



Atlas Foundation for Autism
252 W 29th St – 3rd Floor
New York, NY 10001

Atlas School/Atlas Foundation for Autism 2021 2022 Onsite Reopen Plan

Atlas is a not for profit non-public private school and special needs program that provides day school for children and young adults with Autism and other developmental differences as well as afterschool and weekend programs and community classes year round. This reopening document has been prepared in compliance with the NYS Education Department and the Department of Health guidelines.

As specifically outlined in these expectations we shall outline in our reopen plan how Atlas plans to :

- reopen the school facility for in person instruction and post on our website updating it as needed ensuring our staff, students, families, community and all necessary agencies can see what is happening in real time
- monitor health and safety conditions by containment of potential transmission of COVID-19 In accordance with CDC and DOH COVID-19 guidelines
- Address closure of the school facility and in person instruction if necessary by widespread virus transmission

Reopening:

- As a part of our reopen preparation a risk assessment and mitigation plan was created specifically for the Atlas School by the Hudson Valley safety Associates LLC organization based off of CDC Guidelines and using the OSHA Hierarchy of Control Method. These controls are administrative, engineering and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). NYS WBE file # 57477 and NYC WBE vendor number VC00202614
- The Atlas School Reopen Plan Information is being posted on our website and shared via email with families and staff as well as via administrators in individual meetings and phone calls/zoom discussions as needed to answer specific questions and personal matters/concerns that may be unique to each families/individuals needs or confidential circumstances.

Monitoring Health and Safety Conditions

Entering and exiting Atlas

In order to limit exposure and mitigate risk factors:

- Staff and students will be directed to one entrance way only to enter the building and may enter only after passing a health screening.



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- There will a separate exit used for exit of any individuals who show symptoms and are quarantined at any point in the day.
- Atlas will be limiting transitions to no more than 2 staff and 2 students in the elevator at one time; students not wearing masks should maintain appropriate social distance.
- All staff must be wearing appropriate PPE
- Wherever possible and safe, doors will be propped open to limit touching handles so long as access control can be achieved.
- Essential vendors will adhere to the use of PPE and social distancing, will undergo a health screening prior to entry. Vendors are accompanied by Facilities staff at all times when in the building.
- Deliveries will be made in the lobby or at the door and will be accepted by our Staff.
- Hand sanitizer automatic dispensers will be available and accessible upon entering and exiting the space
- Signs will be posted reminding staff to use sanitizer, PPE, and maintain social distancing.
- Parents and visitors will be asked to make appointments when visiting to limit exposure and number of people in the building at one time. Whenever possible it is recommended to keep these virtual at this time to minimize risk.

Covid -19 health screenings and temperature checks

- For ALL those entering the building Atlas will require mandatory health screening to identify any individuals who may have recently been exposed to Covid -19, show any symptoms, and who may later be diagnosed and need to be reached and therein must leave contact tracing information. If an individual presents a temperature of greater than 100.4°F, the individual will be denied entry into the facility, or sent directly to a dedicated quarantine area prior to be picked up or otherwise sent home.
- During the day a second temperature check is done in case symptoms arise later which are also documented. Should symptoms arise at that time and a temperature occur the staff or student is brought to the quarantine room or asked to leave immediately so long as appropriate supervision is available.

Positive Screens

- Any individual who screens positive for COVID-19 exposure or symptoms, if screened at the school, will immediately be sent home with instructions to contact their health care provider for assessment and testing. If a student arrives at school and has a positive screen (e.g., onset of COVID-19 symptoms) he or she will be immediately separated from other students and supervised in the “Quarantine room” until their parent or emergency contact can come to pick them up from school. The parent will be provided with information on health care and testing



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resources. Atlas will immediately notify the state and local health department about the case if the individual tests positive for COVID-19.

- Atlas will follow the local DOH requirements for determining when individuals, staff and students, who screened positive for COVID-19 symptoms can return to the in-person learning/work environment. At a minimum, a return to school will require documentation of evaluation from a health care provider, negative COVID-19 testing, and symptom resolution.
- Protections for those screeners doing temperature checks and supervising the quarantine room includes at a minimum, a KN-95 mask, N95 should they be available and may also include gloves, a gown, and/or a face shield upon request.

Staff and Student Testing

- In compliance with CDC and NYSED guidance, Atlas does not require COVID-19 testing or antibody testing of students or staff as a part of the screening process. Only a healthcare provider or the local Department of Health may decide whether a test needs to be conducted. Atlas may require testing to “clear” the individual to return to school following a positive COVID-19 test result or a quarantine period and dr statement of no symptoms and clearing to return to school. A dr note clearing safe return for staff and students will be required for return on site.

Staff or Students who show symptoms while at Atlas will immediately be brought to the “quarantine room” and asked to be picked up as quickly as possible.

- A room by the back elevator and stairwell (separate from general front use elevator) has been modified specifically for this purpose to serve as an isolated space for students and staff to stay until they are able to leave the school building.
- An Atlas staff member will monitor the room (From outside the door if possible) to ensure students are safe. This staff member will be provided with the appropriate PPE and social distancing will be highly encouraged.
- Specific Cleaning and disinfecting procedures will be followed as specified by CDC guidelines for both this room and the room the staff and student were in prior to symptoms occurring that day.

Immediate Response and Cleaning Protocols

- As of Monday, September 27, the DOE no longer automatically closes an entire classroom when there is a positive student case in that class. Schools will be closed only when it is determined by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) that there is widespread transmission in the school. With the health and safety measures in place, we expect that school closures will be limited.



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Contact Tracing Support

- Atlas is required by NY State to support the DOH in tracing all contacts of any student or staff who test positive in accordance with the protocols, training, and tools provided through the New York State Contact Tracing Program. Atlas will follow all guidelines related to contact tracing, which currently include: Confidentiality, Cooperation with all state and local health department isolation requirements, Notification of faculty and families, and identifying those who have come in close proximity without providing individual specific information.

Return to School after suspected Covid -19

Individuals cleared by a doctor as not having COVID-19 can return to school:

- Once there is no fever for 24 hours and they have a note stating they can return to work
- If they have been diagnosed with a non-COVID-19 related illness, and have a healthcare provider written note stating they are clear to return to school.

Individuals diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider based on a test or their symptoms, or those who did not take a COVID-19 test but had COVID-19 related symptoms, will remain at home until:

- It has been at least ten days since the individual first had symptoms;
- It has been at least three days since the individual has had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine); and
- It has been at least three days since the individual's symptoms improved, including cough and shortness of breath.
- A doctors note will be required (possibly a test depending on DOH requirements) to clear their return on site to Atlas and to ensure the safety of staff and students

Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)

- Atlas will require all staff and visitors to wear masks throughout the school day. We encourage students who are able to do so. We do understand that this may be difficult for some students due to sensory issues, health, and anxiety issues relating to their disabilities. We have implemented social stories, a variety of desensitizing techniques, and curriculum supports to work on this and are additionally relying on social distancing and close supervision by staff as well as our environmental modifications to address this issue as well.

Handwashing and Hygiene protocols:

Atlas follows all hygiene requirements as advised by the CDC and DOH. These currently include:



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- Training all students and staff on safety and hygiene (Handwashing, mouthing objects, and all aspects of body contact and body fluid contacts). This includes adapting information in meaningful ways they can understand for students that may include social stories videos and play, curriculum adaptations and picture signs and includes providing information to families on ways to reinforce this at home as well
- Creating extra time in the schedule for hand washing, especially after restroom breaks, recess, using shared equipment, or other higher risk activities.
- Creating time for therapists and educators in their schedules to wash hands between sessions
- Installing touchless hand sanitizer dispensers filled with at least 60% alcohol-based sanitizer for areas where hand washing is impractical. Hand sanitizer use will be minimized in areas serving younger children, where hand washing is preferable for safety reasons;
- Providing hand sanitizer and wipes in common areas or near shared workplace items (copy machines, computers).

Cleaning & Disinfection

- The Atlas school's staff are primarily responsible for common and routine cleaning of items and areas throughout the day along with the onsite cleaning support staff responsible for oversight of PPE refills, hand sanitizer, wiping down doorknobs and common areas and any major clean ups needed throughout the day. Per DOH guidelines, the custodial staff will keep logs that include the date, time, and scope of daily and weekly cleaning and disinfection. Extra time and appropriate materials will be made available and prioritized in all classrooms therapy rooms and common areas to ensure realistic execution of all protocols throughout the day.
- Students will be working in their own classrooms And will no longer be sharing space and common times with other classes in the gym, art areas, or other spaces to minimize exposure and ensure appropriate social distancing and allow for more cleaning of shared materials. As much as possible individual materials will be prioritized to encourage limited exposure. Shared items will be cleaned and disinfected between each groups use and be the responsibility of the teachers and therapists. The cleaning staff will also be available to assist and can be called by walkie talkie or cell phone to assist in the immediate or by set scheduled times upon request. If items cannot be cleaned sufficiently in the moment they will be isolated in a box and cleaned and disinfected by staff at the end of each day and available by the morning for use again.
- Children will each have their own personal classroom supplies (of pencils, crayons paper, etc) that they will draw from rather than using common materials. Each child's supply will be labeled and stored either in a desk, individual file, or other method that ensures separation of materials.



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- Materials and tools used by staff or employees are regularly cleaned and disinfected using registered disinfectants. It will be encouraged that a limited number of people use copy machines, and such to limit exposure.

Food service/Management

- Atlas does not provide meal service
- Common areas and food related appliances use will be limited and disinfectant wipes and gloves will be stocked in the immediate vicinity signs with protocols will be up in these areas
- Staff and students will be encouraged to bring water bottles and utensils from home
- Atlas will supply individual utensils and condiments to limit touch exposure
- Staff and students will eat in their classrooms or private offices. Birthdays and celebrations school wide in one shared space but now within individual classrooms.
- Snacks or foods will only be shared if in individually wrapped packaging/servings to avoid unnecessary exposure

Restrooms

- The 3 stall restrooms will have middle stalls/urinals closed off and marked to ensure social distancing (no more than 2 Staff and 2 students at a time)
- The 2 stall restrooms will have no more than 1 staff and 1 student at a time
- Signage noting the maximum capacity will be posted on doors.
- staff and visitors will use designated bathroom to limit cross-exposure.
- Restrooms will be cleaned and disinfected frequently during the day, following recommendations established by the DOH.

Cleaning & Disinfection After a Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Case

- Atlas will immediately Close off areas used by the person who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19.
- Open windows to increase air circulation in the area.
- Wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting.
- Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, such as offices, classrooms, bathrooms, lockers, and common areas.
- Reopen the area once it has been appropriately cleaned and disinfected.
- If more than seven days have passed since the person who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection would not be necessary, but routine cleaning and disinfection would continue.

Social Distancing



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- Atlas will ensure appropriate social distancing between all staff students and visitors individuals while in school facilities and on school grounds, unless safety or the core activity requires a shorter distance in which case Mask-wearing and barriers (sneeze guards, e.g.) will be used to mitigate risk and maintain appropriate health measures as recommended in CDC and DOH guidelines
- Visual markers and posters will be hung in all public areas and verbal reminders as well as social stories and curriculum will address social distancing and PPE safety measures as part of ADLs and student health and well being and staff training and protocols

Physical Space

COVID-19 related changes within Atlas on site include:

Classrooms

- All desks/tables will be facing one direction and either have appropriate partitions between them or a full 6 ft distance across the room.
- Shared surfaces or workstations will be disinfected between use.

Common Areas

- Hallways will be marked with signage and tape arrows on the floor to ensure safe two- way traffic.

Ventilation

- Classrooms windows can be opened to allow additional airflow. Classrooms and offices will all have individual fans to increase air circulation from the outside.

Arrival, Departure, and Scheduling

- Atlas staff times will be staggered between 8:15, 8:30 and 8:45 to allow for health screenings to be processed without a backup of employees waiting to enter the building
- Social distancing markers will be placed at the entrance to allow for screening as staff enter the building.
- The same process can be used for staff departing in the afternoon between 4:15, 4:30, 4:45
- Students being brought to school by their parents will socially distance as they line up outside of the building or in the lobby to await the screening process. Parents will not be permitted in the school without an appointment outside of an emergency situation.
- Parents should text or call one of the bussing or safety team when they are nearing the school or downstairs so their screening can be prepared for.



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- Students coming in by bus will be unloaded one bus at a time, ensuring that they maintain social distancing as they enter the building and are appropriately screened. Atlas staff will accompany the students from the bus to the school elevator to limit unnecessary exposure.
- For dismissal, parents and bus matrons/drivers will be required to wait outside of the building and students will be brought down to the entrance. For students on the school bus, we will load only one bus at a time.
- Recess times will be staggered so that each class has time to use the sensory gym with cleaning and disinfecting between each use.

Social Distancing Considerations for Faculty and Staff

- For staff with shared offices we will rotate student schedules, ensure social distancing, allow access to other areas for therapies to take place and also rearrange desks to be facing the same or opposite direction have partitions and/or maintain 6ft social distance
- All meetings of 10 or more people will happen remotely or in separate rooms until further notice, except when social distancing can be maintained appropriately.

Considerations in when to Close due to Covid-19

- Atlas will follow CDC and DOH guidance in determining when to close the school due to staff and/or students testing positive and when students and/or staff should return to school and if any additional steps are needed for the school community at large. Students and staff who are taking care of or share a home with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 will be required to follow instructions from local health officials to determine when to return to school and must notify Atlas right away of any possible exposure.

Student attendance and educational/therapeutic programming

- Atlas school collects attendance data every day, and will continue for both in-person and remote /blended instruction settings.
- Atlas will continue to work to support students and families with any challenges due to sickness, family situation, or other circumstances, reaching out to families and providing educational support services that include:
- Check-ins with the class teacher to provide contact and academic/social support via zoom, WhatsApp, google classroom, mailed assignments etc. in accordance of what works most appropriately for the child and families needs at this time
- Additional support from related service providers based on the student's IEP mandates.
- Help obtaining the necessary technology to ensure continuity of learning



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- We will continue to gauge what is best for the families to keep in meaningful and regular contact for feedback, direct instruction, and overall important school communications whether by phone, email, and even video calls to engage and converse with family members and caregivers.

Atlas Student Program Types

- Due to the small size of the Atlas School (under 25 students) for 2021-2022 Atlas prioritizes on site return to school with social distance measures in full effect. Full remote instruction options are available upon request as are blended schedules. These must be formally set and stuck to however to ensure appropriate staffing and planning throughout the year.

Direct Instruction Platforms

- Atlas Will continue its use of Google Classroom as the online platform for our remote learning program. We will continue to use Google Classroom and Zoom meetings for students participating in the remote program.
- In the use of Zoom, Atlas has employed all of the security options available, including passwords, use of unique meeting identification, and the waiting room. We will continue to monitor and implement additional security measures as they become available.
- All subject areas for the educational day and all therapeutic mandates will be fulfilled by daily direct instruction and/or google classroom personalized video instruction and assignments along with calls and emails for feedback from families. The equivalency of instruction and therapy is highlighted in full lesson and activity breakdowns and documented on daily notes shared with the families outlining student activity and engagement
- Students with 1:1 paras continue to receive full support from their paraprofessional including during zooms, in planning and engagement, team meeting participation, and parent/school communications

ELL Services

- Atlas does not have a formal ELL program. When needed, we have Spanish speaking staff available to provide translation services for meeting and for written communication with parents and for students as needed to support academic and social emotional regulation

Staffing & Human Resources Policies & Procedures Updates

- Atlas is updating its policies & Procedures to address COVID-19 regulations as pertains to worker protection, hazards of exposure, Bloodborn Pathogens and



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instructions on what to do if they develop symptoms of Covid 19 as well as cleaning protocols and appropriate use of PPE and social distancing. Copies will be available from our HR Management agency and can be requested via the Assistant Director.

Training & Communication

- Atlas will maintain regular updates with staff families and it's community via emails, phone calls and zoom meetings to keep everyone informed of protocols and safety measures
- Protocols on use of PPE, cleaning, OSHA standards compliance and Bloodborn Pathogens will be reviewed in meetings and video trainings
- Safety committee meetings will be setup with specific administrators to target ongoing efforts to monitor Covid 19 exposure, maintain appropriate PPE stock, use, cleaning materials, and schedules, etc
- Communication systems will be established and maintained for families and staff to self report to the school if they or their student have been exposed to someone with Covid 19 within 14 days
- Communication systems will be in place for notifying staff families and the public of school closure and any immediate restrictions due to Covid 19 exposure.

Atlas Reopen Program Recap

- Atlas has an established reopen plan and is making it available to its families staff and the public on the www.atlasforautism.org website
- Atlas has a clear and manageable risk management plan addressing health and Covid 19 containment measures
- Atlas has a clearly delineated plan for closure and communication thereof in cases of a positive virus outcome for one or more staff or students
- Additionally Atlas has a clear plan for both continuation of educational and therapeutic mandates for both onsite and remote instruction students