



Parent Considerations for Sending Children to Child Care & Preschool During COVID-19

Updated 9/12/2020

This health and safety checklist offers information to help Denver County parents make decisions about whether to place their children in child care or preschool during the COVID-19 pandemic. These programs are decreasing the likelihood of spreading the virus in their centers by incorporating the safety practices described below.

COVID-19 Safety Practices and Considerations

Family/Child Health

NOTE: * indicates a rule, + indicates guidance

- Assess [virus exposure risk based on community's outbreak level](#)+
- Assess risk to child/household resident with [underlying health condition risk](#) (immunocompromised, moderate-severe asthma, heart condition, age over 65, diabetes, etc.)+
- Children with special needs or who have a health condition(s) & attending the center have an updated individualized health plan approved by a Child Care Health Consultant (CCHC)*
 - Staff trained on any procedures & medication administration*
 - Medication is current with explicit instructions on administration with log maintained*
 - Medications are safely stored*

Child Care Center/Family Home

- Current trusting relationship with center/home
- OR**
- Positive research/recommendations regarding center/home
- Clear & open communication overall
- Clear & open communication about practices and procedures during pandemic

[Classroom Staffing & Group/Class](#)

- Same teacher(s) is working with a stable group of children for the day*
- A consistent staff member is assigned to give classroom staff breaks each day*
- Groups/classes are not combined at any time during the day*
- Only staff and children can enter center/home/school*
- Only designated staff assigned to room can enter classroom*
- Daily schedules altered to keep exposure low & adherence to rules and guidelines maintained*
 - Lunch & snacks in the classroom/outdoors*
 - Outdoor gross motor play* & Indoor gross motor movement
 - Room arrangement, play & planned learning promote physical distancing between children/staff as much as possible*+
 - No guests allowed in classrooms or class field trips*
 - Toys and materials easily disinfected*

[Classroom Health & Safety](#)

- In room [access to handwashing sinks with soap and paper towels](#)*
- Hand washing hygiene routinely practiced* for children & staff

- [Common surfaces disinfected routinely](#) & when contaminated by staff or children (door knobs, counters, tables, chairs, sinks, etc.) *
- Staff* and children age [3 and older wear masks*](#)
 - [Face coverings are never worn during naps*](#)
- [Hard to clean toys/materials](#) are not used in the program*
- Toys from home are not allowed*
- Toys are cleaned & disinfected daily or upon body fluid contamination*
- Family-style meals discontinued*
- [Nap mats/cribs spaced 6 ft apart](#) with alternating head/feet placement of children*
- Bedding is: not shared, washed weekly, and dried using high heat by either the center or parent*
- No multi-child sensory activities: sand, water, clay, etc.*
 - Can provide individual sensory activities (i.e. disposable plates or bowls or small containers that are disinfected after each use) +
- 6-foot distance between children in the classroom and play area/playground is maintained as much as possible*
 - Strategies used which might include room arrangement, types of toys/activities, intentional teacher/child interactions*
- Center is thoroughly cleaned and disinfected daily after children leave*

[Drop-off & Pick-up of Children*](#)

- Children dropped off curbside*+
OR
- Outdoor/indoor drop off stations*+:
 - 6 foot spacing marked on floor/sidewalk*
 - No more than 10 people in common area*
 - Parents must wear face masks
 - Staggered drop off and pick up times if needed to minimize larger than 10 group gathering
 - Alternate sign in/sign out procedure includes:
 - No sharing pens/clipboards
 - Keypads are sanitized between use and/or parent uses own device to access attendance system
- [Child health check](#)
 - Station located indoors/outdoors*
 - Staff wear face mask & gloves*
 - Temperature check*
 - No touch thermometer or forehead touch that is cleaned with alcohol between each use or with disposable cover*
 - Children with temperature <100.4° or center determined temperature benchmark must return home*
 - [Symptom check](#) (cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, fever, contact with virus exposed person, other illness related symptoms) *
- OR**
- Parent at home health check and reported to staff that includes*

- Children with temperature <100.4° or center determined temperature benchmark must stay home*
- [Symptom check](#) (cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, fever, contact with virus exposed person, other illness related symptoms) *

[Staff Health & Safety Practices](#)

- [Beginning of shift health screen for all staff](#): symptomatic staff sent home*
- Staff wear a mask*
- Staff use gloves at appropriate times*
- Hand washing hygiene routinely practiced*
- Changes of clothing/smocks if exposed to body fluids+
- Staff trained on COVID-19 center protocols and procedures*

During the Day Illness Symptoms: Staff & Children

- [Designated space for isolating sick child](#)(ren) until parents can pick them up*
- Ill child(ren) monitored by staff member wearing mask and gloves*
- Isolation area disinfected after ill staff/child(ren) leave*
- Staff leave immediately or isolate in building until transportation is available*

**[COVID-19 Staff & Child Exposure/](#)
Diagnosis**

- [Plan shared about center procedure and protocols which include](#)+:
 - Closure of center or designated part of the center if containable for a minimum of 24 hours for deep cleaning and disinfecting*
 - Notification of staff and children of the exposure (no names may be shared as per HIPPA) *
 - Health Department notification* (call 211)
 - [Isolation requirements in place for children and staff](#)*
 - Back to center/home requirements for exposed/diagnosed staff & children*

Additional Information and Resources

Liability waivers: Child care programs may request that families sign a liability waiver that exempts the program from legal recourse if they follow guidelines that reduce the likelihood of exposure to COVID 19. Additionally, some programs may require families to sign a contract that indicates families will abide by [Safer at Home](#) practices and/or specify when a child(ren) can come back to care after travel/vacation.

Rates and schedules: Child care rates and schedules may change because of COVID. Families who can no longer afford child care may qualify for assistance. Please reach out to your child care program for more information.

Resources: Please click on the links below to learn more about governmental agencies’ responses to the pandemic and available child care resources.

- [CDPHE Safer at Home: Child Care Facilities](#)
- [A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS DURING COVID-19, Colorado Office of Early Childhood](#)
- [Colorado Department of Human Services \(CDHS\) Child Care Rules](#)
- [Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment \(CDPHE\)](#)
- [Colorado Shines Child Care Referral resource for families searching for care](#)
- [Denver Department of Public Health and Environment \(DDPHE\)](#)