

	PROGRAM POLICIES	CHILDREN/STAFF WHO BECOME ILL DURING CARE EXCLUSION COVID-19	SUBJECT	COVID-19
	MEDICAL AND HEALTH REQUIREMENTS		DATE	January 2022
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POLICY

To ensure the health and well-being of children and staff within the early learning and child care setting, children and staff who become ill while attending the program will immediately be isolated and required to leave the program. Staff must consistently assess their health and the health of children in care.

PROCEDURES

When to exclude

Communicable Diseases

If COVID-19 or any other infectious disease is suspected, the parent should be contacted immediately, and the child must be isolated from the other children and supervised until the parent arrives. Staff should ensure that the child is as comfortable as possible. Health department contact information related to inquiries about sick children or staff should be sent to EHL@durham.ca or call the Helpline at 905-668-2020.

Parents should be provided with guidance as to next steps and when their child may return to care as per the guidance in *COVID-19 Screening Tool for Children, Staff and Visitors in Durham Region Licensed Child Care*. Parents should also follow guidance in this document as to when their child may return to care. Suspected cases of COVID-19 do not require Serious Occurrence reporting. Any child who develops symptoms of ill health including one or more symptoms of ill health related to COVID19 must leave the child care program. Symptoms should not be chronic or related to other known causes or conditions.

The symptoms most commonly associated with COVID-19 in children include:

Disclaimer: This document is a sample template that has been prepared to assist operators in understanding the minimum requirement for Health and Safety policies and practices related to offering child care services in the Region of Durham. The information in this sample template has been reviewed by the Health Department, as the Medical Officer of Health. It is the responsibility of the operator to ensure that the information included in this document is appropriately modified to reflect the individual circumstances and needs of each child care centre it operates.

Please be advised that this document does not constitute legal advice and should not be relied on as such. The information provided in this document does not impact the Ministry’s authority to enforce the CCEYA and its regulations or the Local Medical Officer of Health’s authority to enforce Health related regulations. Health Department staff will continue to enforce legislation, regulations and Health department requirements based on the facts as they may find them at the time of any inspection or investigation. It is the responsibility of the operator to ensure compliance with all applicable legislation and guidance documents. If the operator requires assistance with respect to the interpretation of the legislation, guidance documents and their application, the operator may wish to consult legal counsel.

- Fever and/or chills (temperature of 37.8°C/100°F or greater)
- Cough or barking cough (continuous, more than usual, making a whistling noise when breathing, not related to asthma, post-infectious reactive airways, or other known causes or conditions the child already has)
- Shortness of breath (out of breath, unable to breathe deeply, not related to other known causes or conditions the child already has)
- Decrease of loss of smell or taste (not related to seasonal allergies, neurological disorder, or other known causes or conditions the child already has)

The symptoms less commonly associated with COVID-19 in children include:

- Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea (not related to irritable bowel syndrome, anxiety, menstrual cramps, or other known causes or conditions the child already has)
- Sore Throat: Painful or difficulty swallowing (not related to post-nasal drip, acid reflux, or other known causes or conditions you already have).
- Runny or stuffy/congested nose (not related to seasonal allergies, being outside in cold weather, or other known causes or conditions you already have).
- Headache: New, unusual, long-lasting (not related to getting a COVID-19 vaccine and/or flu shot in the last 48 hours, tension-type headaches, chronic migraines, or other known causes or conditions you already have).

If the child has any symptoms (including fever, cough, difficulty breathing, vomiting, or diarrhea), the child must be isolated immediately from the other children in a separate room, if available, and supervised at all times.

The parent must be notified to arrange for pick-up of the child. Parents should be asked to ensure that the child is picked up within one hour of the time of the call. If the parent is not reached an emergency contact person will be contacted to pick up the child within the hour.

Every effort must be made to keep the child comfortable until someone arrives to take him or her home.

Staff must document the situation in the Daily Communication Log and notify the supervisor or designate immediately to ensure that this information is managed and recorded in the child's file on the Symptoms of Ill Health.

How to exclude

- Supervise the child in a designated room with a hand washing sink or hand sanitizer available. If a separate room is not available, the ill person should be kept at a minimum two metres distance from others.
- Notify parents/caregivers of the sick child for pick up.
- Children older than two years of age should wear a medical mask, if tolerated, and be provided with tissues and reminded of hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette (e.g., sneezing in sleeve) and proper disposal of tissues.
- Only one staff should be in the designated room and attempt physical distancing of two metres. Staff should wear a medical or N95 mask, goggles or face shield, gown, and gloves. In addition, staff should perform hand hygiene, avoid contact

with child's respiratory secretions and attempt to not touch their face with unwashed hands.

- Increase ventilation in the designated exclusion room, if possible (e.g., open windows).
- All items used by the ill child should be cleaned and disinfected. Any items that cannot be cleaned (e.g., books, cardboard puzzles) should be removed and stored in a sealed container for seven days.
- The isolation room or area is to be cleaned and disinfected immediately after the child has been sent home.
- If the child care program is in a shared setting (e.g., school) follow Public Health direction for notification of others using the space.

Returning from exclusion due to illness

- Children or staff can return to the program based on the guidance provided by Public Health in the *COVID-19 Screening Tool for Children, Staff, and Visitors in Durham Region Licensed Child Care*.

Staff Illness

Any staff person who suspects that they have an infectious disease should follow common sense precautions and should not attend the child care program if they are not well, particularly if their symptoms include any outlined in the COVID-19 screening. Staff must pass the COVID-19 daily screen to work at the site.

Staff members who begin to experience mild headache, fatigue, muscle aches and/or joint pain (with no other COVID-19 symptoms) and has received their COVID-19 vaccination or flu shot within the past 48 hours may be experiencing post-vaccine symptoms and would not be required to leave the centre. If a staff member is still experiencing fatigue, or muscle aches after the 48-hour timeframe, they would be required to isolate themselves immediately until they are able to leave.

If a staff member becomes ill while at the centre they should, if possible, isolate themselves immediately until they are able to leave.

A staff person who presents with symptoms of ill health must notify their supervisor and refer to the *COVID-19 Screening Tool for Children, Staff and Visitors in Durham Region Licensed Child Care* and follow instructions which may include seeking medical advice. Staff will follow the direction of Public Health if necessary. A staff member's illness that is determined to be work-related requires the completion of the appropriate internal documentation required by the centre.