



CHILD CARE FACILITIES

Child Care Facilities

This applies to Licensed Child Care Facilities for community with minimal to moderate community transmission

GENERAL INFORMATION

At this time, there are no required mandates regarding child care closure; it is still your business decision to remain open, close, or re-open. To help you make this decision, please find a flowchart from Child Care Aware of America ([click here to view](#)), which indicates important decision points for you to consider as this situation continues to unfold. In addition, the CDC also has information to help guide your decision ([click here to view](#)).

CDC last updated their recommendations on May 21, 2020 ([click to view here](#)). Updates include the importance of additional screening procedures to decrease possible exposures to others. The Municipality emphasizes the following three mitigation strategies: do everything possible to support adequate physical distancing; always wear a mask; and practice hand washing hygiene for staff, children, and anyone in contact with the facility.

The Municipality is still requiring certain mitigation strategies to protect the health and safety of children, staff, and families. **Required items are in bold and italics.** Recommended implementation guidance is in regular text.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

- ***Keep groups static to avoid mixing of children.*** A facility may oversee multiple groups, as long as the groups are kept apart at all times and no mixing between groups occurs. Each group should consider separate eating areas, recreation space, and restroom facilities when possible. If not possible, complete a sanitization process between each group using a shared space.
 - To adjust to not mixing groups, consider breaking staff differently, increasing staff hours, and/or grouping based on ages and arrival and departure times for each child.
- ***Group size should be limited to no more than 20 children.*** A group includes the number of children in a distinct area or classroom, provided adequate spacing for distancing exists. It does not include staff.
- ***Staff may move between groups, though when doing so, must wash hands following CDC guidance before entering a new group, as well as disinfect hard items they carry (such as tablet, clipboard, pen, etc.) and/or disinfecting their space (such as activity supplies, equipment, high touch objects, etc.).***
- Activities which require projection of voice or physical exertion should only take place outdoors, with a minimum of ten feet between each person, with an understanding on limitations in physical distancing in young children.

ATTACHMENT E

- Explain health guidelines to all children and staff, in an age-appropriate manner.
- Reach out to thread for resources ([click here to view](#)).
- Have conversations with children about personal space.
- Make this a learning activity and consider developmentally appropriate ways to have children learn this new skill.
- Be open with families so they too know how to discuss these at home.
- In addition to requirements for physical distancing in Attachment V ([click here to view](#)), consider:
 - Using other rooms in your facility that would otherwise be closed.
 - Opening more windows as is possible.
 - Adjusting HVAC systems to allow for more fresh air to enter the program space.
 - Using physical reminders (like tape/cones and/or adding/removing furniture in appropriate locations) to:
 - control the flow of traffic.
 - indicate where to wait.
 - indicate where to sit (and where not to sit).
 - Minimizing times standing in lines.
 - Washing hands between all transitions, including diapering.
 - Eliminating sensory tubs and water tables.
 - Ensuring that children's naptime mats (or cribs) are spaced out as much as possible, ideally 6 feet apart. Placing children head-to-toe instead of face-to-face in order to further reduce the potential for viral spread.

STAFFING/OPERATIONS

- Cloth face coverings should be worn by staff and age-appropriate children.
 - Create alternatives for staff or children that may not be able to wear masks.
 - Remind staff and children not to touch their face.
 - Provide information to all staff on the proper use, removal, and washing of cloth coverings. The CDC has information regarding cloth face coverings which may be useful ([Click here to view](#)).
- **Facility staff must screen every child daily upon arrival and conduct a temperature check on site. If a touchless thermometer is not available, please follow CDC guidance for taking temperatures safely with non-touchless thermometer at site ([Click here to view](#)).**
- **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED*** Assign a staff member responsibility for continually checking CDC, state, and municipal websites for most up-to-date guidance and mandates.

COVID-19 MITIGATION PLAN

All facilities must write, share with parents, train staff on, and maintain hard copies at site of COVID-19 Mitigation Plans. If you have multiple licensed sites, hard copies are required at each location.

ATTACHMENT E

Plans **must** include the following areas written in ***bold and italics***. Recommended topic areas are in regular text.

GENERAL

- Admittance criteria, if any:
 - Medical conditions that children or family members may have that disqualifies their attendance at the facility until after the emergency orders have been lifted.
 - Older adults and those with serious underlying medical conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, or lung disease are at greater risk of getting very sick from this virus ([click here to view](#)).
 - Employment status and/or parent's employer.
 - Child's at-risk status.
- **Communication measures:**
 - Signage at the door.
 - **Expectations of:**
 - ***Staff and families reporting known exposures to COVID-19 positive individuals to facility.***
 - ***Facility reporting to families known exposures to COVID-19 positive individuals, while respecting privacy of individual.***
- Limits to visitors, deliveries, and/or others not registered in program.
- Meal prep, service, and clean-up procedures.

OPERATIONS

- ***Sign-In and Sign-Out procedures.***
- ***Screening protocol for staff and children:***
 - ***Timeline/indicators to return if screened out*** ([click to view here](#)).
 - ***Make sure to include your requirements around travel.***
- ***Handwashing / Hand Sanitizing processes, with oversight procedures for staff, families, and children throughout the day.***
- ***How children are grouped, kept in static groups, and maintain group size less than 20.***
- Daily Schedule & Physical Distancing procedures in each time block of the day, at a minimum including:
 - Activities (inside/outside & high energy/low energy).
 - Free and rest times.
 - Meal times.
 - Safety on walking field trips.
- ***Extra mitigation strategies if it is necessary to share staff and/or spaces between groups.***
- ***Cleaning/Sanitizing/Disinfecting procedures, including ventilation safety:***
 - ***Hourly, daily, weekly processes.***
 - ***Extra mitigation strategies for shared spaces, including program areas, eating spaces, restrooms, hand-washing stations.***

ATTACHMENT E

- Face covering expectations (who and in what conditions must wear cloth masks).

OCCURRENCE OF COVID-19 IN THE WORKPLACE

- Communication to staff and family, including timelines from notice to announcement.
- ***Plan for staff and children to return to program after testing positive, or how to discontinue home isolation*** ([click to view here](#)).
 - ***Plan for staff and children to return to program after testing positive and being cleared by public health to discontinue isolation.***
 - ***Public Health Nurses also may require facilities to collect documentation of negative test results if there was a known exposure.***
- Closure plans and on what timeframe (as anticipated, though may end up on a case-by-case basis).
- CDC protocols, for *Cleaning and Disinfection* ([click to view here](#)).

OTHER RECOMMENDED SAFETY MEASURES

- Educate staff, families, and children about signs and symptoms of COVID-19 ([click to view here](#)) as well as behaviors that encourage (1) risk reduction behaviors and (2) reducing the stigma surrounding this disease ([click to view here](#)).
 - Your parents and your staff should know that they should report any positive cases and/or exposure to other positive cases to you immediately.
 - You should then have a plan to share that information with other parents and the Health Department, namely your Licensing Specialist.
- Facilities should encourage families to consider alternative child care opportunities, if possible.
 - If the parents have the ability to stay home with their children, they should.
 - Discuss other options for care in their friend and family support network.
- Increase handwashing procedures throughout the day, bookending most activities (i.e. washing hands before and after all activities). Only use hand sanitizer if soap and water is not available, and if using hand sanitizer, increase supervision while this product is in use.
 - Hand hygiene stations should be set up at the entrance of the facility and within each room so that children can regularly clean their hands in general in addition to before they enter and exit the room/facility.

RESOURCES / MISCELLANEOUS

- Food insecurity may be an issue for families who never experienced it prior to this pandemic. There are several avenues for families who are experiencing financial burdens, including ways to obtain food ([click here to view](#)).
- US Foods (previously Food Services of America) may be an option for ordering milk and other foods ([click here to view](#)).
- Encourage families to come up with their own plan of care which includes finding alternate care in the event your facility closes as well as in case someone in their home becomes sick and or needs to quarantine/isolate ([click to view here](#)).

ATTACHMENT E

- There are a multitude of resources available at your fingertips. We encourage you to access the websites listed below:
 - Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) ([click here to view](#)).
 - MOA Emergency Operations Center (EOC).
 - For COVID-19 questions beyond Child Care Licensing, please feel free to directly ask the EOC: 343-4019 or covid-19@anchorageak.gov.
 - State of Alaska (SOA) ([click here to view](#)).
 - SOA Health Mandates ([click here to view](#)).
 - SOA CCPO FAQ's ([click here to view](#)).
 - thread ([click here to view](#)).
 - Child Care Aware of America ([click here to view](#)).
 - Center for Disease Control (CDC) ([click here to view](#)).
 - Interim Guidance for Schools and Child Care Settings ([click here to view](#)).
 - AK Small Business Development Center ([click here to view](#)).
 - U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) ([click here to view](#)).
 - Economic Injury Disaster Loan Emergency Advance ([click here to view](#)).<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html>
 - Information regarding the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) act, including how it relates to Child Care ([click here to view](#)).
 - Small Business Administration (SBA) loans through what is being called the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) ([click here to view](#)).
 - Information to aid in understanding new unemployment benefits Included in the CARES Act ([click here to view](#)).
 - To subscribe to Nixle for COVID-19 updates, text:
 - ANCHEALTH to 888-777 (from Health Department).
 - ANCHORAGEOEM to 888-777 (for COVID-19 emergencies beyond the Health Department).
 - Resources for Children and Families from Alaska DHSS ([click here to view](#)).
 - Food Bank of Alaska ([click here to view](#)).
 - Food pantries in Anchorage ([click here to view](#)).
 - Sign up for SOA health alerts and press releases ([click here to view](#)).