Public Health Guidance for Childcare Programs

Conduct Risk Assessment
Establish critical protective guidelines. Consider the following questions:

- Are there locations where employees routinely congregate?
- Are tools and equipment frequently shared by multiple employees?
- Does customer flow allow for social distancing measures?
- Where are areas in your business that would not allow customers and staff to properly distance?
- Who are your high risk employees?

- Is your business actively engaged in activities that promote disease transmission?
- Does your business have existing cleaning and disinfecting procedures?
- How quickly can you communicate with employees?
- Are communication resources needed in multiple languages?

Physical Distancing
Establish policies and procedures for social distancing. Consider the following:

- Child care classes should include the same group each day, and the same providers should remain with the same group each day. If program remains open, consider creating a separate classroom or group for the children of essential workers and other first responders. If your program is unable to create a separate classroom, consider serving only the children of essential/first responder workers.
- Consider staggering arrival and drop off times; offer curbside assistance where providers come outside the facility to pick up children as they arrive.

- Cancel or postpone special events such a performances, festivals, holiday events, etc.
- Limit the mixing of children, such as staggering playground times and keeping groups separate for special activities such as art, music, and exercising.
- At nap time, ensure that children's nap time mats (or cribs) are spaced out as much as possible, ideally six feet. Consider placing children head to toe to further reduce the potential for viral spread.

Engineering & Environmental Controls
Improve engineering controls and perform routine environmental cleaning.
Consider the following:

- Increase ventilation rates and percentage of outdoor air that circulates into the system.
- Support respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene for employees and children:
  - Provide tissues, no-touch disposal receptacles, and soap and water in the center (if not readily available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol). Ensure adequate supplies are maintained and place hand sanitizers in multiple locations.
  - Place posters that encourage hand hygiene to help stop the spread of COVID-19 at the entrance to your workplace and in other areas where they are likely to be seen.
  - Discourage handshaking – encourage the use of other non-contact methods of greeting.
  - Direct employees to visit CDC website for information on coughing and sneezing etiquette and handwashing.

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Engineering & Environmental Controls (continued)
Improve engineering controls and perform routine environmental cleaning.

Consider the following:

- Perform routine environmental cleaning and disinfection.
  - Routinely disinfect all frequently touched surfaces at least daily, especially toys and games; Provide disinfectant wipes to wipe down keyboards, electronics, remote controls, etc.
  - For disinfection, most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products.
- Plan to have an isolation room or area that can be used to isolate a sick child before the parent can arrive to take them home.
- Install physical barriers (plexiglass or plastic window) in locations where parent may sign children in/out and where health monitoring/temperature checks occur.
- Perform enhanced disinfection after suspected cases of COVID-19 have been in the center. Close off areas used by the sick person, open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation, and wait up to 24 hours or as long as possible before cleaning to allow for respiratory droplets settle before cleaning and disinfecting.

Administrative Controls
Establish administrative controls while employees and visitors are onsite.

Consider the following:

- Identify a workplace coordinator who will be responsible for COVID-19 issues and their impact at the center.
  - Implement daily health and temperature screenings for employee and children upon arrival to the center.
  - Encourage parents to be on the alert for signs of illness in their children and to keep them home when they are sick.
  - Provide education and training on new processes, COVID-19, and the use of PPE while in the building.
- Review Human Resource policies to make sure that policies and practices are consistent with both public health recommendations and existing state and federal workplace laws.
  - Establish procedures to ensure children and staff who come to the center sick or become sick while at the center are sent home as soon as possible.
  - Implement flexible sick leave and supportive policies and practices.
  - Ensure that sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance and provide employee training on new policies. If sick leave is not a benefit, it is recommended that employers draft a non-punitive emergency sick leave policy.
  - Maintain flexible policies that permit employees to stay home to care for a sick family member or take care of children due to school/daycare closures.
  - Employers should not require a positive COVID-19 test result or a healthcare provider's note for employees who are sick to validate their illness, qualify for sick leave, or to return to work.
  - Connect employees to Employee Assistance Program (EAP) resources and community resources as needed. Employees may need additional social, behavioral, and other services for mental health support.

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Administrative Controls (continued)
Establish administrative controls while employees and visitors are onsite.

Consider the following:

- Review Human Resource policies to make sure that policies and practices are consistent with both public health recommendations and existing state and federal workplace laws (continued).
  - Consider temporarily assigning employees at high risk for virus to duties that do not involve close contact with the public.
  - Communicate to staff the importance of being vigilant for symptoms and staying in touch with facility management if or when they start to feel sick.
- Assess essential functions and the reliance that the community has on your services/products.
  - Talk with companies that provide your business with contract or temporary employees about the importance of sick employees staying home and encourage them to develop non-punitive leave policies.
  - Determine how you will operate if absenteeism spikes from increases in sick employees, those who stay home to care for sick family members, and those who must stay home to watch their children. Plan to monitor and respond to absenteeism in the workplace. Implement plans to continue your essential business functions. Cross-train employees to perform essential functions so the workplace can operate even if key employees are absent.
- Maintain an adequate ratio of staff to children to ensure safety.
- Communicate to parents the importance of keeping children home when they are sick. Sick staff members and children should not return to facility until they have met the criteria to discontinue home isolation.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
Require the appropriate type of PPE for employees and customers.

Consider the following:

- Cloth face coverings should be worn at all times; cloth face coverings should not be put on babies and children under the age of 2 because of the dangers of suffocation.
- Gloves should be worn when cleaning and disinfecting as well as during meal prep/serving.

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