



Engage families and communities to promote the safety and well-being of children through prevention, intervention, treatment and rehabilitative services.

March 22, 2020

Delaware is rapidly responding to COVID-19 and making decisions based on expert health and emergency management guidance. To that end, Governor John Carney has closed schools and issued a Stay-at-Home Order, among other strategies in an effort to slow the spread of coronavirus. Recommendations continue to be updated.

Under Governor Carney's recent order, which modifies his State of Emergency declaration, **child care is considered an essential service and not ordered to close.** That means child care providers can remain open, if they choose, during this time. Child care is a critical service that serves a dual purpose by caring and enriching the lives of children and allowing caregivers to continue to work. We cannot thank our providers enough for all they do each and every day, especially during this time.

Providers can take steps in an effort to prepare and prevent coronavirus in child care settings.

Recommendations include:

- Share information with parents and staff about steps to protect themselves and keep others safe. Communicate regularly.
- Know the symptoms of coronavirus. Symptoms include: fever (over 100 degrees) AND cough or difficulty breathing.
- Monitor for illness and temperatures. Ask parents to check their child's temperature before coming to child care. Have staff monitor their temperature before coming to work. If the temperature is more than 100, the child or staff member should stay home.
- Strictly enforce the provider's illness policy for both children and staff.
 - Encourage staff and children to stay home when sick.
 - Develop a process to identify and act on sending children and staff home if sick.
 - Separate sick students and adults from others until they can go home.
 - Keep a log of children and adults who are absent.
 - Collect contact information, including phone numbers, to coordinate pick up for children if they are sick.
- Increase handwashing procedures throughout the day for staff and children. Use soap and water and scrub vigorously for at least 20 seconds.
- Rigorously implement cleaning for toys and surfaces, including tables, shelves, trash cans, sinks, door knobs and other materials available to staff and children. Regularly launder soft items such as bedding and clothing.

- Remind staff and children to avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.
- Encourage social distancing in all aspects of child care. For example:
 - Curbside drop off and pick up
 - Ask caregivers to not bring in toys and other items from home, unless necessary
 - When planning activities practice social distancing, such as space between children during activities, if possible.
- Increase the frequency of cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting child care spaces.
- Continually review and update plans.
- If you have questions about how to prevent and address illness in the facility, please contact the Division of Public Health Coronavirus Call Center (number below).

Additional Information:

Delawareans with questions about COVID-19 can call the Division of Public Health’s Coronavirus Call Center at 1-866-408-1899, or 711 for individuals who are hearing impaired. Email DPHCall@delaware.gov.

[Governor Carney Signs Executive Order on Child Care](#)

[Delaware Issues Guidance for Child Care Providers on Coronavirus](#)

[Delaware COVID-19 News and Updates](#)

[Interim Guidance for Administrators of US K-12 Schools and Childcare Programs](#)

[How to Prepare and Protect Yourself](#)