

COVID-19 AND RESPIRATORY VIRUS POLICY

Policy Statement

In order to help reduced the risk of respiratory infections (including COVID-19), a health screening is an essential step.

We are committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for children, families and employees. We will take every reasonable precaution to prevent the risk of communicable diseases within our centre.

Purpose

To ensure that all employees are aware of, and adhere to, the directive established by Toronto Public Health (TPH), and Children's Services.

Application

This policy applies to all employees, students, community members and any other persons engaged with our centre.

Working with Local Public Health

While the Ministry of Education is providing **guidance** on how to operate childcare during the COVID-19 outbreak, licensees **must follow the advice of the local public health** unit when establishing health and safety protocols, including how to implement any provincial or local public health unit direction on health and safety guidance.

Guidelines

Drop-Off and Pick-up Procedures

All entrances have **alcohol-based hand rub** with **signage** demonstrating appropriate use (see How to Wash Your Hands). Alcohol based hand rub should not be accessible to children and children should be supervised when using the hand rub.

Personal belongings should be labeled and kept in the child's cubby/designated area. (e.g., backpack, hats and mittens, etc.). While appropriate clothing for the weather (e.g., jackets, hats, sunscreen) should continue to come with the child, **other personal belongings** (e.g., toys) should be **minimized**.

Visitors

All visitors to the program, including parents, students completing educational placements, or others, **are subject** to the health and safety protocols.

Ventilation

Adequate ventilation should be provided by **opening** windows, **moving activities outdoors** when possible, and through **mechanical** ventilation including **HVAC** systems.

There is **one air sanitizer** and **one air purifier** in each classroom and in staff room. Also there is **one air purifier** in gym.

Air sanitizers to be switched on **Monday** morning and switched off on **Friday** afternoon before the school is closed (should be running on weekly basis).

Air purifiers to be switched on **every morning** and switched off **every evening** before the school is closed (should be running on daily basis).

Screening procedures

Procedures

Every person arriving at the childcare centre must be **DAILY** actively screened **PRIOR** to entering the centre.

Our **daily screening** will be done **electronically** prior to arrival at the childcare. Each morning, staff and parents will receive e-mail with **online Daily Health Screening form** to be filled and submit.

Location of screening station

Front entrance lobby is a screening area.

- The table is placed at the main entrance.
- Staff must complete **hand hygiene** and should take **appropriate precautions** when screening children.
- There are front entrance signages identifying the screening process.
- Hand sanitizer (at least 60-90% alcohol content) dispensing unit is mounted on walls at entrance and staff/clients entering the building are asked to hand sanitize.
- Once a person has passed the active screening, s/he must complete hand hygiene with the hand sanitizer.
- The health screening areas are disinfected regularly throughout screening and the day.
- Staff are permitted past the health screening line only after they have passed **online Daily Health Screening**.

If the **child, childcare staff, placement student or visitor** received a **COVID-19 vaccination** in the last **48 hours** and is experiencing **mild** headache, fatigue,

muscle aches, and/or joint pain that only **began after vaccination**, and **no other** symptoms, they may **continue to attend** the childcare program if they are feeling well enough to do so.

Screening of Staff

Online **Daily Health Screening form** must be completed for **all** staff **electronically** prior to arrival at the childcare centre. The Supervisor will designate staff to conduct active screening of staff/parents/caregivers and children for each day.

Staff members are required to **stay home**, if they are experiencing **ANY** of the **symptoms** identified on the **online Daily Health Screening form** and to **report their absence** to the Principal immediately.

Screening of Parents, Caregivers and Children

Screening must be completed for **ALL** parents, caregivers and children with **online Daily Health Screening form before** arrival at the centre.

In the event that an individual is **not screened prior to arriving** at the program, active (in-person) screening will be executed.

These are the symptoms in **Daily Screening Form**:

List (A) symptoms:

- Fever (>37.8 degrees Celsius)
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing
- Decrease or loss of taste or smell

List (B) symptoms:

- Sore throat
- Headache
- Feeling very tired
- Runny nose / nasal congestion
- Muscle aches / joint pain
- Nausea / Vomiting / Diarrhea

List (C) symptoms:

- Abdominal pain
- pink eye
- Decreased or lack of appetite

Anyone who is **sick or has any symptoms** of illness, including those **not listed** above, should **stay home** and seek **assessment** from their health care provider if needed.

When assessing for the symptoms, parents should focus on evaluating, if they are **new, worsening, or different from child's baseline health status or usual state** (check off the box in our Daily Screening Form). Symptoms associated with **known chronic** health conditions or related to **other known** causes/conditions should not be considered unless new, different or worsening (do not check off the box in our Daily Screening Form).

After arrival of parent with child to the centre, the designated staff member will check parent's online **Daily Health Screening form** results. If **no symptoms** and **no fever** are reported and **ALL** answers are **NO** to **ALL** questions in **online Daily Health Screening form** (green colour in form), designated staff will advise the parent that child is cleared to enter the school.

Once the parent/caregiver and child(ren) have **all passed** the active screening requirements, the child(ren) **will be escorted** into the childcare program **by parents**.

If **any symptom** was reported or parent answered **YES** to **ANY** of **online Daily Health Screening form** (red colour in form) or **fever** was reported (37.8 degrees Celsius and above) the child will **not be permitted** to enter the centre.

Staff will advise the parent that based on the answers in Daily Screening Form, we are not able to let the child enter the childcare centre.

Child has 1 or more symptom(s) from list (A) and/or 2 or more symptoms from list (B)

- The child is **presumed** to have COVID-19 or another respiratory virus, and they **should not go to** school or childcare.
- Child will **stay home** and **self-isolate** until **fever is resolved** and **symptoms** have been **improving** for at least **24 hours** (or 48 hours if nausea/vomiting/diarrhea)
- **After** self-isolation is **completed**, for a total of **10 days** after the start of symptoms or positive COVID-19 test (whichever came first):
 - Follow **extra measures** (see below).
 - Follow **additional guidance**:
 - if child is **immunocompromised** OR residing in a highest-risk setting OR hospitalized for COVID-19.
 - if you have been told that your child should be staying at home or not attending childcare right now (e.g., by a doctor, federal

border agent, public health), follow the guidance or directions that have been provided to you.

Next steps for siblings and household members of the individual:

- For a total of **10 days** after your last close contact with a person who has COVID-19 symptoms or a positive COVID-19 test:
- **Self-monitor for symptoms. Stay home** (self-isolate) if you **develop** any **symptoms** of COVID-19 and **seek testing** if eligible/available.
- Follow **guidance** under “**Individual has 1 or more symptoms from (A) and/or 2 or more symptoms from (B)**”
- Follow **extra measures** (see below).

Get Tested and Treated if Eligible.

Child has no symptoms from list (A) and only one symptom from list (B) or list (C)

- The child **should not** go to childcare.
- Child **stays home** until symptom is **improving** for at least **24 hours** (or 48 hours if nausea/vomiting/diarrhea).

Next steps for siblings and household members of the individual:

- Siblings and other household members **do not need** to stay home as long as they **do not develop** symptoms.
- Following **extra measures can be** an added layer of protection against the spread of COVID-19 and respiratory viruses.
- If the child has one symptom from list (B) or list (C) **AND** was a **close contact** of someone in the household/community, the child is to **self-isolate** and follow guidance under the section, “**Individual has 1 or more symptoms from (A) and/or 2 or more symptoms from (B)**”.

Individual has symptoms and has an alternative medical diagnosis

- If the **symptoms** are from a **known** health condition diagnosed by a healthcare provider (not related to COVID-19), the child **does not have** to self-isolate and **can attend** childcare.
- Symptoms should be **chronic** or related to other **known causes** or conditions that the individual already has.
- If the symptoms are **new, different, or worsening**, the child **should stay home and self-isolate**, and follow guidance under the section, “**Individual has 1 or more symptoms from (A) and/or 2 or more symptoms from (B)**”

Child has tested positive for COVID-19 (using a PCR, rapid molecular, or rapid antigen test)

- If **sick or not well**, even with symptoms **not listed** in this screening tool, child is **to stay home**. Talk with a doctor if necessary.
- If any **new or worsening** symptoms develop, child **to stay home and self-isolate** immediately. Follow guidance under “**Individual has 1 or more symptoms from (A) and/or 2 or more symptoms from (B)**”
- **Asymptomatic** individuals with a **positive** test result **do not need** to self-isolate **unless** symptoms develop.
- For a total of **10 days** after positive test date or for 10 days after the start of symptoms (whichever came first) follow **extra measures** (see below).

Next steps for siblings and household members of the individual:

- For a total of **10 days** after your last close contact with a person who has COVID-19 symptoms or a positive COVID-19 test:
- **Self-monitor for symptoms. Stay home (self-isolate)**, if you develop any symptoms of COVID-19 and seek testing if eligible/available.
- Follow **guidance** under “**Individual has 1 or more symptoms from (A) and/or 2 or more symptoms from (B)**”
- Follow **extra measures** (see below).

Child has been identified as a close contact of someone with symptoms or with COVID-19. The child has no symptoms.

- The child **may attend** childcare, as long as child **does not have** any symptoms.
- All cases in the childcare settings are encouraged **to notify** their close contacts **directly**, if they have significant one-on-one interactions, without wearing a well-fitted, high-quality mask.
- For a total of **10 days after** child’s last close contact with a person who has symptoms or a positive COVID-19 test child **to be monitored** for symptoms:
 - If symptoms **develop**, child to **stay home (self-isolate)** and **seek testing for COVID-19** if eligible / available. Follow guidance under “**Individual has 1 or more symptoms from (A) and/or 2 or more symptoms from (B)**”
- Follow **extra measures** (see below).

Household member has symptoms of COVID-19 or tests positive

- The household member of the individual with COVID-19 symptoms / positive test result **may attend** childcare, as long as they **do not have** symptoms..

- For **10 days** after child's **last close contact** with a person who has symptoms or a positive COVID-19 test, child **to be monitored** for symptoms.
 - If symptoms **develop**, child to **stay home (self-isolate)** and **seek testing for** COVID-19 if eligible / available. Follow guidance under **“Individual has 1 or more symptoms from (A) and/or 2 or more symptoms from (B)”**
- Follow **extra measures** (see below).

If additional household members develop COVID-19 symptoms

- The individual with COVID-19 symptoms is to stay home (self-isolate) and follow guidance under **“Individual has 1 or more symptoms from (A) and/or 2 or more symptoms from (B)”**
- The **initial** household member(s) with symptoms of COVID-19 **do not have to extend** their self-isolation based on other household members becoming ill.

Individual has travelled outside of Canada

- The individual **must follow federal** requirements for travellers, for quarantine and testing after returning from international travel.

Child has been told that he/she should currently be quarantining, isolating, staying at home, or not attending childcare

- This could include being told by a doctor, health care provider, public health unit, federal border agency, or other government authority.
- The child **should not** attend school or childcare.
- Child to **stay home** and **follow** the guidance or directions that have been provided to you including when you can return to childcare.

Next steps for siblings and household members of the individual:

- Siblings and other people in the home are **not required** to stay home, **unless** they were also told to quarantine, isolate, or stay home.

Definitions

Self-Isolation means:

Stay home and do not attend work, school, childcare or other public places. Only leave home if there is a medical emergency or to get a clinical assessment or test.

Follow Extra Measures means:

For **10 days** after the **start of symptoms** OR a **positive COVID-19 test** (whichever came first) OR for **10 days** after your **last close contact** with a person who has **symptoms** or a **positive** COVID-19 test:

- **Wear a well-fitted mask** in all public settings (including childcare, unless <2 years of age);
- **Avoid non-essential activities** where you need to take off your mask (e.g., dining out, playing a wind instrument, high contact sports where masks cannot be safely worn), with reasonable exceptions such as when eating in a shared space at school while maintaining as much distancing as possible;
- **Do not visit** people or settings (e.g. hospitals, long-term care homes) **at higher risk**, including where there are seniors or those who are immunocompromised.

Follow this advice even if you test **negative** for COVID-19 or you **did not** do a test. These measures are an added **layer of prevention** against the spread of COVID-19 and respiratory viruses.

Before and after school programs

- Children that are received into care are only required to be **screened once daily** (i.e. screened in the morning). Children are **not** required to be **screened again** when returning to the afterschool program. This applies to children that only attend after school programming (e.g. parents/guardians may submit screening results to the childcare centre in the morning prior to the child attending care in the afternoon).
- **School age** children who attend different schools or from different classrooms may be accepted into care at a childcare centre location. Childcare centre supervisors should try to prioritize grouping based on their core-school program if possible.
- Before and after school programs operating in **shared spaces** located in schools should ensure **cleaning and disinfecting** of **high touch surfaces** in the program areas (i.e. classroom) is completed **after** the core day program ends and **the before and after** school program begins.
- Before and after school programs operating in shared spaces (e.g. in a school or community centre) **should** also **consider** storing items, materials and other resources **separately** to avoid accidental sharing.

If really necessary, **any third-party vendor** granted entry into the childcare centre during operation hours, **MUST** also complete the daily active screening process using **Visitors Screening Form** prior to entering the site (see enclosed). Third party caterers will be screened by their employer before starting their delivery route.

Disposable Masks

The use of **medical masks** and eye protection is **not required**. However, the staff member may choose to wear medical masks and/or shield/goggles if preferred. It is strongly recommended that all individuals **age 2 or older wear** a well-fitted **mask** in indoor public settings. This includes childcare due to the additional risk of Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) and influenza.

Children **age 2 to 5** should **only** wear a **mask** if they are **supervised**, can **safely tolerate** masking, and can **put their mask on** and **take it off**.

If parents/guardians **prefer** that their children wear the mask, they are responsible for **providing** their child(ren) with a nonmedical mask(s) or face covering each day and are required to arrange a way to store their mask when not in use.

Masks should be **replaced** when they become **damp or visibly soiled**.

Disposable Gloves

Wearing gloves **at all times** is **not recommended** for either the children or staff. Hand hygiene shall be practiced **before** applying **and after** removing gloves. Nitrile gloves are **single use** only and must be **disposed** after use.

Shared Spaces/Objects

The risk associated with transmission with shared objects **is low**.

Instead of regular cleaning of shared objects, **the focus** should be on regular **hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette** to reduce the risk of infection related to shared equipment.

This is especially the case for young children where shared equipment is important for learning (for example, toys for imaginative play, manipulatives for math).

Outbreak management

Exclusion of Sick Children/Staff Policy and Procedures

If the Toronto Public Health declares an outbreak, they will determine what happens next.

The Toronto Public Health will help determine which groups of children and/or staff/providers need to be sent home or if a partial or full closure of the childcare setting is required.

Procedures

Health Checks for Children in Care

Staff must ensure that all children in care are monitored for illness, with a temperature taken as appropriate, including the symptoms of COVID-19.

Surveillance

Ensuring that all environmental conditions are constantly monitored is essential in prevention and reducing illness.

Staff will **observe children** for illness upon arrival and record:

- **symptoms** of illness for each child including signs or complaints the child may describe (e.g., sore throat, stomach-ache, headache etc.)
- **the date and time** that the symptoms occur
- **the room** the child attends (e.g., room number/description)
- **attendances and absences**

in **the child's daily record** and in a **daily logbook**.

If **ANY ONE** of the symptoms related to COVID-19 are present in a child, the child must be immediately excluded from the childcare centre and sent home. If the child has **siblings** who attend the same childcare centre, **all siblings** must also be **excluded**.

How to exclude

- Ill children will be separated from all other children and staff to the designated **exclusion room** (Staff room) with a **hand sanitizer** available.
- Increase ventilation in the designated exclusion room if possible (e.g., open windows)
- The parent/guardian of the ill child will be notified of the child's symptoms and of the need to pick the child up immediately; or
- If it appears that the child requires **immediate medical attention**, the child will be taken to **the hospital by ambulance** and examined by a legally qualified medical practitioner or a nurse
- Keep the child **comfortable** by providing a separate cot and toys.
- Respiratory etiquette should also be practiced while the child is waiting to be picked up. **Tissues** should be provided to the child and disposed of properly after use in a lined, covered garbage container.
- Once the child has been picked up, the staff will ensure that **the isolation room** and any other **surfaces** that the child had contact with are thoroughly **cleaned and disinfected**. Staff will also clean and disinfect the **cot and all toys** child used after the child leaves the centre.

- All items that **cannot be cleaned** (paper, books, cardboard puzzles) should be removed and stored in a **sealed container** for a **minimum of 7 days**.

Ensure that **door handles, and any other surfaces** the individual has touched are **disinfected immediately**.

Communication with parents

We will inform the parents as per latest guidelines from Toronto Public Health.

Reporting to Toronto Public Health

We will report to Toronto Public Health as per their latest guidelines.

Additional support can be accessed by calling TPH at **416-338-7600** during work hours (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday) or **3-1-1** after hours or by emailing to publichealth@toronto.ca.

Serious Occurrence Reporting

We will report serious occurrence closures related to COVID-19 where they result in an **“Unplanned Disruption of Service”** (*confirmed cases of COVID-19 is no longer required to be reported*)

Licensees are now required to report both **Public Health Ordered** Closures and **Voluntary** Closures related to COVID-19.

Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development and Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) reporting requirements

The OHSA requires an employer to provide a **written notice within four days** of being advised that a worker has **an occupational illness** (including COVID-19) from exposure **in the workplace** or if a claim has been made to **the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB)** by or on behalf of the worker with respect to an occupational illness, including an occupational infection, to **the Ministry of Labour**.

Any instances of occupationally acquired illnesses shall be reported to WSIB **within 72 hours** of receiving notification of said illness.

Mental Health

The ministry's ***Building on How Does Learning Happen?*** provides information on how early years settings can support the social and emotional health and wellbeing of children and families, in addition to safe and healthy environments.

Our centre collaborates with child and youth mental health agencies to support strong connections and make the best use of mental health resources and supports across the integrated system of care.

Continuation of Service

If a child is **excluded** from the centre due to any **symptoms** related to COVID-19 screening, **the regular fees** will apply for the **time of exclusion**.

If parents decide to **withdraw** child from the centre, the **regular policy** for withdrawal applies as stated in our Parents Handbook:

- Any withdrawals from the school must be requested in writing 30 days in advance of the final date the child/children will attend. If withdrawal is approved, school fees are to be paid for 30 days after the initial request.
- **Deposit** is applied to June payment and **is not returned**, if **child does not start** or **does not finish** the school year. **Deposit is not refundable**.

If a **classroom and/or the centre** is directed to **close** down, the **regular fees** will apply for the **first 14 days**. After 14 days, we will hopefully re-open. If we are directed to stay **closed** for a **longer period/second wave** of pandemic, we will stop charging the fees for the period following first 14 days and/or will refund the fees paid for period following first 14 days.

Fees

The present requirements for environmental cleaning as well as other rules to be followed have significantly increased the costs of running the centre.

We are doing our best to keep the childcare fees on the same level when accepted children into our centre. However, we reserve the right to revise/increase the fees and/or change our fees policy for enrolled children during the school year.

Policy and Procedure Review

This policy and procedure will be reviewed and signed off by all employees and students before commencing employment/unpaid placement in our childcare centre, and at any time where a change is made.