

ENHANCED HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY – COVID

Contents

Purpose	2
Symptoms of COVID-19	2
New Procedures to Implement in Care Homes	3
Daily Screening for Symptoms	3
Screening Procedures for Providers:	3
Daily Screening Procedures for Parents/children	3
Drop off and Pick-up Procedures	4
Cleaning and Disinfecting Provider Home	4
Hand Washing and Hygiene	4
Respiratory Etiquette	5
Equipment and Toy Usage Restrictions	5
Nap/Sleep Time.....	5
Outdoor Play	5
Interactions with Infants/Toddlers	6
Meals.....	6
Visitors in the Home.....	6
What to do when a Child, Provider or Member of the Household show symptoms or become sick	7
Provider or member of their Household	7
Child becomes ill or show symptoms.....	7
Agency Procedures	7
Exclusions from Care.....	8
Back up Care	9
Expired Requirements.....	9
Training and Meetings	9
Communication with Parents	9

Purpose

The following guidelines have been created to assist you in managing risk associated with COVID-19 spread within our childcare homes. Wee Watch has developed these guidelines in alignment with Public Health and Ministry of Education guidelines for Operations during COVID-19 outbreak. All existing Wee Watch policies and procedures continue to be in effect. These guidelines outline additional measures that must be taken on top of our current procedures, or specific guidelines that may be different than existing protocols. These additional measures are required to be in place until otherwise notified. Agencies, staff, and Providers must operate with these enhanced health and safety measures in place immediately. Failure to comply with the guidelines by Providers may result in a Follow-up or Deficiency notice, disassociation from the Agency or in most extreme cases a monetary fine from the Ministry.

Symptoms of COVID-19

It is important that the symptoms of COVID-19 are known and understood. The symptoms of COVID-19 as outlined by Health Canada¹ are:

- Fever (temperature of 37.8°C or greater)
- New or worsening cough
- Shortness of breath

Other symptoms may also include:

- Sore throat
- Difficulty swallowing
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, chills
- Runny, stuffy, congested nose (in the absence of an underlying reason such as allergies)
- Headache
- Pink eye
- Decrease or loss of sense of taste or smell
- Unexplained fatigue/malaise/muscle aches

In particular for children, symptoms also include: sluggishness or lack of appetite

Continue to monitor Health Canada and your local Public Health Agency for any changes or modifications to symptoms.

¹ <https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-stop-spread#section-0>

New Procedures to Implement in Care Homes

Daily Screening for Symptoms

Providers and those living in their household and children attending care and their parents/guardians must be screened **every day** and the results of the screening **MUST be recorded** and kept on file in the Provider's home.

Screening Procedures for Providers:

1. Providers must answer all screening questions daily for themselves and anyone living in their home regardless of age
2. If the answer to all screening questions for all household members is "No", and all household members have a temperature below 37.8C, the Provider can open
3. Providers must record the results of the screening and temperatures on the **Daily Screening Form** for themselves and their household members.
4. If the Provider or anyone in their household responds 'Yes' to any question they must contact the Agency **immediately** – their home may need to be closed for the day or longer depending on the direction of your local Public Health department.
5. If the Provider or her household members are feeling ill, even if symptoms resemble a mild cold, they must contact the Agency **BEFORE** any children arrive for the day.

Daily Screening Procedures for Parents/children

1. All children attending care and their parents must be **screened daily** in advance of the child attending care. Parents and anyone entering the home must answer the **Screening questions**. These questions should be **posted** visibly at the entry door/area of the Provider's home.
2. Parents must take their child's **temperature at home before they bring** the child to the Provider's home. If the temperature is above 37.8C they should contact the agency to let them know.
3. When parents arrive, the Provider will ask them if they answered "Yes" to any of the questions on the screening page posted at the entry. If they answer "Yes" to any questions, they **cannot enter the home** and their child cannot be permitted into care that day. The Provider should contact the Agency for next steps. Local Public Health may be consulted.
4. If they answer "No" to all questions, record the child's temperature as they measured it and record it on the **Daily Screening Form**.
5. If the parent cannot remember the temperature of the child or has not taken it in advance, have the parent take the child's temperature at the Provider's home.

Providers must disinfect the thermometer after the parent has used it or after they use it.

Drop off and Pick-up Procedures

- Individuals should maintain physical distance from each other when dropping off and picking up children or waiting to enter the Provider's home (stand at least 2 meters apart)
- No more than 1 parent/guardian at a time can enter the care home. Parents/Guardians should wait outside the home while another person is in the transition area.
- Whenever possible, parents should not enter the home past the drop-off or pick-up area in the home
- If possible and safe, Providers can have Hand Sanitizer at the front door area and ask parents to use it before entering (if they are entering) the home as an extra precaution
- If a child is an infant, it is recommended that parents/guardians pass the child to the Provider using a blanket and not hand to hand contact.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Provider Home

- Frequently touched or high touched surfaces must be cleaned and disinfected at **least twice a day** (for example, light switches, doorknobs, tables and other furnishings, railings, toilet handles and faucets)
- Providers should use the **bleach and water** solution as a disinfectant as per their Provider Manual unless directed differently by local Public Health
- Wash Toys daily (either in a sink with disinfectant solution or in a dishwasher)
- Complete the disinfecting log

Hand Washing and Hygiene

Regular and proper hand washing is the best way to reduce the risk of contracting COVID-19. Providers are to wash their hands and those of the children regularly throughout the day. Follow guidelines set out by Public health which include: wetting hands, applying soap and lathering for at least 20 seconds, rubbing between fingers and under nails and rinsing well.

We recommend Providers wash their hands:

- At the beginning of the workday and when children arrive and leave
- Before and after any crafts or play activities
- Before and after handling food and serving snacks/meals
- Before and after diaper checks, changes, and toileting
- Before and after giving or applying medication or ointment to a child or self
- Before and after contact with bodily fluids (i.e. runny noses, spit, vomit, blood)
- After cleaning and handling garbage

Children should wash their hands:

- When they arrive at the home and before they go home
- Before and after eating and drinking
- After a diaper change and using the toilet
- After playing outside
- After sneezing or coughing into hands

Hand Sanitizer does not replace hand washing and should not be used on children less than 2 years of age. Use with children only when you do not have the ability to wash hands (i.e. out at a park).

Respiratory Etiquette

Providers and children in care should practice proper respiratory etiquette of sneezing or coughing into their elbow versus into their hands.

Equipment and Toy Usage Restrictions

- Try to use toys and equipment in the home that can be cleaned and disinfected easily (i.e. avoid plush toys), try to reduce activities that involve shared toys (i.e. puzzles, board games, unless using individually)
- Mouthed toys should be cleaned and disinfected immediately after the child is finished using it
- Group sensory activities such as water or sand tables, or playdough cannot be used. Only individual sensory play is permitted (i.e. each child can have their own playdough and it is to be discarded after use or labelled for their use only from that point forward)
- Ensure all shared items/toys are cleaned and disinfected between uses
- Incorporate more individual activities or activities that encourage more space between children

Nap/Sleep Time

- Cots and playpens should not be shared between children. If there are two part time children sharing a cot/playpen, Providers should disinfect the equipment after each child has used it and change the linen after each use
- Cots and playpens should be disinfected weekly
- Linens should be cleaned weekly at minimum and never be shared
- Where possible separate cots/playpens where children are sleeping or if there is not room, place the children head to toe or toe to toe for physical distancing

Outdoor Play

- Children should continue to play outdoors for at least two hours a day weather permitting. Where possible use a backyard for outdoor play or go for neighbourhood walks, follow local Public Health advice on parks and public playgrounds. Avoid public parks/playgrounds if there are already a number of children playing there or if your local Public Health is not recommending children attend them.

- Play structures in the backyard must be cleaned and disinfected before and after each use by a cohort (one Provider household of children is a considered a cohort).
- Have designated outdoor toys and equipment and clean those toys and equipment before and after it has been used by children
- Children should be bringing their own sunscreen, which should be labelled and cannot be shared.

Interactions with Infants/Toddlers

- When possible, it is recommended to hold infants and toddlers using a blankets/cloth over clothing and change the blanket/cloths between children
- Children must not share food, soothers, bottles, sippy cups etc.
- Mouthed toys must be removed immediately for cleaning and disinfecting and must not be shared with other children. Labelling the children's items is a good idea to minimize any accidental sharing.

Meals

- Two snacks and lunch (dinner for overnight children) are still to be prepared and given to the children daily
- Ensure that no self-service of food or sharing of food takes place
- No sharing of the utensils to serve food (i.e. saltshaker, serving spoons)
- Meals should be served in individual portions to the children, and they should not be taking food off a main platter
- Children should neither prepare or provide food that will be shared with others, if you are conducting cooking/baking activities the children should have their own ingredients and eat what they have prepared (i.e. pizza cooking activity: each child has their own dough, sauce, cheese, toppings)
- Ensure you are following proper hand hygiene when preparing and serving the food

Visitors in the Home

- **Non-essential visitors are not** allowed in the home during care hours. Home Visitors and Ministry personnel and Resource Consultants are excluded from this (they are allowed in your home), record their **time in and out in your Logbook**.
- Home Visitors and Ministry Personnel will be screened in advance of coming to your home and will wear masks when in your home conducting visits
- The agency should be notified of any other essential visitors that need to visit the home (i.e. PSW for elderly parent) to discuss approval and screening.
- Record the time in and out of any visitor in your Logbook and Screening results in the Daily Screening Form

What to do when someone in care shows symptoms or becomes sick

Provider or member of their household

- If a member of the Provider's household becomes sick while children are in care, they should be **isolated** away from care children. If a Provider becomes ill, they should put on a mask immediately and attempt to distance as much as possible from the children until the Agency is contacted. (Stay visually connected to all children and provide assistance as required)
- Provider should call the Agency immediately for assistance and to call parents to pick up the children in care. **Symptomatic Providers or Members of the Household should be referred for testing and Toronto Public Health Agency will be consulted. See "Exclusions" for actions based on result of that testing**
- Hand Hygiene and respiratory etiquette should be practiced while waiting for the children to be picked up.

Child becomes ill or show symptoms

- When a child becomes sick or shows symptoms while in care, they should be **separated** from other children in care while still being visually connected to the Provider.
- Providers should attempt to stay at a distance of 2 meters apart, depending on the age and needs of the child that is ill. Hand Hygiene and respiratory etiquette should be practiced while waiting for the child to be picked up.
- Provider should call the Agency immediately for assistance and to call parents to pick up the children in care. **Symptomatic children should be referred to testing and Toronto Public Health Agency will be consulted. See "Exclusions" for actions based on result of the tests**
- If tolerated and if the child is above 2 years old, the ill child should wear a mask. The Provider should also wear a mask when taking care of an ill child
- All items used by the sick person should be cleaned and disinfected. All items that cannot be cleaned (paper, books, cardboard games/puzzles) should be removed and stored in a sealed container for a minimum of 7 days
- Follow Public Health directions and guidelines for next steps
- Report to agency if any parent has communicated with you that they have been ill and have been tested for COVID-19

Agency Procedures

- Agency will follow all current Wee Watch Serious Occurrence Policies
- A Serious Occurrence will be communicated to the Ministry when there is a suspected case of COVID-19, or when a child, parent, Provider, or Member of the Household is being tested, when there is confirmed case in a childcare home or a child's home.

- A Serious Occurrence Notification form will be posted in the Provider's home for 10 days.
- **A single, symptomatic, laboratory confirmed case of COVID_19 with staff, provider, or child must be considered a confirmed COVID_19 outbreak, in consultation with the Toronto Public Health Agency. Outbreaks should be declared in collaboration between the agency and the Toronto Public Health unit to ensure an outbreak number is provided.**

Guidance for Using Masks

- Wearing a mask while providing childcare is not required
- Under certain conditions if you are wearing a mask, follow Public Health guidelines regarding the proper wearing and removal of masks
- You may choose to wear or use masks in the following situations:
 - When screening parents as they drop off their children
 - When cleaning blood or bodily fluid spills
 - When caring for a sick child or a child showing symptoms of illness

Exclusions from Care

- Children who have any symptoms, or children of parents with symptoms as described on the Daily Screening questions, including a temperature of 37.8C or higher or are ill cannot be in care
- Children who have been exposed to a confirmed or presumed case of COVID-19 may be excluded from care as per Public Health direction
- Children or their parents that have travelled outside of Canada within 14 days prior to the day they want to attend care
- If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in a care home, the home will be closed for 14 days.
- **Symptomatic children, staff, and providers should be referred for testing**
 - **Those who test negative for COVID_19 must be excluded from the program until 24 hours after symptom resolution**
 - **Those who test positive for COVID_19 must be excluded from the program for 14 days after the onset of symptoms and/or clearance has been received from the Toronto Public Health.**
- **Staff, providers, parents/ guardians, and children who are symptomatic or have been advised to self-isolate by the Toronto Public Health, must not attend the program.**
- **Testing of asymptomatic person is only done on the direction of the public health. Individuals awaiting results may not need to be excluded and should follow the advice of Toronto Public Health.**

Back up Care

- Back-up care will be provided when available and at the specific direction of local Public Health. Back-up care may not be offered depending on the individual situation.

Expired Requirements

- If the Vulnerable Sector Check for Providers or a household member over 19 has expired during the emergency period, they have **60 days after the emergency order** is lifted to acquire a new and up to date VSC.
- If First Aid Certification has expired during the emergency period, the certificate has been extended until September 30, 2020. Providers must make every attempt to take training and renew their certification as soon as courses become available.

Training and Meetings

- Professional Development and other training/meetings for Providers will occur virtually during this period or in groups of less than 10 people if face to face is required

Communication with Parents

- These amended policies will be shared with all parents of children in care by the Agency