



Health & Safety Procedures and Protocols for Early Childhood Programs

This guide is a working document and may be revised based on changes in state-level and/or local public health mandates and guidance.

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FACE COVERINGS- ADULTS & STUDENTS

In accordance with guidance from California Department of Public Health masks are no longer required to be worn by adults or children within school or childcare settings. While they are no longer required, masks will continue to be **recommended** for staff and students for indoor settings.

Guidance may change to adapt to the changes that arise with COVID-19 activity and potential new variants. Please weigh your own risks and the risks of your loved ones as you make decisions about your health. Staff can continue to choose to wear masks around others whether it's required or not for added protection and people should respect each other's choices around their health.

VIRTUAL OR IN-PERSON MEETINGS

- In person meetings should be prioritized whenever possible- this includes IEP meetings, integrated therapy meetings, site meetings, etc. Teams can continue to discuss which meetings are essential for in-person collaboration. Parent requests for virtual meetings should be accommodated. Masks continue to be recommended, but not required, for in-person meetings.

PERSONAL HYGIENE

- All children and staff must wash their hands upon entering the facility and then at regular intervals
- Use hand sanitizer (at least 60% or more alcohol) at regular intervals when hand washing is not available. *Hand sanitizer is **not** a substitute for proper handwashing.*
 - Children will be supervised when using hand sanitizer and it should be dispensed by an adult.
 - Do not use hand sanitizer with children under 2 years of age.
- Teach, model, practice and encourage covering your cough & sneeze.
- Encourage children to keep hands away from their face, enforce hand washing/sanitizing when children's hands come in contact with their face.

SYMPTOM SELF-ASSESSMENT

NCOE requires all employees to complete a self-assessment of symptoms prior to coming into work, to ensure no one comes into work with symptoms. You will be asked, when checking in each day, to certify that you:

- are not experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 including cough, runny nose/congestion, fever, chills, headache, loss of taste or smell, or sore throat.

DO NOT REPORT TO WORK IF YOU ARE FEELING SICK. IT IS BETTER TO PLAY IT SAFE.

CHILDREN OR STAFF WHO DEVELOP COVID SYMPTOMS DURING THE DAY

- If a child or staff member becomes ill during the day with any of the following symptoms, isolate them, and notify their family to pick them up right away. Symptoms may include:
 - Fever (100.4°F/37°C or higher)
 - Dry cough
 - Shortness of breath
 - Chills or muscle pain
 - Sore throat, and/or new loss of taste or smell
- You may apply a mask to staff and children over two years old if tolerated. Always supervise ill children.
- Ensure gown/gloves/high quality masks are worn by the adult caring for the child. If you are caring for a symptomatic child, **please wear a tight-fitting high-quality mask (i.e. KN95)**, available on site if needed.
- Designate a place in the classroom or on campus as an isolation zone for children/staff who are suspected to be ill.
- Clean & disinfect isolation zone immediately once a child is picked up by the parent.

- Report concerns to your supervisor and school nurse as soon as possible.

RETURNING TO WORK OR SCHOOL AFTER SUSPECTED OR CONFIRMED ILLNESS

EXPERIENCING COVID SYMPTOMS

Staff & Students

In order to return to work or school:

- 1) You have a negative COVID test (PCR or Rapid Antigen Accepted) and 24 hours have passed since symptoms resolved **OR**
- 2) If you do not take a test, you may return when:
 - 10 days have passed
 - You are fever free for at least 24 hours
 - Other symptoms have begun to resolve

Staff Only

- Once you self- assess off work due to COVID concerns, you must follow one of the options above in order to return to work
- You will need to inform your supervisor of your test results prior to returning to work if you do take a COVID test.
- During time away from work, it may be possible for you to work from home depending on your health and your job description. **All work from home arrangements must be approved by your supervisor before you can work from home.**
- If you are not approved to work from home, or you are too ill to work from home, you will need to put your absence in ReadySub utilizing one of your leave options.

RECEIVING A POSITIVE COVID DIAGNOSIS

The person diagnosed with COVID-19 must follow the isolation guidance listed below. The employee or student must stay home until they have met the requirements to return to work or school.

For staff only: The employee will be asked who they have had contact with at work within the last 48 hours prior to experiencing symptoms. **Per the CDC, contact for this purpose includes contact within 6 feet for 15 minutes or more, anywhere in the workplace within 48 hours of when the diagnosed individual first experienced symptoms.** The County health department may be informed of a confirmed case and guidance on notification and closure will be sought. While maintaining confidentiality, those who came in contact with sick person will be notified and should follow the protocol for those exposed to someone with COVID-19.

When may an employee or student return to school or work after a positive COVID-19 diagnosis or close contact with a confirmed COVID case?

If you test positive for COVID-19 (ISOLATION):

Persons Who Test Positive for COVID-19 (Isolation)	Recommended Action
<p>Everyone, regardless of vaccination status, previous infection or lack of symptoms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay home (PDF) for at least 5 days. • Isolation can end after day 5 if symptoms are not present or are resolving and a diagnostic specimen* collected on day 5 or later tests negative. • If unable to test or choosing not to test, and symptoms are not present or are resolving, isolation can end after day 10. • If fever is present, isolation should be continued until fever resolves. • If symptoms, other than fever, are not resolving continue to isolate until symptoms are resolving or until after day 10. • If staff return before day 10, they are required to mask through day 10. If students return before day 10, masking is highly encouraged. <p>*Antigen test preferred.</p>

If you have close contact with someone who is positive for COVID-19:

Asymptomatic Persons Who are Exposed to Someone with COVID-19 (No Quarantine)	Recommended Actions
<p>Everyone, regardless of vaccination status.</p> <p>Includes exposures at work and outside of work</p> <p>Persons infected within the prior 90 days do not need to be tested, quarantined, or excluded from work or school unless symptoms develop.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test within 3-5 days after last exposure (For staff, testing can occur with NCOE. For students, parents are responsible for providing tests). • Staff close contacts must wear a well-fitting mask around others for a total of 10 days • It is strongly recommended that children who are exposed where a mask for a total of days after exposure • Strongly encouraged to get vaccinated or boosted. • If symptoms develop, test and stay home (see earlier section on symptomatic persons), AND • If test result is positive, follow isolation recommendations above (Table 1).

What happens when a student or staff member receives a positive diagnosis?

Alerting your supervisor of any positive diagnosis, staff or student (or student's family member) is the first step. Your supervisor will communicate with NCOE administration and public health may be consulted. Each situation, and eventual outcome, is carefully considered to help maintain staff and student safety. Classroom closures may occur. It is possible that classrooms will remain open if close contacts can be determined and isolated.

Criteria for Full School Closure:

Individual full school closure is recommended based on the number of cases and stable groups impacted, which suggests that active in-school transmission is occurring. Closure should be done in consultation with NCPH. CDPH defines a school outbreak as 3 or more confirmed or probable cases of staff or students occurring within a 14-day period who are epidemiologically linked in the school, are from different households and are not contacts of each other in any other investigation cases (e.g., transmission likely occurred in the school setting).

NOTIFICATION OF COVID EXPOSURE

ECS Administration is responsible for notifying staff and parents of any COVID exposure. Notification will be as follows:

- Classroom staff and others who had close contact with the COVID positive individual. Close contact, as defined by Public Health, is exposure for more than 15 minutes within 6 feet regardless of mask wearing. Administration and Public Health staff consult regarding various scenarios and level of exposure prior to making decisions about who may be impacted.
- Site staff who are not directly impacted will receive general notification of COVID exposure at site. For those not directly impacted, no action will be required.

GUIDELINES FOR WHEN COHORT CLOSURE OCCURS

- You do NOT need to enter any leave into ReadySub. You are expected to be working, providing distance learning, during this time of closure. If you work in multiple classrooms, and you do not need to quarantine, you are expected to work in the classrooms that remain open.
- Please plan to report to your regular worksite unless your supervisor instructs you otherwise.
- If you become ill, and you are unable to work, please alert your supervisor and enter your absence into ReadySub. In this situation, you will need to use your personal leave bank unless other arrangements are made with your supervisor.

- Your class should revert to distance learning. The expectation for virtual learning during a time of closure is as follows:
 - Infant Classroom:
 - Twice weekly parent communication in the parent’s preferred method of communication such as email, text, phone call or virtual meeting.
 - Toddler Classroom:
 - Twice weekly parent communication in the parent’s preferred method of communication such as email, text, phone call or virtual meeting.
 - Twice weekly group virtual learning experiences such as circle time, music and movement, or small group activities for a maximum of 30 minutes each.
 - Offer each parent one weekly individual teacher/child virtual interaction for a maximum of 30 minutes scheduled at a time that is convenient for the family
 - Preschool Classrooms:
 - Twice weekly parent communication in the parent’s preferred method of communication such as email, text, phone call or virtual meeting.
 - Three times weekly group virtual learning experiences, offered at consistent times, for a maximum of 45 minutes.
 - Offer each parent one weekly individual teacher/child virtual interaction for a maximum of 30 minutes scheduled at a time that is convenient for the family, within your regular contracted work hours.

Please note: Given the circumstances of a closure and the impact this may have on a family’s childcare arrangements or daily schedule; some families may not have the ability to shift easily to virtual learning. Make every effort to include all families in distance learning. Document your attempts to reach families and all the distance learning activities provided.

- Having ready-to-go distance learning activities is suggested as closures can happen at any time
- For special education support staff who are assigned to classrooms: IEP services are expected to be delivered virtually during time of closure. Work directly with classroom teacher to help support classroom virtual opportunities.
 - If required, offer parents individual services virtually during a time of closure. Document in your service logs that services were delivered virtually due to COVID exposure cohort closures.

STAFF SURVEILLANCE COVID-19 TESTING

Surveillance testing has been discontinued. Testing when symptomatic, or after exposure, with antigen tests is preferred. Additional information on testing will be sent from HR. If you need tests, please contact Rena Bruner.

CLASSROOM & STUDENT GUIDELINES

Student Arrival/Departure Procedures

- Parents will be provided with frequent reminders about keeping their child home if they have any symptoms related to COVID-19. If they are bringing their child to school, it is under the assumption that their child is healthy.
- Parents will be given guidance to complete a health check on their child each day before they arrive at school.
- Encourage a “goodbye” ritual for parents and children to engage in so that parents are not entering the classroom with their child.
- If parents need to enter the classroom, masks are not required.
- Encourage families to move quickly through the sign-in process and not use this time as a check-in with their teacher/staff. If needed, schedule a follow up conversation with parents.

Cleaning & Sanitization

- ECS Regular Cleaning Guidelines apply. According to CDC guidelines, cleaning at a regular occurrence is usually sufficient to remove potential viruses that may be on surfaces.
 - Keep in mind, high touch surfaces should always be cleaned more regularly.
- Prepare a soiled bucket for toys that have been mouthed or have come into contact with bodily secretions. Follow NCOE cleaning protocols to clean these toys before returning them to the classroom.
- If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using soap and water prior to disinfection.
- All cleaning materials **MUST** be labeled, kept secure, and out of reach of children.
- Bleach solutions should be made daily following NCOE guidelines and discarded and replaced after 24 hours.

Bleach Solution Preparation Guidelines

- 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) bleach per gallon of room temperature water or
- 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of room temperature water
- Wear skin protection and consider eye protection for potential splash hazards-
- Cleaning products should not be used near children, and staff should ensure that there is adequate ventilation when using these products.
- Playground equipment, and outdoor toys, should be cleaned regularly but do not require sanitization between group use. Children should wash hands before and after they play on the play structures or use outdoor equipment.

FOOD PREPARATION & MEALTIMES

- All staff preparing meals are required to wear masks, gloves and follow food safety/preparation protocols.
- All meals and snacks will be prepared and delivered to classrooms for teachers to serve to students. Individual meals are no longer required.
- Teachers wearing gloves will serve the child sized portion of all menu items (drinks included) to the children.
- Wash hands before and after eating.

COMMUNICATION & TRAINING

Training for Families

- All families will receive an updated parent guidance packet before their child returns to school. Parents will be expected to follow the guidelines listed in the packet.
- Parents will still be encouraged to be an active member of their child's classroom in a safe manner
- Communicate often with your families. They may feel removed from their child's preschool experience due to our restrictions. Send pictures and videos of their child's day and progress at regular rates through various means of communication.

Students

- Regularly teach and model healthy hygiene practices within your classroom.
- Discuss why handwashing and covering coughs & sneezes keep us healthy.
- Provide children with reassurance that they are safe at school
- Teach children how to use the materials in your classroom safely; not to use other children's materials, to be helpers to keep toys clean, and to remind their friends to use tissues and wash hands when needed.

PROVIDING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES FOR IN-PERSON OR DISTANCE LEARNING

In-Person Learning

All special education services for students attending in person learning will resume with special education providers in the classroom at their regular frequency and duration as noted on IEPS of the students being served.

Virtual Learning

Follow the distance learning plan that has been created between the child's case manager, family, and service providers.