



COVID-19 CHILD CARE CENTRE OPERATIONS

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Employees

- Child care centres are permitted to operate with maximum group sizes as set out under the CCEYA. (i.e. licensed age groups prior to the COVID-19 outbreak).
- Cohorting and distancing will no longer be required for indoor or outdoor activities. Licensees are required to ensure ratios, group sizes, reduced ratios and mixed age groupings meet the requirements under the *Child Care and Early Years Act* (CCEYA), as well as any conditions set out on their licence.
- Ratios set out by the CCEYA must be maintained.

Schedules

- Program Coordinators and Management will work together to set and implement staff scheduling with the child care centre teams to ensure based on operational needs and hours of care that families will require.

Screening Area/Employees

- All entrances must have alcohol-based hand sanitizer with a concentration of 60 – 90% available with signage demonstrating appropriate use.
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer should not be accessible to children and children should be supervised when using.

Guidance on Use of Masks:

- In alignment with provincial masking requirements, masks will no longer be required for staff, providers or any other individual (including children) at the child care.
- Eye protection for staff will also no longer be required.
- Employees may choose to continue to wear masks or eye protection at times or consistently.
- We encourage everyone to promote respectful, welcoming and inclusive practices and communications within our centres.
- A reminder that under [current federal travel requirements](#), upon return from international travel, individuals must, wear a mask at all times when in public spaces (including schools and child care), maintain a list of all close contacts for first 14 days in Canada, and monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
- Individuals with symptoms after isolation period of 5 days (from days 6 to 10) must continue to wear a well-fitted mask; avoid activities where you need to take off your mask and do not visit anyone who may be at higher risk of illness (for example, seniors or people who are immunocompromised).
- If after receiving a COVID- vaccination the individual experiences mild headache, fatigue, muscle aches, and/or joint pain symptoms worsen or continue past 48 hours, or if the individual develops other symptoms, they should leave the child care centre immediately to self-isolate and seek COVID-19 testing.
- In addition, if any household members are experiencing any new COVID-19 symptoms and/or are waiting for COVID-19 test results after experiencing symptoms, the child, employee, or placement student must not attend child care. (This direction does not pertain to those who received a COVID-19

vaccination in the last 48 hours and are experiencing mild headache, fatigue, muscle aches, and/or joint pain that only began after vaccination, and no other symptoms.). Unless 18 or older and have received their COVID-19 booster dose AND/OR tested positive on a rapid antigen test or PCR in the past 90 days and have already completed their isolation period OR 17 years and younger AND fully vaccinated

Visitors/Students/Attendance

- Daily records must be kept of anyone entering the child care centre.
- Visitors (those who are providing a service to the centre) are permitted into the child care centre.
- The Visitor Log Book will be maintained and recorded on the COVID-19 Outbreak Visitor Log form.
- These records must include the name, contact information, time of arrival and departure.
- Management will follow up with all individuals (child/employee) who are absent to determine the reason for the unplanned absence and if their absence is due to illness.
- Students completing post-secondary educational placements will be permitted to enter and will be required to follow all ACW COVID-19 policies and protocols.
- In-person meetings and orientations are allowed.

Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

- Appropriate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette are among the most important protective strategies.
- Staff and students on an educational placement should be trained and able to assist children on appropriate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, including the use of alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR), and reinforcing its use.
- Anyone entering the centre must sanitize their hands with Alcohol-Based Hand Sanitizer (ABHS). Niagara Region Public Health expectation is at least 60-90% alcohol (minimum 70% is preferred).
- Hand hygiene will be incorporated into the daily schedule at regular intervals during the day, above and beyond what is usually recommended (before eating food, after using the washroom)
- For children and staff this may include but not limited to:
 - Upon entering the child care centre
 - Upon entering the playroom
 - Upon entering the staffroom
 - Upon entering the centre from the playground
 - Before and after use of sensory materials
 - At any time, it is observed that a child has put their hands on their mouth/nose.
- Age appropriate posters or signage should be placed around the child care centre see [NR COVID-19 Posters and Resources](#) for hand hygiene posters.
- Soap and water are preferred as the most effective method and least likely to cause harm if accidentally ingested.
- ABHS can be used by children. It is most effective when hands are not visibly soiled.
- For any dirt, blood, body fluids (urine/feces), it is preferred that hands be washed with soap and water.
- Safe placement of the ABHS to avoid consumption is important, especially for young children.
- Support or modifications should be provided to allow children with special needs to regularly perform hand hygiene as independently as possible.
- Tissues and lined, no-touch waste baskets (for example, foot pedal-operated, hand sensor, open basket) are to be provided, where possible.

- ABHS should be located at the entry point to each child care room and/or plain liquid soap in dispensers, sinks and paper towel dispensers.
- Wash hands in between applying sunscreen.

Equipment/Toy Usage and Restrictions

- All belongings (i.e. water bottles, hats) should be labelled and kept in the child's locker/cubby/designated area.
- Toys/Equipment should be made of materials that can be cleaned and disinfected (non-porous).
- Shared objects and sensory items can be offered with the focus on hand hygiene before and after the use of materials.
- Mouthed toys should be cleaned and disinfected immediately after the child is finished using it.
- Children must not share food, feeding utensils, soothers, bottles, sippy cups or reusable water bottles.
 - Label these items with the child's name
- Singing is permitted indoors

Food Provisions

- Regular food preparations guidelines should be followed.
- Family style meals are permitted with adequate food handling and safety practices.
- No food is to be provided by the family outside of the regular meal provision except where required and special precautions for handling and serving food must be put in place.
- Ensure proper hand hygiene is practiced when employees are preparing food and for all individuals before and after eating.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Will align with the Ministry of Health COVID-19 Integrated Testing & Case Interim Guidance: Omicron Surge

Donning and Doffing Medical Masks

Staff must follow proper donning, doffing and storage procedures each time the mask is removed.

This includes but not limited to:

- Washing or sanitizing hands prior to putting mask on and immediately after taking mask off.
- Remove mask by only touching the ear loops.
- Dispose mask in a closed bin/garbage.
- Do not put the mask on around your neck or up on your forehead.
- Do not touch the outside of your mask and if you do, wash or sanitize your hands immediately.
- If mask becomes wet or visibly soiled, it will need to be replaced.
- Follow the Niagara Region Fact sheet for donning and doffing a mask/face covering and for proper procedure. "COVID-19 Face Coverings for Non-healthcare Workers", see link below as well as proper hand hygiene.

Eye Protection (Face Shields & Goggles/Safety Glasses)

- Eye Protection must be available in the isolation kits for when dealing with symptomatic individuals.
- Eye protection must be stored properly and safely in the container when not in use.
- The manufacturer directions should be followed for cleaning and disinfection to avoid damage to the plastic.

- If no cleaning instructions are provided, clean with detergent, rinse and the disinfected based on contact time of the chemical.
- Face shields and goggles/safety glasses, should be cleaned from the inside (least contaminated) to the outside (most contaminated).
- Avoid getting the foam forehead piece and strap wet on face shields, as they may be damaged by chemicals.
- Dispose of visibly soiled or damaged.
- Eye glasses are not considered eye protection.

Gowns

- Disposable or cloth gowns are required when assisting ill children
- Disposable gowns are to be discarded immediately after use.
- Cloth gowns are to be laundered in hot water and placed in a high heat dryer immediately after each use. Be sure that soiled laundry is maintained in a specific area to lessen the risk of possible contamination across multiple surfaces and best practice is to launder immediately whenever possible.
- Ensure that gowns are properly stored in a sealed container to limit the possibility of contamination.

Isolation kits with a supply of PPE items required in the event that an individual becomes ill, should be readily available containing:

- cloth or disposable gowns
- medical masks
- gloves
- eye protection
- facial tissues (Kleenex)
- ABHS accessible in the immediate area that care is taking place.

This will ensure quick and timely access to required PPE and immediate access if eye protection or medical mask become soiled during the 1:1 care of the ill individual.

Staff Training

- Staff will receive updates and complete trainings through staff portal (www.acwstaffportal.com).
- All staff must be trained on the proper use of medical masks which will include but not limited to:
 - **Putting on Masks**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DcHN0CfiU0k&feature=youtu.be>
 - **How to Wash Hands**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o9hjmques72I>
 - **How to Rub Hands with Sanitizer**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sDUJ4CAYhpA>
 - **Putting Gloves On**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UIBmi578NmE>
 - **Taking off Gloves**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WDI0Zj573Js>

Ventilation

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

- Heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems (HVACs) and their filters are designed to reduce airborne pollutants, including virus particles, when they circulate through the system.
 - Ensure HVAC systems are in good working condition.
 - Keep areas near HVAC inlets and outlets clear.
 - Arrange furniture away from air vents and high airflow areas.
 - Avoid re-circulating air.
- Ensure that the HVAC units are routinely maintained/serviced by a HVAC professional and that records of all maintenance is kept on site.

HEPA machines (stand alone)

- The HEPA filter unit should be placed near the center of the room OR near potential sources of COVID-19 droplets/aerosols, such as lunch tables.
- The fan in the filter unit will generate noise (~40-70 decibels) and this should be considered when placing the unit.
- Use power bars not extension cords as well ensure the cord is not a tripping hazard
- Date the replacement filter in the space provided.
- Follow manufacturers guidelines for frequency and specifics of filter changes.

Additional Staffing Supports

- Employees can access the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EAP).
- If you are seeking Access to EAP telephone number:
 - 905-937-7731