



Frequently Asked Questions

GUIDELINES

Q: What evidence supports the new recommendations regarding tick testing in Act 120 of 2024? The information from the PA DOH and the CDC seem to contraindicate the Act 120 Guidelines.

A: The guidance that PA DOH provides must align with the requirements of this Act even if it may differ from CDC guidance.

Q: If the school notifies parent and sends tick home – is there any additional responsibility for the school?

A: No, once the tick is given to the parent, there is no additional responsibility from the school.

Q: Is consent required to remove a tick?

A: The Act requires the school to remove the tick and provide notice afterwards. There is no requirement to obtain consent before removal, but schools may still seek consent.

Q: Is this a procedure that requires a physician's order to perform? Or is this considered basic nursing care?

A: The Act allows a school nurse, school physician, or a designated employee of the school to remove the tick. The Act does not require a physician's order.

Q: Often when a tick is removed, even when following the protocol, pieces are retained. Is there any liability if this occurs?

A: The Act does not provide any protection from liability. However, the Act requires that notification of the removal is sent to the parents or guardian so this can be explained to them in the notification.

Q: If a tick is removed from a student and the parent/guardian does not want to send the tick for testing, does the school then have the responsibility to send the tick for testing? If the school does need to send, then what is to be done with results? Law indicates that results must be sent to parent/guardian and not recorded in student's health record.

A: The school must preserve the tick and offer it to the parents. If the parents request the tick, the school must provide it to them. If the parents decline the tick, the school is not required to send the tick for testing but may choose to do so if the school wishes to track de-identified results for their own informational purposes. If the school chooses to send the tick, the school is required to send the results to the parents of the student. If the school does not send the tick to the Tick Research Lab of Pennsylvania, the tick may be placed in a plastic bag or wrapped in tape and disposed.



Q: Are schools to designate which employees will remove a tick from a student?

A: Yes.

TESTING

Q: Is it expected that the schools cover the cost to send ticks for testing?

A: There should not be any cost to the school for the free basic panel tick test specified in legislation. Additional information regarding sending a tick to the Tick Research Lab may be found at the following link: [Tick Research Lab FAQs](#):

Q: Why are the results unable to be part of the student's records? If a student has an increased risk of Lyme disease due to the tick and transfers to another school soon after exposure, wouldn't that information be beneficial to pass on to the next school?

A: The Act was drafted and enacted by the legislature, therefore inquiries on the reasoning of the legislature cannot be answered by the Department.

Q: Do schools need to keep data on tick removal/testing/results? If so, what do we do with this data?

A: The Act states that if the school sent the tick for testing and receives the result, it shall not make a copy of the results or include any information regarding the results in the student's school medical record. The school may note the disease present in the tick, without any identifying or personal information of the child, for the purposes of compiling data as to what diseases are present in the ticks on and around the school entity's property.

Any additional tracking of tick removal, testing, or results is not required by the Act.

Q: What is the process if a parent/guardian wants the tick but indicates they will not send in for testing?

A: If the parent requests the tick, the school should send the preserved tick home along with the [Health Room Tick Removal Flyer](#). It will then be up to the parent/guardian whether they want to send the tick for testing.

Q: Our students come from all over the state. How are we to know if the tick attached to the student over the weekend at home, or on school grounds? The form from the Tick Research Lab requests specific address location information.

A: Please contact the Tick Research Lab for specifics about their survey questions including location. Contact information may be found here: [Support | PA Tick Research Lab](#)



FIELD TRIPS AND EXTRACURRICULARS

Q: What are the requirements during field trips and extracurricular activities?

A: Act 120 requires the removal of a tick by a school nurse, school physician or designated employee of a school entity and does not provide exceptions for field trips or after school activities.

RESOURCES

For additional information on Act 120 visit [Tick/Lyme Information for Schools and Camps](#).