

CONDOM ACCESSIBILITY

This circular will remain in effect unless rescinded or superseded by a subsequent version

BACKGROUND

In June 2017, the School Committee voted to revise the district Wellness Policy, which includes provisions on sexual health education and condom accessibility in high schools. The goal of this policy is to support the sexual and reproductive health of students and to prevent negative sexual health outcomes and their impact on student learning. This policy establishes access to information and resources for students in order to reduce the spread of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) as well as decrease the number of unintended pregnancies. This policy increases the access and agency of BPS students to care for their personal health and well-being. The revised policy states:

Under Massachusetts Law (Mass.Gen.Laws Ch.111, Section 24E) adolescents may seek and consent to confidential family planning services without parental notification. Family Planning services include testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections and HIV, all birth control options, pregnancy testing, and emergency contraception.

BPS High Schools shall provide access to free condoms with appropriate reproductive health counseling for students. Each high school (grades 9-12) will have a Condom Accessibility Team (CAT) which will consist of a minimum of at least three school staff members. Condoms will be made available through the CAT at each high school. Condoms will also be accessible at some schools from school-based health centers and the Boston Public Health Commission's (BPHC) Health Resource Centers (HRCs). Parents and caregivers may exempt their students from receiving condoms from the BPS CAT by notifying the school when they complete the family information forms at the beginning of the school year. This condom opt-out does not apply to other confidential health services.

Under this policy, the Office of Health Services, along with the Office of Health and Wellness, is charged with enacting systems and practices to ensure that all students have access to key resources and services that are developmentally appropriate and support sexual and reproductive health in a safe and supportive environment.

BPS high schools have three possible venues for the delivery of sexual health services: 1) through BPS CAT members; 2) school-based health centers run by BPHC or neighborhood health centers that provide medical, reproductive, and mental health services, including STI/pregnancy testing, options counseling, access to contraceptives/condoms, treatment for STIs, and comprehensive routine health care; and 3) school-based health resource centers (HRCs) overseen by the Boston Public Health

Commission, which provide individual counseling, condom access, and STI testing and treatment for gonorrhea and chlamydia, where available. Annually, all BPS CAT members must participate in appropriate training related to the condom accessibility program.

The following chart summarizes the services available and staffing model for each location.

Please note:

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Location	School-based Health Centers Run by BPHC	School-based Health Centers– Run by Community Health Centers	Health Resource Centers *	BPS High School CAT
Services	A clinical setting offering routine health care and acute care services, including mental health counseling and sexual & reproductive health care.	A clinical setting offering routine health care and acute care services, including mental health counseling and sexual reproductive health care.	Classroom sexual health education; 1:1 education; condom availability; STI screening, treatment and referral, where available.	Free internal and external condoms, oral dams, lubricant, and educational materials to students not opted out of the program as these products are available. Confidential sexual health referrals made available to any students in need of sexual health care. *a barrier method that reduces the risk of STIs **lubricants increase the effectiveness of condoms, reducing breakage.

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Staffing	<p>Staffed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nurse Practitioner• Mental Health Clinician• Health Educator• Health Coordinator• Admin Assistant	<p>Staffed by:</p> <p>Nurse Practitioners or Physician Assistants</p>	<p>A team of two Health Educators assigned to 2 high schools</p>	<p>A minimum of three* trained school staff members.</p> <p>*Schools are encouraged to add more CAT members to increase access points within the school. Each additional member must complete CAT training. It is important that students receive supplies from trusted, caring adults. This may include the school nurse, health teachers, trained teachers of sexual health, social workers, school counselors, family liaisons, and/or other staff able to complete the training.</p>
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IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of condom accessibility will be directed by the Office of Health & Wellness (OHW), with support from and integration with the Office of Health Services at both the central and individual school levels.

SCHOOL-BASED IMPLEMENTATION

Each high school serving students in grades 9-12 will have a Condom Accessibility Team (CAT) which will consist of at least three school staff members. Schools are encouraged to add additional interested staff to the CAT. The CAT shall meet at least biannually to oversee its responsibilities and report back to the Wellness Council.

Condom Accessibility Team responsibilities:

- Participate in CAT training organized and led by the Office of Health and Wellness
- All parents and caregivers will be notified of the policy in the Guide to the BPS for Students & Families and have the option to opt their student out of the condom accessibility program by informing the student's school. Additional communications to notify parents and caregivers through the school's preferred communication channels is also recommended.

- Distribute communication information provided by the Office of Health and Wellness, such as brochures, posters, stickers, etc. that outline the Condom Accessibility program
- Post information advertising who the CAT members are so that students are aware of this program-and know who and where to locate CAT members in the school
- Store condoms in secure, appropriate storage that does not experience extreme low or high temperatures to preserve effectiveness
- Ensure that the school wellness council is updated on CAT functionality in the school
- Advocate for all students to receive the BPS Comprehensive Sexual Health Education Program
- Provide CAT team member names to the Office of Health and Wellness annually and add any new team members throughout the year
- Document referrals and provide tracking as outlined in the training
- Ensure that student confidentiality is maintained as per Massachusetts State Law
- Ensure that parental/caregiver opt-out is clearly and confidently documented in the nurse electronic health record (SNAP) and communicated to all CAT members and other appropriate staff, including HRC staff involved in condom accessibility

- Please note: CAT members are required to file a 51a only when there is reasonable suspicion of physical or emotional harm by abuse, not based solely on the age of the student.

DISTRICT-BASED IMPLEMENTATION

Office of Health Services responsibilities:

- Align the condom accessibility process with the overall Health Services action plan
- In partnership with OHW, monitor referral tracking data within SNAP and assess district capacity to implement the condom accessibility program
- Promote and complete CAT training
- Partner with OHW instructional coaches to review questions/concerns brought forward during the CAT training
- Promote the sexual health services referral resource 211 Help Steps at <https://www.helpsteps.com/#/>
- Coordinate and communicate with adolescent community sexual health programming, including school-based health centers

Office of Health and Wellness responsibilities:

- Include the condom accessibility process in overall wellness action planning.

- Review and approve all reproductive health materials that are to be distributed in the schools by CAT members, including materials donated by community partners. All community organizations interested in donating condoms and other materials should contact the Office of Health and Wellness before delivering materials to the schools.
- Oversee ordering and storing of condoms for the district and distribution to schools.
- Coordinate and communicate with adolescent community sexual health programming including school-based health centers and Health Resource Centers.
- Collaborate with the Office of Health Services to provide training, marketing materials, and implementation tools to schools and technical assistance.
- Provide updates and promotions for the BPS sexual health services referral guide (Y2Connect).
- In partnership with Health Services, monitor referral tracking data, providing all high schools a system for tracking and reporting, and assess the district capacity to implement the condom accessibility program.

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT DATES AND DEADLINES

Month	Activity
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parental and Caregiver Opt-out information included in Family Handbook• Parents and caregivers who do not want their student to receive condoms at school should email or submit in writing their intentions to the school principal and include the school nurse(s) in this communication.

For more information about this circular, contact:

Owner:	Director, Office of Health Services
Department:	Office of Health Services
Mailing Address:	443 Warren Street Suite 2, Dorchester, MA 02121
Phone:	617-635-6788
Email:	Operations-Department-Heads@bostonpublicschools.org

Mary Skipper, Superintendent