

September 28, 2022

To All Child Care Providers,

Last month, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) streamlined its COVID-19 guidance to help people better understand their risk, how to protect themselves and others, what actions to take if exposed to COVID-19, and what actions to take if they are sick or test positive for the virus. This revised guidance provides flexibility so early childhood education programs can remain open and help support safe, in-person learning while reducing the spread of COVID-19.

The CDC recommends that early education programs “should put in place a core set of infectious disease prevention strategies as part of their normal operations.... Enhanced prevention strategies also may be necessary in response to an outbreak in...the ECE setting.”

OCCL encourages you to follow these updated CDC guidelines with your staff and families to lower risk of infection in your facility. Following these guidelines is strongly recommended but is not required by OCCL regulations. You may exceed these recommendations if desired.

To avoid confusion, be sure to inform your families of your facility’s specific requirements.

Please go to [Operational Guidance for K-12 Schools and Early Care and Education Programs to Support Safe In-Person Learning | CDC](#) to view the complete CDC document. Summarized CDC recommendations:

1. Stay up to date with vaccinations and boosters; it is the leading public health strategy to prevent severe disease.
2. Stay home when sick. Consider closing if you are a family child care. People who have symptoms of respiratory or gastrointestinal infections, such as cough, fever, sore throat, vomiting, or diarrhea, should stay home and get tested as soon as possible after symptoms begin.
 - i. If your results are positive, follow CDC’s full isolation recommendations.
 - ii. If your results are negative, you can end your isolation.
3. **If you test positive for COVID-19 or are waiting for test results:**
 - a. Regardless of vaccination status, stay home for at least 5 days and isolate from others in your home. You are most infectious during these first 5 days. Wear a mask if you must be around others at home.
 - b. Isolate if you are sick and suspect that you have COVID-19 but do not yet have test results.
 - c. If you tested positive and had no symptoms, you may end isolation after day 5. If you experienced shortness of breath or had difficulty breathing, you need to isolate through day 10. Regardless of when you end isolation, avoid being around people who are more likely to get very sick from COVID-19 until at least day 11. You should wear a high-quality mask through day 10.
 - d. If you had symptoms and your symptoms are not improving, continue to isolate until you are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and consult your health care provider before ending isolation. Regardless of when you end

isolation, avoid being around people who are more likely to get very sick from COVID-19 until at least day 11. You should wear a high-quality mask through day 10.

- e. If you were hospitalized due to COVID-19 or have a weakened immune system, isolate through day 10 and consult with your health care provider before ending isolation.
 - f. After you have ended isolation, if your COVID-19 symptoms worsen, restart your isolation at day 0. Talk to a healthcare provider if you have questions about your symptoms or when to end isolation.
4. Increase outdoor air intake and improve air filtration in your facility when possible.
 5. Teach and reinforce proper handwashing to lower the risk of spreading viruses. Use hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol when hand-washing is not possible. (Keep hand sanitizer out of sight and away from young children and use only under adult supervision.)
 6. Clean surfaces at least once daily and as specified in OCCL regulations.
 7. Wearing a well-fitting mask correctly reduces the risk of spreading the virus that causes COVID-19 *but is not required*. Mask wearing is prohibited for children younger than two years of age. People who have known or suspected exposure to COVID-19 should wear a well-fitting mask around others for 10 days from their last exposure, regardless of vaccination status or history of prior infection, and get tested on day 5.
 8. Children or staff who come to an ECE program with symptoms or develop symptoms while at the center/child care home should be asked to wear a well-fitting mask while in the building and be sent home and encouraged to get tested. Symptomatic people such as young children who cannot wear a mask should be separated from others as much as possible and properly supervised by a staff person who is wearing a well-fitting mask until they leave the facility.
 9. Testing of asymptomatic people without known exposures is no longer recommended in most community settings.

Consult Delaware's official Coronavirus website at <https://coronavirus.delaware.gov/> for additional information and infographics you can print and share with families.

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