

COVID-19 INFORMATION

GUIDANCE FOR APPROVED FAMILY DAY HOME/ GROUP FAMILY CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

Overview

Under current Chief Medical Officer of Health Orders, businesses and entities are required to:

- implement practices to minimize the risk of transmission of infection among attendees;
- provide procedures for rapid response if an attendee develops symptoms of illness;
- ensure that attendees maintain high levels of sanitation and personal hygiene;
- comply, to the extent possible, with the [COVID-19 General Relaunch Guidance](#), this guidance, and any other applicable Alberta Health guidance found at: <https://www.alberta.ca/biz-connect.aspx>.

This document has been developed to support approved family day home agencies and licenced group family child care programs in reducing the risk of transmission of COVID-19. This guidance builds upon the [Alberta Health Services Health and Safety Childcare Guidelines](#). The guidance provided outlines public health and infection prevention control measures, specific to this setting.

All licensed group family child care programs and approved family day home providers and child care providers will also be required to be in compliance with applicable zoning and health and safety legislation, including the [Child Care Licensing Act](#) and/or [Child Care Licensing Regulation](#), and/or Alberta's Family Day Home Standards.

In the event of a conflict between this document and the AHS Health and Safety Childcare Guidelines, this document will prevail.

This document and the guidance within it is subject to change and will be updated as needed. Current information related to COVID-19 can be found at: <https://www.alberta.ca/covid-19-information.aspx>.

COVID-19 Risk Mitigation

General Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operators should review the COVID-19 General Relaunch Guidance for considerations prior to reopening• Operators should encourage and facilitate families of attendees staying up to date with developments related to COVID-19.• Operators should notify families of attendees of the steps being taken to prevent the risk of transmission, and the importance of their roles in these measures.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ COVID-19 signage should be posted in highly visible locations:<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ "Help prevent the spread" posters are available.▪ When possible, provide necessary information in languages that are preferred by attendees.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Albertans must follow CMOH Order 05-2020, which establishes legal requirements for quarantine and isolation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19, with a history of international travel in the last 14 days, or with close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days must remain at home. Signs should be posted at the entrance reminding persons not to enter if they have signs or symptoms of COVID-19. Activities cannot violate a public health order. To help plan activities, staff should ask themselves the following questions to determine the risk of the activities and whether they are allowed to proceed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the activity involve shared surfaces or objects frequently touched by hands? Can an activity be modified to increase opportunities for physical distancing? Where possible, physical distancing practices should occur, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid close greetings like hugs or handshakes and encourage physically-distant greetings such as “air fives” and waves, Plan for physically-distant activities such as shadow tag and where possible, avoid activities that require clustering around a particular item or part of the room. Consider ways to set up rooms to avoid clustering or congestion. Consider staggering individual participation in activities or use of equipment to avoid clustering in any specific area. For naps, increase distance between sleeping mats/cots up to 2 metres if possible, and always practice head-to-toe placement. Operators should develop a plan to provide isolation for an attendee if needed.
Screening and response plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff, parents and children must not attend the program if they have COVID-19 symptoms. Before every shift, day home providers are expected to assess themselves for symptoms of COVID-19 using the Alberta Health Daily Checklist. Providers must not open their home for child care if they or anyone else residing in the home has symptoms of COVID-19 until the symptomatic person or persons have been tested for COVID-19. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the person(s) is negative for COVID-19, the family home may re-open once the symptoms have resolved.

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- If the COVID-19 test is positive, the family day home must remain closed during the legal isolation period for the case and the legal quarantine period of the close contacts.
- The day home provider is expected to ask parents to check children's temperatures daily before coming to the program. Parents should be reminded of this requirement when children are first registered for the day home program, and through visible signage at the entrance to the day home. For reference, normal temperatures are:
 - Mouth: 35.5-37.5°C (95.9-99.5°F)
 - Underarm: 36.5-37.5°C (97.7-99.5°F)
 - Forehead: 36.6-38.0°C (97.9-100.4°F)
 - Ear (not recommended in children under 2 years): 35.8-38.0°C (96.4-100.4°F)
- Parents should be provided a copy of the [Alberta Health Daily Checklist](#) upon registration in a day home with the expectation that it needs to be completed on a daily basis.
- Before leaving home, the parent or guardian conducting drop off is expected to screen each child for symptoms using the [Alberta Health Daily Checklist](#).
- If a child develops symptoms while at the day home, the child should be isolated in a separate room and the parent should be notified to come and pick up the child immediately. If a separate room is not available, the child needs to be kept at least two meters away from other children.
 - If the child is young and requires close contact and care, staff can continue to care for the child until the parent is able to pick the child. Staff should wear a non-medical mask and eye protection during all interactions with the child and should avoid contact with the child's respiratory secretions.
 - Staff should wash their hands before donning a non-medical mask and before and after removing the non-medical mask (as per [Alberta Health mask guidance](#)), and before and after touching any items used by the child.
 - All items, such as bedding, toys etc., used by the child in the 48 hours prior to the onset of their symptoms and while isolated should be cleaned and disinfected as soon as the child has been picked up. Items that cannot be cleaned and disinfected (e.g. paper, books, cardboard puzzles) should be removed from the home and stored in a sealed container for a minimum of 72 hours.
- Parents can access COVID-19 [testing](#) for their child (with or without symptoms) by filling out the [AHS Online Assessment Tool](#) and booking a test.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proof of a negative COVID-19 test result is not necessary to return to childcare. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A child that has a cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose or sore throat that is not related to a pre-existing health condition or who tests positive for COVID-19 is legally required to isolate for 10 days from the start of their symptoms, or until symptoms resolve, whichever takes longer. ○ If a child has a fever, cough, runny nose, shortness of breath or sore throat and is not tested for COVID-19, the child must be isolated for 10 days from symptom onset, or until symptoms resolve, whichever is longer. NOTE: It is always recommended that the parent seek testing for a child with symptoms of COVID-19. ○ If the child tested negative and has no known exposure to the virus, they must stay home until their symptoms resolve. If the child tested negative and has had an exposure to the virus, they are legally required to quarantine for 14 days from the exposure date. • Programs should keep records of children's known pre-existing conditions. If a child develops symptoms that could be caused by either COVID-19 or by a known pre-existing condition (e.g. allergies, chronic cough), the child should be tested for COVID-19 to confirm that it is not the source of their symptoms before entering or returning to the program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A child that has tested negative for COVID-19 does not need to be retested unless new or different symptoms develop. • AHS Coordinated COVID-19 Response is available to all child care settings at 1-844-343-0971. AHS Coordinated COVID-19 Response must be contacted as soon as there are two or more children/staff members showing COVID-19 symptoms for additional guidance and decision-making support at a site that does not already have an outbreak of COVID-19. <p>Programs directly associated with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 must adhere to requirements from Alberta Health Services. This may include temporary program closure to allow for contact tracing processes to occur.</p>
Entering and exiting the day home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs should develop procedures for drop off and pick up that support physical distancing and separate cohorts to the greatest extent possible. Possible strategies include separate cohort entrances, having one designated parent/guardian pick up and drop off each child, staggering entry, or limiting the numbers of people in entry areas.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support public health contact tracing efforts in the event that an attendee tests positive, programs should keep daily records of anyone entering the program who stays for 15 minutes or longer (e.g. staff working each day, children, etc.). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programs must obtain a parent or guardian consent (for children under 18) and notify parents or guardians about the purpose and legal authority for the collection. Any personal information that is collected for COVID-19 contact tracing can only be used for this purpose, unless an individual provides their consent. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records should only be kept for 4 weeks. An organization must make reasonable security arrangements to protect the personal information. Program attendance needs to be reported weekly to the Ministry of Children's Services. For more information, the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner has released Pandemic FAQ: Customer Lists about collecting personal information from customers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Family day home agency consultants visiting approved provider homes must wear a mask and must wash their hands (or use hand sanitizer) when entering or exiting the home. Information on how to use a mask can be found at www.alberta.ca/prevent-the-spread.aspx.
Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff and children should be frequently reminded to follow proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette (wash hands frequently, sneeze/cough into their elbow, put used tissues in a waste receptacle and wash hands immediately after using tissues). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post signs with visual cues around the program area to remind staff and children to perform proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette. Day home providers should use the following handwashing guidelines. Engage in frequent handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds at the following times: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before caring for a child each day and at the end of the day. After going to the washroom. After a diaper change (both children and providers). Before preparing food. Before and after eating. After getting hands dirty. After wiping nose or handling dirty tissues. After blowing nose. After cleaning tasks (providers).

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Child care programs must adhere to handwashing guidelines outlined in the AHS Health and Safety Guidelines for Child Care Facilities. Hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol is recommended as there is evidence that supports effectiveness against COVID-19. Hand sanitizer can help reduce the risk of infection by and the spread of microorganisms when hand washing is not possible. If parents have questions about their child using alcohol-based hand sanitizer, they should contact the day home operator to discuss potential alternatives.Access to hand sanitizer needs to be monitored at all times because it can result in accidental poisoning if ingested. Children should be closely supervised when using hand sanitizer. Manufacturer instructions for each product should be followed.
Masks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Use of non-medical masks by day home staff is only encouraged for prolonged close interactions with children (e.g. changing a diaper or assisting with feeding).<ul style="list-style-type: none">If non-medical masks are worn, Alberta Health mask guidance should be followed and can be found here: www.alberta.ca/masks.Once a non-medical mask has been removed, it should be thrown in a lined trash bin (disposable masks) or placed in a sealed container to be laundered (reusable masks).Children attending a day home are not required to wear a mask while in the day home.
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Close off kitchen/nourishment areas that could be accessed by children, non-designated staff, or essential visitors.Ensure that food handling staff practice meticulous hand hygiene and are excluded from work if they are symptomatic.Where possible, children should practice social distancing while eating.There should be no common food items (e.g. salt and pepper shakers).Meals should be served in individual portions by a designated staff member to each child.Utensils should be used to serve food items (not fingers).
Outdoor play	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Programs are encouraged to use alternatives to licensed outdoor play spaces, such as walks and supervised play in parks and safe open spaces. Follow physical distancing practices when possible.<ul style="list-style-type: none">If using a public or school playground, ensure that children engage in hand hygiene before and after play.Providers or family day home agency staff may contact their Children's

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	<p>Services licensing officer for advice on suitable outdoor spaces in their area. Find contact information for local Children's Services offices at https://www.alberta.ca/childrens-services-offices.aspx.</p>
Cleaning and disinfecting items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs should engage in frequent, thorough cleaning and disinfecting each day. • Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces, including diapering areas, as per AHS' COVID-19 Public Health Recommendations for Environmental Cleaning of Public Facilities. • Cleaning and disinfecting of toys should be done by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Commercial dishwasher ○ A domestic dishwasher with a sanitizing cycle ○ If using a dishwasher without a sanitizing cycle, wipe/spray/immerse the toys in disinfectant after the dishwasher cycle is completed OR : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Wash with detergent and water; ○ Rinse with clean warm water; ○ Wipe, spray or immerse for 2 minutes in an approved disinfectant. Toys that may be mouthed by young children should be rinsed prior to disinfecting if using 1000 ppm bleach or another non-food grade disinfectant is used; and ○ Air dry. • Discontinue shared use of items that cannot be cleaned and disinfected. • Area rugs and soft furnishings (e.g. large pillows or cushions, bean bag chairs) that cannot be easily cleaned and disinfected should be removed. Increased frequency of cleaning of permanent carpets and upholstered furniture is recommended. • Ensure mouthed toys are immediately put into a designated bucket to be cleaned and disinfected. • Soft toys (plush toys and blankets) should not be shared at this time. Launder in hot water and dryer between children or discontinue use. • Close all shared sensory tables including water tables, sand tables, shared play dough. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Individual sensory bins or activities that are not shared between children may be used (play dough labelled for individual child use, small individual water bowl with sensory activities). ○ If coat hooks, lockers or open cubbies are to be use to store personal items they should be assigned to a single child or they must be cleaned and disinfected in between uses. ○ Equipment that is required for children's day-to-day use (e.g. mobility or feeding devices, weighted blankets, headphones) should be

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	cleaned and disinfected at drop off and pick up, and should not be used by anyone other than the child.
Other resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• General information regarding COVID-19 (Government of Alberta) www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx• How to hand wash (AHS) https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/healthinfo/ipc/if-hp-ipc-flu-handwash-how-to.pdf• How to use alcohol-based hand sanitizer (AHS) https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/healthinfo/ipc/if-hp-flu-hand-rub-how-to.pdf• Diapering procedures poster (AHS) https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/wf/eph/wf-eph-diapering-procedure-poster.pdf• Hand washing posters (AHS) https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/wf/eph/wf-eh-you-d-clean-em.pdf https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/wf/eph/wf-eh-you-d-clean-em-2.pdf• Arts and crafts safety (AHS) https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/wf/eph/wf-eh-arts-crafts-safety.pdf