



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of Child Care Licensing

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August 11, 2021

To All Licensed Child Care Providers,

Governor Carney announced on Tuesday, August 10, 2021 that **everyone** kindergarten-age and older in child care homes and child care centers must wear face coverings indoors effective Monday, August 16, regardless of vaccination status.

Child care center and family/large family child care educators are strongly encouraged to require masks for children 2 years old to kindergarten inside their facilities/homes to prevent spread of COVID-19. Children younger than 2 years old should not wear masks due to risk of suffocation.

OCCL is providing you with updated guidance to include this new information. Newly added text is shown as underlined.

REQUIREMENTS

This means that the following regulations are again in place:

1. New staff must be fingerprinted for a Delaware SBI and FBI check **before the start of employment**. The fingerprint verification form must be provided to the employer before working with children. Appointments to be fingerprinted are required at all locations except on Wednesdays in Dover when individuals from child care may walk in. Contact the fingerprinting facility for details and appointments.
2. New applications for licensure and renewal applications must again be notarized if submitted after July 13, 2021.
3. The skills demonstration is required for any new or renewed CPR certification earned after July 13, 2021.
4. Screen time activities require written parent/guardian permission and are limited to one hour or less per day, unless a special event occurs. Children younger than two years are prohibited from participating in screen time activities. Assistive technology is not included in screen time restrictions.

USE OF INTERNS IN CENTERS

OCCL is temporarily granting a variance to all child care centers on the possible use of interns (center regulations 24K and 87D) at least until December 31, 2021. This global variance will be reassessed in the fall to determine if regulation change is needed or if the variance will end on December 31st. Providers will be informed in advance of this date.

How interns will be used in an individual child care center is the decision of each facility until December 31, 2021. A licensed child care center may follow the current *DELACARE*

Regulations regarding the use of Early Childhood or School-Age Interns or may follow the modified requirements shown below.

Until December 31, 2021, center staff may be alone with children after meeting these requirements:

- Is qualified as at least an early childhood or school-age intern by Delaware First;
- Is at least 18 years old;
- Has been determined eligible by the Criminal History Unit after completion of a comprehensive background check; and
- Has at least one month of employment at the current center and has been oriented to the policies and procedures of that center and *DELACARE Regulations*.

It is recommended that centers place their more experienced staff with the younger children they serve.

MASK WEARING

Beginning August 16, 2021, **everyone** kindergarten-age and older in child care homes and centers must wear face coverings indoors, regardless of vaccination status.

Child care center educators/staff and family/large family child care educators/staff are strongly encouraged to require masks for children 2 years old to kindergarten inside their facilities/homes to prevent spread of COVID-19. Children younger than 2 years old should not wear masks due to risk of suffocation.

Masks are required when travelling on a bus or in a car with others not in your immediate family.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For the health and safety of staff and children in your care, the following practices are strongly recommended but are no longer required:

1. Health screenings of children and adults entering your facility is no longer required. Unless they are ill, families may enter the child care facility at any time while their child is in care. See *DELACARE Regulations* 23 (centers) and 13T (family/large family). (However, masks must be worn by anyone kindergarten age and older entering your facility; this includes staff, families, contractors, visitors, etc. regardless of vaccination status.)
2. Play dough and clay may be shared among different children. (*DELACARE Regulations* require handwashing after using shared clay/dough.)
3. Staff and children do not have to wash hands upon entering and leaving a classroom but this practice is encouraged. You must comply with hand washing requirements in *DELACARE Regulations* (regulation 59 in centers or 38 in family/large family homes).
4. Social distancing between adults and children is recommended when possible but not required.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will provide updates as needed at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html>. Please follow their guidance regarding COVID-19 recommendations.

As always, contact your licensing specialist with any questions.

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