

Addendum to 3.11 Early Years Division – Pandemic Policy

LICENSED AND REGULATED CHILD CARE ENHANCED PROTOCOLS DURING COVID-19

Introduction Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. To reduce the impact of COVID-19 outbreak conditions on our children, staff and families, it is important for us to plan for COVID-19 and mitigate the associated risks. This document provides guidance and direction for staff and families to reduce the potential risk for infection during Ontario’s Recovery Period.

The protocols and procedures outlined herein are extensions to the SEC Policies, Protocols and procedures to meet compliance standards for child care as referenced below. In some cases the standards outlined may exceed, change or adapt to the current approved standards of SEC policy, SEC will adopt any standard as and when directed by health authorities and update these procedures as required.

Pandemic measures and or policy will be reviewed with all program staff prior to their start date. All staff must complete any required training have received proper personal protective equipment and be fully prepared to uphold and practice all new polices, protocols and practices prior to being scheduled for direct service.

The SEC policies, protocols and procedures in conjunction with the *Licensed and Regulated Child Care Enhanced Protocols During COVID-19* will remain in place until such time that SEC confirms the Ministry of Education and York Region Public Health indicate it is safe to return to normal operating procedures and or makes further changes to health and safety recommendations. All child care programs are required to follow all COVID-19 health and safety requirements and regulations, and ensure all current infection prevention and control practices are adhered to.

**Effective
References
and
Resources**

August 20 2020

[Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014](#)
[Operational Guidance During COVID-19 Outbreak - Child Care Re-Opening](#)
(Ministry of Education)
[COVID-19 Guidance for Child Care](#) (York Region Presentation by Public Health)
[COVID-19 Information for Re-opening Licensed Child Care Centres](#)
[COVID-19 Child Care Centre Self Auditing Checklist](#)
Video: [How to properly put on PPE during COVID-19](#)
and [How to properly take off and dispose of PPE during COVID-19](#)
Video: [How to properly put on masks/face coverings during COVID-19](#)
And [How to properly take off and dispose of masks/face coverings during COVID-19](#)
Video: [Correct Handwashing Procedures - Full Steps](#)

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES DURING THE RECOVERY PERIOD

Sanitization of the space, toys and equipment

To minimize the spread of COVID-19, enhanced cleaning and disinfection procedures must be put in place. Please refer to York Region Public Health presentation COVID-19 Guidance for Child Care for current requirements

Procedure:

SEC has implemented enhanced cleaning and disinfecting measures to help reduce the spread of infectious illness. A schedule of the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting required has been recommended by Public Health. A focus is placed on high touch areas including door handles, sinks, toilets, and toys. Any toy that is difficult to clean and disinfect has been put away (i.e. plush toys, dress-up clothes, puppets). Anytime a child places a toy in their mouth, coughs or sneezes on a toy, it is taken out of rotation until it can be cleaned and disinfected.

Disinfectants to be used:

Vert2Go Saber is the disinfecting product for use in the York Region District School Board and the York Catholic District School Board. This product meets public health guidelines. In each program operating in those locations, labelled spritz bottles filled with Vert2Go Saber will be available, out of children's reach, in each program room, the kitchen and bathrooms for use. Disposable cleaning cloths and gloves will be in use during cleaning and sanitizing.

Bleach and water is the disinfecting product for use on SEC toys and equipment and in their regulated and licensed programs not located in schools. This product meets public health guidelines. Labelled spritz bottles filled with bleach and water will be placed, out of children's reach, in each program room, the kitchen and bathrooms for use. Disposable cleaning cloths and gloves will be in use during cleaning and sanitizing. For proper concentration (recipe) refer to [York Region - Proper Cleaning Disinfection Practices](#) During a Pandemic we follow Outbreak requirements.

In addition:

- There will be a cleaning and disinfecting schedule (log to be completed daily) for each space.
- Cleaning and disinfecting routines will be increased where the risk of environmental contamination is higher.
- All touched surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected frequently (minimum twice per day).

High-touch surfaces: any surfaces that have frequent contact with hands (e.g., light switches, shelving, containers, table tops, hand rails, door knobs, sinks, toilets etc.). These surfaces will be cleaned at least twice per day and as often as necessary.

Low-touch surfaces: (any surfaces that have minimal contact with hands), will be cleaned and disinfected daily (e.g. Window ledges, doors, sides of furnishings).

Toys and equipment: will be cleaned and disinfected at a minimum between cohorts. Mouthed toys will be removed, cleaned and disinfected after each use by a child.

Tables and countertops: used for food preparation and food service will be cleaned and disinfected before and after each use.

Spills: will be cleaned up and disinfected immediately.

Floors: cleaning and disinfecting will be performed as required, i.e., when spills occur, and throughout the day when rooms are not in use, i.e., during outdoor play.

Outdoor play equipment: will be cleaned and disinfected between cohorts, and as required (e.g. balls, sand toys).

Hard (Non-porous) Surfaces: If surfaces are dirty, they will be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

Soft (Porous) Surfaces: Indoor area carpets and other soft (porous) items will be removed as required from the child care program prior to reopening.

Electronics: For electronics such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remove visible contamination if present.

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products.
- If no manufacturer guidance is available, alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 60% alcohol will be used to disinfect touch screens. Dry surfaces thoroughly to avoid pooling of liquids.

Laundry

- All laundry will be handled in a manner that minimizes spreading the virus.
 - Staff will use appropriate PPE when handling laundry including gloves, eye protection and a gown.
 - Laundering will be done with regular laundry soap and hot water (60°C – 90°C) and dried thoroughly.
 - Linens (cot sheets) soiled with fecal material will be washed separately.
 - Children's soiled clothing will be bagged and sent home to be laundered.
 - Clothing and linen from an unwell/infected child will be sent home for cleaning.
 - Washcloths, towels and linens will not be shared between children and laundered after each use.
 - Daily laundering of cot sheet, blankets, towels and other reusable items will occur.
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Managing and Reporting Illness

In order to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and contain outbreaks within the child care centre, staff/home child care providers, parents and guardians, and children will not attend the program if they are sick, even if symptoms resemble a mild cold or allergies. Standardized screening questions are to be used.

Daily and individual site and program attendance records will be a requirement for all programs and attendance of staff at all locations. Such records will be maintained for the purposes of exposure tracking.

A serious occurrence will be reported to the Ministry when a child, staff or home child care provider is suspected, or has a confirmed case of COVID-19, and York Region Public Health will be contacted. Details of reporting and managing illness can be found on: [Re-opening and Resuming Business during COVID-19 | York Region](#)

Procedure:

MANAGEMENT OF STAFF/CHILDREN WITH POSSIBLE COVID-19

Child care staff, parents/guardians and children must not attend the program if they are sick, even if symptoms resemble a mild cold.

Staff who become ill while at the child care centre should be sent home immediately and directed to seek assessment and testing at a COVID-19 Assessment Centre.

If child begins to experience symptoms of COVID-19 while attending child care: Isolate the sick child and notify parents/guardians or emergency contacts for pick up immediately. Each site will identify an isolation area that provides for the best separation from others, comfort for the individuals and post cleaning ease.

- The sick child should be kept at least 2-metres from others.
 - Provide the child with tissues and remind them of hand hygiene and proper respiratory etiquette and disposal of soiled tissues.
 - Provide the sick child with a procedural mask if tolerable and above the age of two.
 - Staff who supervises an ill child must wear a gown, mask, eye protection and gloves at all times and not interact with others.
 - Avoid contact with the child's respiratory secretions.
 - Perform meticulous hand hygiene.
 - Clean and disinfect (outbreak level disinfectant) the space and items used by the ill child.
 - For items (e.g., paper, books and cardboard puzzles) that cannot be cleaned, they should be removed and stored in a sealed container for a minimum of 7 days.
 - Contact York Region Public Health (call 1-877-464-9675 ext. 73588 between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., seven days a week or after hours you can call 905-953-6478) and their advice will be followed. If the child care program is located in a shared setting (for example in a school, community setting or a Welcome Centre) we will follow public health advice on notifying others using the space of the suspected illness.
 - Siblings of the ill child are also to be picked up and excluded from the child care centre. In the event that a COVID-19 positive case is identified in the child care centre, a COVID-19 outbreak will be declared
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by York Region Public Health and further direction will be provided by York Region Public Health on who else in the child care centre may need testing and/or isolation at that time.

- Staff who have been in close contact with an ill child should self-monitor for symptoms for the next 14 days. They should be advised to avoid being in contact with vulnerable persons or locations where there are vulnerable persons (e.g. long-term care homes). If the child is a confirmed case, the staff member should also self-isolate and seek assessment and testing.
- Staff/ children with symptoms, who have not been tested for COVID-19, must be excluded from child care for 14 days after the onset of symptoms.
- Staff/ children who are being managed by York Region Public Health (e.g. confirmed cases of COVID-19, household contacts of cases) should follow instructions from public health to determine when to return to the facility.

Asymptomatic individuals

- Asymptomatic contacts of a confirmed case should seek out assessment and testing for COVID-19 at a COVID-19 Assessment Centre as soon as possible after identification of the case. If they test negative and the contact becomes symptomatic, they should be re-tested.
- If the test result is negative, asymptomatic contacts of a confirmed case must remain in self-isolation for 14 days from their last exposure to the case.

Symptomatic Individuals

- Symptomatic child care staff and/or children who develop symptoms compatible with COVID-19 should be sent for testing.
- SEC will notify York Region Public Health if there are two or more symptomatic individuals within 48 hours.
- York Region Public Health will declare a suspect respiratory outbreak.
- Additional guidance can be obtained by calling York Region Public Health at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 73588.

Laboratory-Confirmed Case of COVID-19

- All child care attendees and staff in the child care centre should be tested based on cohorts and with direction from York Region Public Health.
- For further questions about testing guidance, contact COVID-19 phone line at: 1-877-464-9675 ext. 77280 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. (seven days a week) 905-953-6478 (after hours).

PROCESS FOLLOWING SUSPECTED/CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASE IN THE PROGRAM

The public health unit will provide specific advice on what control measures should be implemented to prevent the potential spread and how to monitor for other possible infected staff members and children.

- Gloves, eye protection and masks may be instituted for staff to reduce contact with surfaces and/or during increased exposure times.
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- All areas visited by the ill persons will be closed. Outside doors and windows will be open and ventilating fans will be used to increase air circulation.
 - The program will be closed until cleaning / disinfecting has been completed.
 - We will wait 24 hours or as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection.
 - Enhanced Cleaning/Disinfecting will occur. Thorough and frequent cleaning of equipment and surfaces will be reinforced during an outbreak.
 - *Please refer to Division Policy 3.7 Outbreak Control and Communicable Disease Reporting's for outbreak mode cleaning/disinfecting.*
 - Handwashing frequency will be increased. Use of alcohol-based hand rub containing 60%-90% alcohol content will be implemented in areas where hand sinks are not readily available.
 - In areas where ill persons have visited or used, continue routine cleaning and disinfection as in this guidance.
 - If it has been more than 7 days since the person with suspected/confirmed COVID-19 visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary.

REPORTING OF SUSPECTED OR CONFIRMED CASES of COVID-19 *as per the recent regulatory amendments of [O. Reg 137/15](#)*

A Serious Occurrence is required to be submitted under the category **“suspected/confirmed case of COVID-19”** when:

One of the following individuals has a **confirmed** case of COVID-19 **OR** a **suspected** case involving the individual exhibiting **2 or more symptoms AND** the individual has been **tested**, or has indicated that they will be tested for COVID-19:

- I. a **child who receives child care** at a home child care premises or child care centre,
- II. a home child care **provider**,
- III. a person who is **ordinarily a resident of a home child care premises** (e.g. the home provider's child, the home provider's spouse etc.; for complete definition please refer to the Home Child Care Licensing Manual)
- IV. a person who is **regularly at a home child care premises** (eg. the home provider's friend who visits the premises once a week etc.; for complete definition please refer to the Home Child Care Licensing Manual),
- V. a **home child care visitor**,
- VI. a **parent of a child** mentioned in sub clause (i), or
- VII. a **staff** member at a child care centre
- VIII. a **student** at a home child care premises or child care centre,

Ø Where a serious occurrence has been reported for a suspected case (as defined above) and the individual's test results are positive, licensees must update the original serious occurrence report submitted to add this information.

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- Ø Where a serious occurrence has been reported under this category and that report remains open in CCLS, should a second individual develop a suspected or confirmed case, licensees must update the existing/open serious occurrence report to add this information; i.e. new serious occurrence is NOT required to be submitted where there is an existing report that remains open. However, where a second individual develops a suspected or confirmed case and there is not an open serious occurrence report under this category, the licensee must submit a NEW report.
- Ø Please note: should the entire child care, part of the child care (i.e. a program room) or a home child care provider's home close due to a "confirmed or suspected case" (as defined above), a separate serious occurrence for an unplanned disruption of service is NOT required to be submitted. Licensees must include this information in the Serious Occurrence report and/or update the serious occurrence report when the closure occurs.

A Serious Occurrence is required to be submitted under the category "**Unplanned Disruption of Service**", with the sub-type of "**Other emergency relocation or temporary closure**" when:

The entire child care, part of the child care (i.e. one or some of the program rooms) or a home child care provider's home closes for reasons that may be related to COVID-19 that do NOT include a confirmed or suspected case (as defined above). For example, where a program room closes due to an individual who is exhibiting only 1 symptom is being tested for COVID-19, a serious occurrence for an "unplanned disruption" would be reported.

Please note: A second serious occurrence under the category "suspected/confirmed case" is required to be reported should the incident develop into a "confirmed case" of COVID-19. The "unplanned disruption of service" serious occurrence will then be closed by the Program Advisor.

**Encouraging
Physical
Distancing**

Children and staff will remain in cohorts where possible and physical distancing between cohorts (including outside) will be maintained. Physical distancing will be encouraged where possible between children within the same cohort.

Procedure:

As advised by the Chief Medical Officer of Health, public health officials, and outlined throughout government communications; physical distancing is required to control the spread of COVID-19. Keeping a distance of 2 metres (6 feet) from others where possible.

• Physical distancing between children in a child care setting is difficult. Child care staff are required to maintain a welcoming and caring environment for children.

We will encourage more physical space between children by:

• Spreading children out into different areas at meal, dressing and transition times.

- Incorporating activities that are more individual.
 - Using markings on floors and walls to promote physical distancing.
 - Moving activities outside to allow for more space.
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- Limited chairs at tables.
 - Increase distance between sleeping equipment (e.g., cots and mats) and placing children head to toe if space is limited.
 - Steps will be taken to limit the number of adults in close contact with other adults (i.e. within six feet of another person).
 - Supervising smaller groups of children (i.e. adjusting ratios to include fewer children) and offering increased outdoor play are strategies that support physical distancing.
 - We will convert to virtual/video appointments for visitors and community supports.
 - In shared outdoor space, cohorts must maintain a distance of at least 2 metres between individuals.
 - Shared spaces and structures that cannot be cleaned and disinfected between cohorts will not be used.
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Scheduling Shifts (if applicable)

As per general SEC practice during COVID19, staff and participants will be registered in cohorts where possible and appropriate to limit exposure, and support business continuity.

Rescheduling Group Events and In-person Meetings

At this time all special activities like field trips, special guests that do presentations, and visitors will be suspended. We will also not be accepting volunteers. As the situation improves, and Public Health advises, community activities will be reconsidered. Children can continue to take neighborhood walks, as long as physical distancing is maintained from members of the public. We will convert to virtual/video appointments for visitors and community supports.

Only essential visitors will be entering our programs while we operate under the Pandemic Response Plan. Ministry staff and other public officials (e.g. fire marshal, public health inspectors) are permitted to enter and inspect a child care centre, at any reasonable time. These officials will be required to follow our screening and enhanced health and safety measures prior to entry.

Parent Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures

All staff, children, parents and visitors must be screened prior to entry. Parents are not permitted past the screening area. Staff must wear full PPE (gloves, mask, face shield and gown) for screening procedures when a distance of 2-metres cannot be maintained.

Procedure:

Arrivals

Arrival for Families/Children

- Only one adult may drop off a child at one time.
 - If possible, staggered entrance times will be used to support physical distancing.
 - Screening stations will be set up outside weather permitting.
 - Only staff, children and essential visitors (public health, fire, Ministry personnel etc.) are allowed past the screening area.
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- Others waiting to drop their child must remain outside (practicing physical distancing) or in their vehicles until the prior parent leaves the building and is at least 2 metres away from the entrance.
 - If in an enclosed space and physical distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained, parents/guardians and staff will use face coverings.
 - All entrances will have hand sanitizer and if required, signage/markings on the ground to direct families through the entry steps.
 - Staff will disinfect door handles (inside and outside) immediately after each parent leaves- in the event that the screening station is set up indoors.
 - Distancing markers may be set up outside in the event parents begin to line up.
 - Daily Health Screen Requirements will be followed.
 - Personal belongings (e.g., backpack, clothing, etc.) should be minimized. If brought, belongings should be labeled and kept in the child's cubby/ designated area.
 - We are asking that a change of clothing be brought in a sealed bag labelled with the child's name and it will be left at the centre.
 - Sunscreen and indoor shoes should be labelled and brought into the centre on the child's first day of attendance and remain at program.

Staff

- Wear clean clothes each day. To reduce the risk of transmission, we ask that you come directly to the program from your home (do not stop at a store)
- Upon arrival, complete Daily COVID-19 Screening.
- Wash hands immediately.
- Change into your shoes to be worn at the program only (kept at the centre).
- Store personal items in designated area (identified per site).
- Disinfect all personal belongings with hard surfaces and leave in a designated area (keys, phone etc.).
- Wash hands with soap and water prior to entering your program space.

Departures

Families/Children

- Parents/guardians should call the centre in advance of picking up their child so the staff can get the child ready for pick up.
- All children must wash their hands before leaving the program.
- Parents/guardians must remain outside the designated main entrance where their child will be brought outside to them by staff.
- Only one parent can approach the centre at one time, others waiting to pick up their children must remain outside or in their vehicles until the parent in the program, leaves the building and is at least 2 metres (6 feet) away from the entrance.
- If necessary (inclement weather), parents/guardians may enter the vestibule or main entrance one at a time to pick up their child. If this occurs, they must wear a mask and staff must sanitize door handles (inside and outside) after each parent/guardian leaves the centre.

Centre Staff

- Disinfect all personal belongings with hard surfaces to be taken home when they leave (keys, phone etc.).
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- If you use personal items during the day they must be disinfected after each use.
 - Wash hands with soap and water before leaving the centre.

The following steps are recommended for all participants in our programs to complete at the end of each day when they arrive home:

- Wash hands
- Change clothing
- Wash hands (or bathe)
- Wash clothing worn for the day
- Change into clean clothing

Nutrition

During this time of COVID -19 recovery children will continue to be provided with snacks however, we have changed our meal practices to ensure there is no self-serve or sharing of food at meal times and that;

- Utensils will be used to serve food.
- Meals will be served in individual portions to the children.
- There will be no items shared (i.e., serving spoon or salt shaker).

Staff will be responsible for serving all food and drinks to children and bowls of food will be kept out of the reach of children on a cart or counter.

Please do not send any food from home unless approved by the staff and labelled with your child's name.

Multi-use utensils will be cleaned and sanitized between uses as per requirements outlined in Food Premises Regulation 493/17.

- SEC will assign a staff for kitchen duties.
- Food handlers must be in good health and practice hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.
- Physical distancing will be maintained where possible in all areas including kitchen or serveries.
- Snacks, will be individually portioned.
- Washing hands (staff and children) before and after eating food.
- Educators will reinforce "no sharing" food or items between children.
- Limited chairs will be spaced out around the tables.
- Educators will sit and eat with the children while role modeling and engaging in conversations.

Diapers and Washrooms

Children's bathroom sink, counter and toilet surfaces will be cleaned initially and after the use of children.

- Staff will be responsible to clean and disinfect the toilet and sink prior to and after use.
 - All washrooms will be stocked with soap and paper towels.
 - Diaper changing areas will be cleaned before and after the use of each child.
 - For creams and lotions during diapering, never put hands directly into lotion or cream bottles, use a tissue or single-use gloves. Upon arrival at the centre, wipe the cream/lotion container with a disinfecting wipe.
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- Individual hygiene items such as diaper cream will be labelled and stored separately.

Sleep Routines

During rest time, we will increase the distance between cots and place children head to toe.

- Where possible cot placement will allow for a 2-metre distance between children.
- Each day after rest time cot sheets and blankets will be laundered.
- Cots will be disinfected daily after use.
- Cots will be stored in a manner where there is no contact with the sleeping surface of another cot. Laundered cot sheets and blankets will be replaced prior to the next rest period.
- Daily routine of sleep supervision will continue. (Policy 3.9)

Public Health Measures (Guidance on the Use of Masks, Personal Protective Equipment PPE) & Handwashing)

As required by the Ministry of Education and outlined in their Operational Guidance During COVID Outbreak, version 3 August 2020 the following

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Staff will be trained on the proper use of personal protective equipment provided. SEC will ensure an adequate supply of equipment and cleaning supplies to support ongoing operations.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is used in the program:

- When conducting screens of children/adults during drop off
- When taking care of a symptomatic child at the centre prior to pick up
- When a staff member becomes sick at work
- When coming in contact with blood or body fluids

Gloves and Gowns:

- Gloves and gowns should be compatible with the disinfectant products being used.
- Gloves and gowns should be removed carefully to avoid contamination of the wearer and the surrounding area. Be sure to clean hands after removing gloves.
- Gloves should be removed after cleaning a room or area occupied by ill persons. Clean hands immediately after gloves are removed.

Masks:

All adults in a child care setting (i.e., child care staff and students) are required to wear medical masks and eye protection (i.e., face shield) while inside the child care premises, including in hallways.

- All children in grades 4 and above are required to wear a non-medical or cloth mask while inside in the child care premises, including hallways.
 - All school-aged children are encouraged but not required to wear a mask while inside in the child care premises, including hallways (see <https://www.ontario.ca/page/face-coverings-and-face-masks> for information about the use of masks on the provincial COVID-19 website)
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or the [Public Health Ontario factsheet on non-medical masks](#)).

Parents/guardians are responsible for providing their school-aged child(ren) with a mask(s).

- The use of masks is not required outdoors for adults or children if physical distancing of a least 2-metres can be maintained between individuals.
- Masks are not recommended for children under the age of two (see <https://www.ontario.ca/page/face-coverings-and-face-masks> for information about the use of masks on the provincial COVID-19 website).
- Hands will be washed prior to donning (putting on) a mask and after doffing (removing) a mask.

Signage regarding personal protective practices will be posted throughout the centre.
