

**Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 in Early Care and Education/ Child Care Programs**

A Mitigation Checklist for Providers and Caregivers

Mitigation efforts refer to methods that make it harder for COVID-19 to spread. This checklist, which should be used along with the [Center for Disease Control \(CDC\) updated Guidance for Operating Early Care and Education/Child Care Programs](#), is designed to help your Early Care and Education (ECE) and child care programs reduce the spread of COVID-19 among children, staff, direct service providers, and families. All types of ECE and child care programs (child care centers, home-based and family child care, Head Start, pre-kindergarten, after-school, and summer programs) can use this checklist, which is divided into sections based on different prevention strategies. For more information and resources, please visit the links found at the end of each section.

*Directions: This checklist can be completed by any staff person providing child care but is best used if completed by the person(s) with decision-making authority, such as an administrator or director. If you are not the director or other person(s) in charge, ask if they will complete this checklist with you so your staff/team can decide together what potential changes need to be made. Please note that this checklist does not provide a score but serves as a self-evaluation tool. Upon completion, the program administrator or director should contact the appropriate child care consultant or CCR&R to strengthen COVID-19 practices. Child Care Aware of America is also offering technical assistance (TA) and a suite of relevant resources. To request TA, please [click here](#).*

Pre-Checklist Screening:

Program Information	
Date of Completion:	
Completed By:	
Person(s) in Charge (Administrator/Director): Staff Person (Support Staff or Classroom Lead):	
Program Name:	
Program County, State:	
Type of child care Program:	a. Home-based or family child care b. Child care center c. Head-Start/Early Head-Start d. Other: _____
Ages of Children Served: (Select all that apply)	a. Less than 1 year of age b. From age 1 up to age 2 c. From age 2 up to age 4 d. From age 4 up to age 5 e. School-aged children
Total number of <b>enrolled</b> children: Center/Building <b>capacity</b> :	

Section 2: Screening, Illness, and Communicating Symptoms & Cases

Average number of <b>attending</b> children: <i>(Calculate average over a 4-week period)</i>	
Total number of <b>available</b> classrooms/child-occupied spaces:  Total number of <b>in-use</b> classrooms/child-occupied spaces:  Service capacity of your child care facility: <i>(Capacity facility is licensed for)</i>	
<b>Staff Information</b>	
Total Number of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full-Time Staff:</li> <li>• Part-Time Staff:</li> <li>• Administrative/Office Staff:</li> <li>• Other/Support Staff:</li> </ul>	FT: _____ PT: _____ A/O: _____ Other: _____
Do staff travel between programs/sister-programs or buildings? <i>(If Yes, please describe how often)</i>	
<b>Program Points of Contact (POC)</b> <i>For child care homes and similar smaller ECE spaces, please list as most appropriate.</i>	
COVID-19 Coordinator	Name: _____
	Email: _____
	Phone Number: _____
Facility Maintenance	Name: _____
	Email: _____
	Phone Number: _____
Local Public Health Agency OR <i>child care Consultant</i>	Name: _____
	Email: _____
	Phone Number: _____
State Public Health Agency ( <i>Regional Specialist</i> )	Name: _____
	Email: _____
	Phone Number: _____
<b>Community Information</b>	
Are you familiar with using local/state COVID-19 websites to find regularly updated information?	a. Yes b. No
Does your ECE program direct families and staff to a COVID-19 testing facility? <i>(If yes, please provide facility information)</i>	
<b>Additional Information:</b>	

**Section 2: Screening, Illness, and Communicating Symptoms & Cases**

- a. Has it been shared in writing when children and/or staff should not attend the program if they are sick with COVID-19 or similar symptoms, or if they have recently been in close contact with someone with COVID-19, AND how long they should remain isolated or quarantined?

Yes                      No                      Unsure

- b. Has it been shared in writing when children and/or staff who have been unable to attend the program due to COVID-19 symptoms, infection, or exposure are allowed to return?

Yes                      No                      Unsure

- c. Do you conduct daily health screenings for children, staff, family members, and other visitors upon entry into the building?

Yes                      No                      Unsure

- d. If you *do not* conduct daily health screenings, do family members, staff, and other visitors self-monitor and report symptoms and/or exposure to COVID-19?

Yes                      No                      Unsure

- e. Does the program have an isolation area or room that children/students, or staff can use if they begin to have COVID-19 (or other illness?) symptoms while in care?

Yes                      No                      Unsure

- f. If there is an isolation room for children/students, is there a written plan for monitoring the children in this area/room?

Yes                      No                      Unsure

- g. Does the person(s) in charge know who and how to contact local health officials immediately if there is a case of COVID-19 in your program?

Yes                      No                      Unsure

- h. Does the program have a plan for notifying positive cases and close contacts to ensure that those who are infected or have potentially been exposed know what actions they should take to remain safe and reduce transmission?

Yes                      No                      Unsure

## Section 2: Screening, Illness, and Communicating Symptoms & Cases

### Resources & Guidance:

1. Refer to the [CDC's screening flowchart](#) to help you determine when individuals should return.
2. [Daily health screening](#) guidance from National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education.
3. [CDC's Isolation Quick Guide](#)
4. Understanding what [symptoms](#) to look for and using this [CDC's quick guide](#) on what to do when there is a child showing symptoms of COVID-19.
5. [COVID-19 vs. the flu chart](#) from Child Care Aware of America.
6. Using digital tools for [Contact Tracing](#)

### Appendix: Key Terms and Definitions

**Emergency Operations Plan (EOC)** – A plan that is developed in collaboration with regulatory agencies and state/local public health departments to describe prevention strategies for public health emergencies such as Covid-19. This plan should:

- describe steps to take when a child or staff member has been exposed to someone with Covid-19, has symptoms of Covid-19, or tests positive Covid-19.
- document policy or protocol differences for people who are fully vaccinated for COVID-19 versus those who are not fully vaccinated.
- consider the range of needs among staff, children, and families, including children’s developmental needs, children with disabilities, children with healthcare needs, and children experiencing homelessness.

**Close contact** – Any level of contact of less than six (6) feet for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.

**EPA Approved Sanitizer** – Alcohol-based sanitizer that contains at least 60% ethanol.

**Child Care Health Consultant** – An official of the local public health department that works with child care centers and family care homes to assess, plan, implement, and evaluate strategies to achieve high quality, safe, and healthy child care environments by focusing on topics that include, childhood immunizations, childhood nutrition, risk reduction, emergency preparedness, and dental health.

**Regional Child Care Health Specialist** – An official of the state health department that serves as the primary area (region-specific) child care health consultant.

**Cohort** – Keeping people together in a small group and having each group stay together throughout an entire day. This strategy is often used to avoid mixing different groups to limit the spread of COVID-19 and potentially isolation or quarantine resulting from a confirmed or suspected case.