

COVID-19 (coronavirus) FAQs and guidance for child care providers

What should child care policies be if a local school district closes?

If the local public, non-public or charter school closes and there have not positive cases of COVID-19 identified, child cares **should** remain open but take the following actions:

1. Child care **should** remain open and accept children in need of care unless a positive case of COVID-19 is identified within the child care as a way to support public health workers, families and other important personnel who need to support the overall efforts to combat COVID-19.
2. Child care should maintain and/or implement practices recommended by the CDC including:
 - a. Handwashing strategies include washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
 - b. Emphasize actions for child care staff such as staying home when sick
 - c. Appropriately covering coughs and sneezes
 - d. Cleaning frequently touched surfaces with appropriate bleach and water solutions. For information regarding cleaning practices please visit https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-03/documents/sars-cov-2-list_03-03-2020.pdf
3. Monitor and plan for absenteeism and access additional funding as needed
 - a. Child cares should follow their established procedures to ensure students and staff who become sick at school or who arrive at school sick are sent home as soon as possible.
4. Practice social distancing policies in order to support continued operations
 - a. Postpone or cancel trips that could expose students and staff to potential community spread of COVID-19
 - b. Do not plan or attend events with large groups of people (i.e. events or settings with 50 more participants)
 - c. Avoid mixing students in common areas. For example, allow students to eat lunch and breakfast in their classrooms rather than mixing in common areas when possible. Consider staggering playground use rather than allowing multiple classes to play together, and/or limit other activities where multiple classes interact.

If the public schools are closed due to one of their students testing positive for COVID-19 could the school age children who had contact with the positive COVID-19 student attend a community-based child care during that time?

1. Children who are out of school due to possible contact with a positive case should observe social isolation and be at home, not in a large childcare setting. It is strongly recommended that caregivers for these children during this time frame are NOT older than 65 or have chronic disease or in an immunosuppressed state.

- a. Child Cares should update their emergency preparedness plan to reflect these policies and clearly communicate them to parents/guardians.

Should child care programs be adjusting their drop off and pick up policies?

In order to be cautious about large group settings and the spread of respiratory infectious diseases, including COVID-19, child cares may want to consider implementing different drop off and pick up procedures. These could include meeting families at the door with their children to prevent family members from walking through the child care, having families call when they are near the child care program pick up spot to have children waiting near the front door to greet parents or other means that work for the individual child care program.

Given that child cares are typically prohibited from having hand sanitizer is there any variance for this during this time? If not, can child cares have sanitizer in vestibules or waiting areas where children are not typically present or unsupervised?

Child cares may have hand sanitizer in classrooms as long as it is not in the reach of children and is dispensed by adults. During this time, if programs would like to have sanitizer at their entrance that families can utilize during drop off and pick up times, that would be an encouraged practice as long as children are supervised by an adult to avoid any potential consumption of the sanitizer.

Are there any specific guidelines that child cares should follow as we continue with preventative measures?

Child cares should reference the guidance produced by the Centers for Disease Control that can be found [by clicking here](#). This guidance outlines steps that can be taken to help stop or slow the spread of respiratory infectious diseases, including COVID-19.

What course of action do we need to take if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 at a child care?

If a community or school has cases of COVID-19, local health officials will help identify those individuals and will follow up on next steps. If a child or staff member has been identified with COVID-19, the child care should seek guidance from local health officials to determine when students and staff should return to schools and what additional steps are needed for the school community.

If a child care has a child in attendance who tested positive for COVID-19 will the child care be required to close?

Local health officials' recommendations for the scope and duration of a program closure will be made on a case-by-case basis based on the most up-to-date information about COVID-19 and the specific cases in the impacted community. Child cares should work with the local health department and other relevant leadership to communicate the possible COVID-19 exposure to all families who attend the program.

What practices should be followed when a child care has an ill child but also needs to maintain their ratios and supervision responsibilities.

The CDC has issued guidance to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 that can be found [by clicking here](#). Child cares should follow their established procedures to ensure students and staff who become sick at school or who arrive at school sick are sent home as soon as possible. Programs should keep sick students and staff separate from well students and staff until sick students and staff can be sent home. Ratios and supervision do need to be maintained while limiting exposure to well students until such time that the sick child can be picked up.

Should child cares be adjusting their field trip and travel plans?

Schools may need to postpone or cancel trips that could expose students and staff to potential community spread of COVID-19. These decisions should be made on a case by case basis and clearly communicated to parents and families.

If I have a child in my child care who recently traveled out of the country and they are displaying sick like symptoms, what should I do?

Child cares should follow their established procedures to ensure students and staff who become sick at school or who arrive at school sick are sent home as soon as possible. Programs should keep sick students and staff separate from well students and staff until sick students and staff can be sent home.

Should child cares change their policy on allowing visitors into their program?

Child care programs may desire to temporarily change their visitor policy to limit the spread of respiratory infectious diseases, including COVID-19. It is important to communicate those changes to parents and families and to ensure that all family members still have access to their children during the school day.

What are some other ways child cares can support the prevention and spread of COVID-19 or other respiratory illnesses?

1. Incorporate handwashing in your daily activities.
 - Place handwashing as a part of your lesson plans.
 - Incorporate handwashing as part of your transition activity.
 - Incorporate hand washing as a part of their naptime routine.
2. Sanitize cots/mats daily.
 - Example:
Encourage daily sanitizing of cots/mats regardless of whether or not they are assigned to specific children.
3. Launder your nap and outerwear items more frequently.
 - Example:
Instead of washing items once a week have items washed daily.
4. Sanitize all materials and equipment daily.
 - Example:

- ✓ Toys that are handled by children are placed in a bucket or sink and sanitized daily.
 - ✓ Sanitize cribs and mattress at the end of each day.
 - ✓ Spray down all furniture and surfaces in the building with sanitizer solution and let it air dry overnight.
5. Increase continuity of care between children and assigned staff to limit exposure.
- Example:
Have substitutes assigned to consistently provide breaks to the same classroom.