

# Safe return to school in 2022

## The IEU expects employers to implement the following minimum protections to ensure the safety of staff and students in schools and early learning centres in 2022:

1. Rapid-antigen tests and P2 or N95 masks should be accessible and free for all education staff. Wearing masks should be compulsory for secondary students and strongly encouraged for primary students.
2. Staff should be required to attend the workplace only to perform tasks requiring their physical presence (including teaching and supervision) and should be permitted to work from home otherwise.
3. Meetings and planning sessions (including on student-free days) should be undertaken remotely or in well-ventilated rooms where social distancing is possible.
4. Any staff who have not yet received their booster should be provided with flexibility to obtain it.
5. Staff who make a workers compensation claim because they have caught COVID at work should receive full pay while off sick. (We urge you to call the union if you would like advice about whether you should make a claim.)
6. The union opposes the exemption of education staff from close contact isolation rules. The existing exemption is not automatic and is subject to conditions on a case-by-case basis. Employees who are isolating should be permitted to work from home.
7. All classrooms and work areas must be assessed for adequate ventilation, with appropriate modifications where required.
8. Teachers must not be expected to teach simultaneously in person and remotely.
9. Additional support should be provided to manage COVID-related administrative issues in the workplace – these issues should not add to the existing workloads of teachers and support staff.
10. Employers should make every effort to ensure staff absences are covered by engaging qualified casual teachers and casual support staff.
11. Non-essential programs and events should only occur if they can be conducted safely and without causing significant extra workload. This includes face-to-face gatherings such as assemblies, camps, interschool activities and excursions.
12. Staff must be consulted regularly through their elected Health and Safety Reps and Union Reps.

Do not hesitate to contact the union if you have any health and safety concerns.

