

# Interim Guidance for Child Care Facilities Licensed by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE)

March 3, 2020

This interim guidance is based on what is currently known about the spread and severity of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and KDHE will provide updated guidance as needed and as additional information becomes available. Please check the [CDC website](#) and the [KDHE website](#) periodically for updated guidance.

This guidance is intended primarily for child care facilities licensed by KDHE (day care homes, group day care homes, centers, preschools, school age programs and drop in programs for school age children and youth). The purpose of the guidance is to educate licensees regarding preventing the spread of COVID-19 among children in care and staff and to provide direction to child care facilities, parents of children in care, and community partners to react quickly should a case be identified

## Planning and Preparedness Recommendations for Licensed Child Care Facilities

The most important thing that child care facilities can do now is to prepare for the possibility of community-level outbreaks. Child Care licensees should take the following steps to help stop or slow the spread of respiratory diseases, including COVID-19:

- Stay informed and know where to go for the most current information. Sources of accurate information include the CDC, KDHE and your local county health department.
- Develop or update emergency preparedness plans to address possible disruptions in learning and program operations. Your local licensing surveyor is available to provide technical assistance.
  - Determine how to deal with high absentee rates among children and staff.
  - Identify critical functions and positions and plan for alternative coverage in the event of staff absences or closure.
  - Identify methods to communicate with staff and parents in the event of closure.
- Review your policies for the exclusion of sick children and staff.
  - Make sure that parents of children in care and staff are aware and follow the policies.
  - Encourage parents to plan now in the event their child becomes sick. Sick children should not be taken to another child care program or other group setting, even temporarily.
  - Develop flexible sick leave policies that encourage staff to stay home when sick or when caring for sick family members.
- Review children's files and update contact information.

- Make plans for the isolation and supervision of sick children until their parents can pick them up.
- Implement monitoring systems to track children and staff absences.
  - Understand the usual absenteeism patterns for your facility.
  - Alert your local health department about large increases in absenteeism due to respiratory illnesses.
- Follow existing procedures for reducing the spread of respiratory illnesses among children and staff, including frequent hand washing and cough etiquette (coughing and sneezing into your elbow).
- Avoid over-crowded conditions. Encourage children to spread out during story and circle times.
- Allow more than the two foot minimum required by child care regulations between cribs, cots, and sleep mats. Place cribs, cots, and sleep mats so that children rest “head to toe” rather than “face to face”.
- Get plenty of fresh air. Children should have an opportunity for daily outdoor play, weather permitting. Indoor rooms should be well ventilated. To promote air circulation, open windows whenever weather permits or when children are out of the area.
- Perform routine environmental cleaning.
  - Clean toys, commonly shared items, and touched surfaces like handrails and doorknobs at least daily and when visibly soiled.
  - Set aside toys children have placed in their mouths or otherwise contaminated with bodily fluids, until they have been cleaned and sanitized.
- Stock sinks and restrooms with soap and paper towels.
- Place boxes of facial tissues and waste containers for used tissues throughout the child care area and in places readily accessible to children and staff.

## **Recommendations for Child Care Facilities in Communities with Laboratory-Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 Infection**

The guidance provided in this section is based on current knowledge of COVID-19. This guidance may be updated as additional information becomes available about the virus, how it spreads, and how severe it is.

If public health officials report that there are cases of COVID-19 in the community, child care facilities may need to take additional steps in **response** to prevent the spread in the facility. The first step is to talk to local public health officials.

### **Determine if, when, and for how long child care facilities may need to be closed.**

- Licensees should work in close collaboration and coordination with local public health officials and the local licensing surveyor to make closure decisions. Facility closures may be recommended for 14 days or longer. The nature of

these actions (geographic scope, facility type, and duration) may change as a local outbreak situation evolves.

- Local public health officials may recommend temporary closure if a child in care or staff member were present in the facility prior to being confirmed as a COVID-19 case. The recommendations for the duration of a facility closure will be made case-by-case, based on the most up-to-date information about COVID-19 and the specific cases in the impacted community.
- Facilities located in a residence should temporarily close if the licensee or someone else living in the residence becomes ill.
- Licensees should work with local public health officials to communicate about a possible COVID-19 exposure. Communications to parents of children in care and to staff members should align with the facility's emergency preparedness plan. When communicating information it is critical to maintain the confidentiality of any ill child in care or ill staff member.
- If a child in care or staff member has been confirmed as a COVID-19 case, the licensee should seek guidance from local public health officials to determine when the child or staff member may return to the facility and what additional steps may be needed. Follow the instructions of local public health officials to determine when children and staff who are well but are sharing a home with someone with a case of COVID-19, should return to the facility.
- When child care facilities are temporarily closed, children and staff should stay home; away from gatherings, crowds or other social settings.
- Identify strategies to support families in continuing their child's learning in the event of facility closure.
- Understand that the length (duration), criteria, and public health objective of child care facility closures may be re-assessed and changed as a local outbreak situation evolves. Licensees should follow the advice of KDHE and local public health officials.

## **For More Information**

### **CDC Resources**

- [Coronavirus Disease 2019 website](#)
- [Health Alert Network: Update and Interim Guidance on Outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)
- [Interim US Guidance for Risk Assessment and Public Health Management of Persons with Potential Coronavirus Disease 2019 Exposure in Travel-associated or Community Settings](#)
- [About Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [What to Do If You Are Sick with COVID-19](#)
- [Interim Guidance for Persons Who May Have Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) to Prevent Spread in Homes and Residential Communities](#)

- [Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\), February 2020](#)
- [Coronavirus Disease 2019 Information for Travelers](#)
- [Do Your Part. Slow the Spread of Germs](#)
- [Don't Spread Germs at Work](#)
- [Stay Home if You're Sick](#)

### **Other Federal Agencies and Partners Resources**

#### American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)

- Hand Washing: A Powerful Antidote to Illness: <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/prevention/Pages/Hand-Washing-A-Powerful-Antidote-to-Illness.aspx>
- Reducing the Spread of Illness in Child Care: [https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/prevention/P ages/Prevention-In-Child-Care-or-School.aspx](https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/prevention/Pages/Prevention-In-Child-Care-or-School.aspx)
- Germ Prevention Strategies: <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/prevention/Pages/Germ-Prevention-Strategies.aspx>
- When to Keep Your Child Home from Child Care: <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/work-play/Pages/When-to-Keep-Your-Child-Home-from-Child-Care.aspx>

#### National Resource Center for Health and Safety In Child Care and Early Education

- [Caring for Our Children National Health and Safety Performance Standards for Early Care and Education Programs: https://nrckids.org/CFOC](https://nrckids.org/CFOC)

#### Child Care Aware of America

- Coronavirus: How Does It Impact Child Care Providers and CCR&R's? <https://info.childcareaware.org/blog/coronavirus-how-does-it-impact-child-care-providers-and-crrs>

