service to support the process for Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) cards for eligible students

Vida Charter School will address the staffs’ social, emotional, mental health, and other needs through:

- 1. The creation, amendment, and dissemination of a **“School Reopening and Return to Onsite Work” guide**, developed in collaboration with the school’s legal counsel, which provides updates for Vida staff. Included in this guide is information about:
  - a. Accommodating at-risk employees;
  - b. A plan to ensure the health of employees, which includes a daily health self-screening;
  - c. Information about quarantine as it relates to vaccination;
  - d. Information about returning to work after Covid-related leave
- 2. Vida Charter School offers an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). To those who are members of CapBlue through Vida. The benefit is provided through Mazzitti & Sullivan. Their website is also available in Spanish, which supports our staff with a Spanish language preference.

Use the table below to explain how the LEA will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff and the extent to which it has adopted policies, and a description of any such policy on each of the following safety recommendations established by the CDC.

ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
<b>a. Universal and correct wearing of <a href="#">masks</a>;</b>	Vida Charter School will comply fully with the CDC’s guidance as it relates to mask-wearing <b>indoors</b> . As of the writing of this plan, mask-wearing will continue to be mandated for all unvaccinated people, and will be a part of the Vida Charter School Dress Code. Vaccinated people will be required to share evidence of vaccination to the administration if they wish to

be maskless indoors. For the purposes of modeling appropriate mask-wearing, it is recommended that even vaccinated people wear masks when in close proximity to others and in communal spaces, such as the lobby, office, and in the halls.

Students may remove their face covering when eating or drinking. Students will eat lunch and snack in designated “pods” or small groups, which will comprise no greater than 6 total students in their cohort. Within the pods, students may or may not be socially distanced, though pods themselves are separated by a minimum of 6 feet.

Masks will not be mandated for staff and students **outside** *unless*:

1. Determined to be in the health and safety interests of the Vida Charter School community by the Administration, as a result of a rise in local transmission rates; or
2. Deemed necessary by a teacher or staff member, for an outdoor instructional activity

Students needing a greater number of breaks will be offered them.

Families will be asked to provide their student(s) with masks every day, and to maintain the satisfactory cleanliness of their masks. The school will have additional supplies of masks if needed, including cloth masks.

The school will provide each staff member with at least 3 cloth washable masks at the start of the school year. During instructional hours, all staff members must wear masks, *unless* they are in an office or room with no other individuals and/or if they are vaccinated and are meeting with other individuals who disclose a positive vaccination status.

**b. Modifying facilities to allow for [physical distancing](#) (e.g., use of cohorts/podding);**

Vida Charter School will implement cohorting/podding, defined as a fixed group *not to exceed* 6 students in a cohort, who are grouped throughout the day as a means of supporting instruction and limiting close contacts. Cohorting/Podding of the same students must be maintained in all settings, including the classroom, in station work, in the cafeteria, in the halls, etc.

Further, the sharing of updated lists of pods/cohorts will be expected by the administration as these groupings are changed to support instruction. Vida Staff should make meticulous efforts to limit contact between pods/cohorts to under 15 total minutes over a 24 hour period for small group instruction, as well as their own exposure, if they are unvaccinated.

Outdoor instruction, whenever possible, will be encouraged. During recess and physical education, games that require close proximity will be allowed, *unless* otherwise specified by the administration and staff based on county levels of transmission.

As an alternative to meeting together in the same room, teachers and staff will have opportunities to join collaborations/professional development sessions remotely, from within the building as applicable, for the purpose of personal safety and to reduce potential contact.

Excessive furniture has been removed from classrooms, to allow for physical distancing between students. Gatherings, events, extracurriculars to those that can be conducted while maintaining physical distancing will be made available via Zoom, whenever possible.

To support compliance, bilingual signage will be posted through the CDC in the recommended locations: bathrooms, school entrances (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/index.htm>).

**c. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette;**

There will be scheduled, adult-supervised, handwashing throughout the day, at the beginning of day, out to recess, etc. Electronic hand-sanitizer stations will be stocked throughout the building at key locations.

Teachers will enforce washing/sanitizing hands and the covering of coughs and sneezes. They will support families and students to practice hygiene at home.

The Business and Operations Director will monitor the inventory of handwashing and hand sanitizing supplies.

**d. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation;**

Frequently touched surfaces and objects within the school will be cleaned and disinfected, including door handles, sink handles and water refill stations, through hand-wiping, at a frequency determined by the Administration and Custodial staff.

All water fountains have been replaced by touchless models. All students will be given their own water bottle to fill throughout the day.

The Business and Operations Director will ensure that the HVAC ventilation systems operate properly; it will be monitored by the School Custodian. Each classroom and large common space is self-ventilated; air is confined to each space. As in the 2020-2021 school year, the amount of fresh air brought in by HVAC system and the amount of time the system runs will be sustained at an increase. Windows and doors can be opened to increase ventilation, based on CDC guidance.

Adequate cleaning supplies will be purchased, and the inventory will be carefully monitored by the Business and Operations Director.

**e. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State and local health departments;**

Our process is:

1. The individual who learns of positive case communicates positive cases to School Administration and School Nurse.
2. The School Nurse seeks additional information about the case, and communicates Vida's expectations regarding quarantine/isolation as defined by the CDC to the parent/guardian of the impacted student(s). The School Nurse offers a temporary transition to Distance Learning, if appropriate. If the child is at school, they must be retrieved within an hour, and will remain isolated in the quarantine room.
3. The School Nurse will communicate to Department of Health regarding the positive case, and any resulting close contacts, through the provided template.
4. The Business and Operations Director will communicate the positive case to directors of transportation to determine potential close contacts, as well as to RSG after school

program.

5. The School Administration will communicate with stakeholders, including staff, families, and Board of Trustees, regarding the positive case, while maintaining confidentiality. Those families affected by the positive case will receive information regarding: Food pick-up, technology pick-up, symptoms, return date, and distance learning start date. Impacted staff will be given information regarding self-monitoring, communicating to the doctor, and leave form/process.

**f. Diagnostic and screening testing;**

Vida Charter School recommends a daily self-screening, and monitoring of staff and student symptoms and history of exposure, in compliance with CDC guidelines.

**g. Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities;**

The Vida Charter School Administration and School Nurse will work with local vaccination providers to coordinate and disseminate locations for the school community to consider, schedule, and receive a vaccination. Information will be made periodically available through PeachJar, Robocall, and the Vida Charter School website, and by directing interested parties to: <https://www.vaccines.gov/>

**h. Appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and**

Any student who cannot wear a mask or face shield due to a medical condition, including those with respiratory issues that impede breathing, a mental health condition, or disability, and students who would be unable to remove a mask without assistance, are not required to wear face coverings. These exceptions must be documented and qualified by a physician, and approved by the Executive Director.

Under the Continuity of Education Plan, support services, therapies, and direct instruction for English Language Learners, students with Individualized Education Plans, and those in need of tiered instructional support in accordance with our Multi-tiered Systems of Support are prioritized when a child is a temporary distance learner.

Vida Charter School asks all employees to self-report whether they wish to request a reasonable accommodation due to being in a high risk category for COVID-19 according to the Centers for Disease Control. Those employees will receive a letter regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and an ADA Physician form. The school will review the Physician's recommended accommodation(s) as part of the interactive process to determine whether the accommodations would assist or enable the employee to perform his or her essential job functions, explore alternative accommodations, and determine whether a particular accommodation is unreasonable or would cause an undue hardship to the school. An employee who has a family member that is in a high risk category is not covered by the ADA.

**i. Coordination with state and local health officials.**

Vida Charter School will communicate via email, Robocall, Zoom, and in-person meetings to coordinate and implement updates provided by the CDC and the Pennsylvania Department

of Health. All information from these agencies will be communicated, coordinated, and implemented in collaboration between the Board of Trustees, Administration, and Teachers and Staff.

## Health and Safety Plan Governing Body Affirmation Statement

The Board of Directors/Trustees for **(INSERT NAME OF LEA)** reviewed and approved the Health and Safety Plan on **(INSERT DATE: MONTH, DAY, YEAR)**.

The plan was approved by a vote of:

\_\_\_\_ **Yes**

\_\_\_\_ **No**

Affirmed on: **(INSERT DATE: MONTH, DAY, YEAR)**

By:

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*(Signature\* of Board President)*

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*(Print Name of Board President)*

\*Electronic signatures on this document are acceptable using one of the two methods detailed below.

**Option A:** The use of actual signatures is encouraged whenever possible. This method requires that the document be printed, signed, scanned, and then submitted.

**Option B:** If printing and scanning are not possible, add an electronic signature using the resident Microsoft Office product signature option, which is free to everyone, no installation or purchase needed.