

February 8, 2022

Parent Information: COVID-19 Childcare Program Protocol

Updates as of Feb 1, 2022 *(Based childcare guidelines from Washington State Department of Health-DOH and Public Health Seattle/King County-PHSKC)*

GENERAL INFORMATION

Protocol Updates: Protocols are subject to change as updates are provided by DOH & PHSKC as well as considering the level of community transmission of COVID-19, presence of other people who are at higher risk for severe illness, and the ability to use additional prevention strategies, such as improved ventilation and cohorting, in addition to the vaccination, masking, and testing recommendations.

General Childcare Illness Policy:

We ask that you adhere to the following guidelines when your child is ill. **Please keep at home any child with the following symptoms until resolved:**

- Fever of at least 100.4 °F orally (no-touch thermometer)
- Diarrhea, more than two loose stools per day or stool contains a drop of blood or mucus
- Vomiting, twice or more in the past 24 hours
- Rash, any not associated with heat or allergic reaction
- Drainage from the eye, redness of eyelid lining, swelling and discharge of pus
- Appearance/Behavior: Unusually tired, lack of appetite, confused, irritable, unable to participate in program
- Sore throat: especially with fever and swollen glands
- Head lice or nits: until no lice or nits are present
- Scabies: until after treatment
- Open or oozing sores, unless properly covered and 24 hours have passed since starting antibiotic

Attending Program after Travel: all protocols as described below will apply to attending program following any travel. These protocols are in accordance with CDC guidelines regarding travel when a person has COVID-19 symptoms, has been exposed, tests positive or a household member tests positive.

Accepted COVID-19 Tests:

Molecular (PCR)

Antigen (Rapid, not home administered)

COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

Symptomatic (signs of illness) with Negative Test:

PCR Test: If a person with COVID-19 symptoms tests negative with a molecular test, they may return to the program following the existing illness policies (*see above 'General Childcare Illness Policy'*) so long as they were not identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19 and are subject to quarantine.

Antigen Test: If a person with COVID-19 symptoms tests negative with an antigen test, it is required they either have a molecular test or repeat an antigen test within 24-48 hours to confirm result and then may return to the program following the existing illness policies (*see above 'General Childcare Illness Policy'*) so long as they were not identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19 and are subject to quarantine.

Not Tested: If a person with COVID-19 symptoms does not get tested or see a health care provider from whom they receive an alternative diagnosis and provide documentation, they should follow the same isolation guidance as persons who test positive for COVID-19. This is irrespective of vaccination status.

Isolation – COVID-19 Positive:

Any child with COVID-19 should isolate at home. **This isolation guidance applies regardless of vaccination status.**

“Washington State Department of Health recommends, when an individual is isolating, they should stay home and away from others (including household members) except to get medical care in order to avoid spreading their illness. If a child is excluded from childcare, early learning, or day camp due to isolation, they should not go anywhere except home or to seek medical care. Parents should notify all care providers (e.g., childcare, school) when a child is isolating and thus excluded from all settings. Children identified with symptoms of COVID-19 or who test positive for COVID-19 infection should go or stay home.”

- **If a child tests positive for COVID-19 by a molecular or antigen test, they can return to the facility when the following criteria for completing isolation are met:**
 - 5 days* (day 0 through day 5) have passed since symptom onset, or since positive test specimen collection date if no symptoms are present. Day 0 is the first day symptoms appeared, or the day the positive test sample was collected if not symptomatic. (**note: people who are severely ill or severely immunocompromised may need to isolate for up to 20 days*); AND
 - No symptoms are currently present, or symptoms have significantly improved; AND
 - No fever within the past 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.

Children should continue to be monitored for symptoms and wear a well-fitting mask around others through day 10 (days 6-10) both in and out of the program, including during extracurricular and sports activities, even after all symptoms have ended.

- From day 6-10, individuals who return from isolation should avoid being around other people who are at higher risk for severe illness.
 - During times when masks cannot be worn, such as during meals, snacks, and naptime, children who are returning from isolation will be distanced (6 ft.) while staff still safely maintain proper supervision.
- **If an individual cannot correctly and consistently wear a well-fitting mask around others (e.g., children younger than two, children who have mask accommodations, etc.), they should stay in isolation through day 10.**
 - Individuals who have been in isolation may test on day 5 of their isolation period, but only if the above criteria for completing isolation have been met. If testing, an antigen test is recommended.
 - If the test result is positive, they should continue to isolate until day 10.
 - If the test result is negative, they may return to the program but must continue to wear a well-fitting mask both in and out of the program, around others at home and in the public, including during extracurricular and sports activities, to prevent potentially exposing others through day 10.

- **Notification of positive test result:**

Parents or guardians of children who test positive for COVID-19 should notify the childcare, early learning, or day camp program immediately upon receipt of test results. This ensures parents receive appropriate information regarding isolation. In addition, this allows for contact tracing to determine if any children or staff were exposed to the person with COVID-19.

Quarantine – Exposure to COVID-19

Quarantine is when someone who has been exposed to COVID-19 stays home and away from others for the recommended period of time.

Close contact is someone who was within six feet of a person with COVID-19 for at least 15 cumulative minutes over a 24-hour period during the period of time when the person with COVID-19 was infectious. The infectious period of someone with COVID-19 starts two days before the onset of symptoms or is estimated as two days before the positive test collection date if someone with COVID-19 is asymptomatic. This definition applies regardless of whether masks were worn. If identified as a close contact, quarantine may be required as outlined below.

Notification of Exposure:

Please inform us if your child has an exposure, outside of the childcare program, regardless of where (including school, travel, home, etc.)

Who Does Not Need to Quarantine:

Individuals who come into close contact with someone with COVID-19 do not need to quarantine if they:

- Are ages 5-17 years and completed the primary series of COVID-19 vaccines.
 - Proof of vaccination must be presented prior to return to program; email to families will outline who to provide this documentation to and how to submit it.
- Are ages 18 or older and are up to date on all recommended vaccine doses, including boosters.
- Had confirmed COVID within the last 90 days and isolation period is complete.
 - Proof of positive test result must be presented prior to return to program; email to families will outline who to provide this documentation to and how to submit it.

While those listed above do not need to quarantine, they must wear a well-fitting mask when around others and watch for symptoms for 10 days after their last close contact. It is recommended they get tested with a viral test at least 5 days after their last close contact. If they had confirmed COVID-19 within the last 90 days, an antigen test should be used.

Who Must Quarantine:

Individuals who come into close contact with someone with COVID-19 must quarantine for at least 5 days (day 0 through day 5) after their last close contact* with a person who has COVID-19 if they are in one of the following groups:

- **Those who are not vaccinated, not yet eligible to be vaccinated, or have not completed a primary vaccine series.**
- **Ages 18 or older and completed the primary series of recommended vaccine but have not received a recommended booster shot when eligible.**

**For household exposures this would be the last day the person with COVID-19 is considered infectious.*

Quarantine Requirements:

For childcare, early learning, or day camp program, there are two quarantine options for close contacts.

1. 5-day quarantine with negative test

Quarantine can end after 5 full days beginning after the last close contact (the date of last close contact is considered day 0) if no symptoms have developed and after receiving a negative test result from a test taken no sooner than day 5.

- Individuals should wait to receive a negative test result from a test taken no sooner than day 5 post-exposure and provide the negative test documentation before returning.

- Negative test result must be presented prior to return to program; email to families will outline who to provide this documentation to and how to submit it
- If any COVID-19 symptoms develop, the individual should isolate and get tested. See isolation section for return to program information.

Negative test results may come from school testing programs, a health care provider, local health jurisdiction, pharmacy, or other community-based test site. At-home tests will not be accepted. Proof of a negative COVID-19 test may include the original, a copy, or a photo of a document or other communication from the test provider or laboratory that shows:

- The first and last name(s) of the individual tested.
- The type of test performed (must be molecular or antigen).
- The date the specimen was collected (must be on or after day 5 post-exposure).
- A negative result.

Individuals should continue monitoring for symptoms and **wearing a well-fitting mask** around others through day 10 (days 6-10) in all environments. **If an individual cannot correctly and consistently wear a well-fitting mask around others (e.g., children younger than two, children who have mask accommodations, etc.), they should stay in quarantine through day 10** (option 2 below).

2. If an individual chooses not to test or does not get tested or cannot consistently wear a well-fitting mask:

10-day quarantine is required.

- Quarantine should last for 10 days after the last close contact. However, if any COVID-19 symptoms develop during the 10 days, the individual should isolate and get tested. *Note: 14-day Quarantine is listed as a third option in DOH guidelines; however, in consideration of impact to families we have adopted the minimum recommendation of 10-days.*

Child Care Closure in Response to COVID-19 Cases:

There may be instances where closure of a classroom or program is warranted to stop transmission of COVID-19. The time period on such closures can vary, from initial short-term closures to allow time for local health officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation and help our program determine appropriate next steps, to extended closures to stop transmission of COVID-19. As needed childcare, early learning, and day camp programs will work with their LHJ (Local Health Jurisdiction) to determine when it is necessary to close a classroom or program and when the classroom or program can reopen.

We will consider the following to determine when to close a classroom:

- The classroom/group/cohort experiences a rapid increase in COVID-19 cases.
- There is evidence of transmission of COVID-19 in the classroom/group/cohort.
- The classroom/group/cohort cannot function due to insufficient staff.

A COVID-19 outbreak in a childcare program is considered when the following have been met:

- There are two or more COVID-19 cases among students or staff.
- The cases have a symptom onset or positive test result within a 14-day period of each other.
- The cases are epidemiologically linked.
- The cases do not share a household.
- The cases are not identified as close contacts of each other in another setting during the investigation.