



# Daycares

This document is intended for employers, workers and customers/participants of daycares, as an overview of potential hazards in the workplace due to COVID-19.

In all cases, guidance from local public health authorities must be followed and general COVID-19 prevention practices should be implemented, as outlined in:

[www.ccohs.ca/pdfs/covid-general.pdf](http://www.ccohs.ca/pdfs/covid-general.pdf)

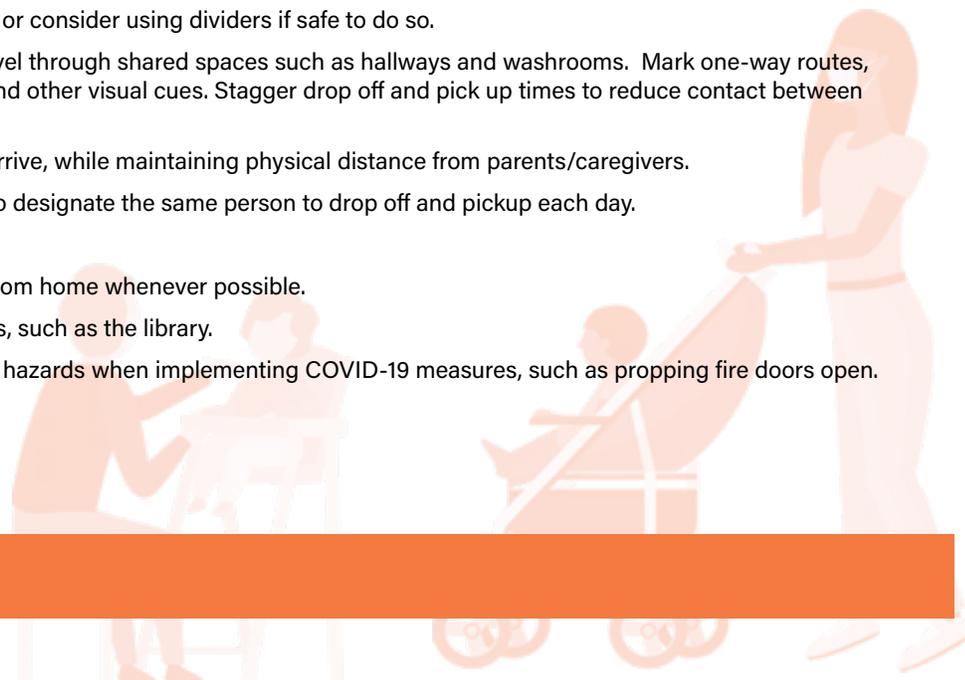
## Considerations when assessing risk in a daycare setting

Daycares must consider:

- Situations that increase the risk of transmission – how many people are present, age of the children, how long they will be there, how close they will be to each other, and are there interactions in a crowded or confined indoor setting.
- Frequent contact with high-touch surfaces or shared items such as door handles, chairs, tables, faucets, etc.
- Ability of children to follow public health measures, or if additional supervision is required.
- Availability of supplies and facilities necessary for frequent hand hygiene.
- The ability for individuals or groups to follow the recommended measures based on their health, age, disability, developmental status, or other socio-economic and demographic circumstances.
- Risk of severe illness, or if they live with a person who belongs to a higher risk group.
- Maintaining confidentiality and privacy protection for the individual.

## Physical Distancing

- Maintain 2 metres (6 feet) of physical distancing wherever possible, including separating desks, tables, mats or beds for napping, and limiting the number of people allowed in the same room.
- For younger children when physical distancing is more difficult, consider keeping the children in smaller groups or cohorts, and maintain 2 metres between the cohorts.
- Seats should face in the same direction.
- Stagger meal and snack times if possible if the tables or eating areas are crowded. Spend more time playing outdoors if there is more space and it is safe to do so.
- Disinfect or avoid climbing structures, shared swings, slides, and other equipment.
- Have children nap “head to toe” or consider using dividers if safe to do so.
- Manage how individuals will travel through shared spaces such as hallways and washrooms. Mark one-way routes, and use floor markings, signs, and other visual cues. Stagger drop off and pick up times to reduce contact between parents/caregivers.
- Greet children outside as they arrive, while maintaining physical distance from parents/caregivers.
- Encourage parents/caregivers to designate the same person to drop off and pickup each day.
- Restrict non-essential visitors.
- Have administrative staff work from home whenever possible.
- Postpone visits to outside places, such as the library.
- Do not create new occupational hazards when implementing COVID-19 measures, such as propping fire doors open.





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### Use of Non-Medical Cloth Masks or Face Coverings

- Follow the recommendations for types of masks and ages as issued by your public health agency, or other authority. Children under the age of 2 should not wear a non-medical mask or face covering. Children between the ages of 2 and 5 may be able to wear a mask if supervised. Children older than the age of 5 should follow the same advice for adults on when to wear a non-medical mask or face covering.
- Masks should not be worn by anyone who is unable to remove the mask without assistance (e.g., due to their age, ability or developmental status).
- Wear the mask correctly, making sure the nose and mouth are covered. Do not touch your face and mask.
- Be aware that non-medical masks have limitations, and improper mask use and disposal can increase the risk of infection.
- Stay informed as guidance is evolving regarding the use of face shields.
- Acknowledge that individuals may choose to wear masks regardless if there is a formal requirement.
- Change your mask if it becomes wet or soiled. For example, you may wish to bring a second mask, and store in a clean paper bag, envelope, or container that does not trap moisture. Store reusable soiled masks in a separate bag or container. Do not touch the outside of the mask while removing it, and wash your hands when you are finished.
- For some children, not being able to see the teacher's face and mouth clearly may cause difficulties. Consider using a transparent mask or face shield.
- Do not allow the mask to be a hazard to other activities, such as getting caught on moving machinery or playground equipment.
- Teachers or staff may also opt for eye protection (such as face shields) when in close physical contact with children. Guidelines or recommendations from your local government or public health agency may also apply within the daycare.

### Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Continue to use PPE for existing occupational safety hazards and emergencies, as directed by applicable laws and your employer.
- Situations where PPE may be considered for protection from COVID-19 include:
  - Wearing gloves when cleaning as recommended by the product's safe work instructions or safety data sheet
  - Wearing disposable gloves when cleaning blood or body fluids (e.g., runny nose, vomit, stool, urine)
- If workers will be required to wear PPE, they must be trained on how to wear, work with, care for the equipment, and understand its limitations.
- Clean and disinfect any shared personal protective equipment before you wear it.
- Wash hands before wearing and after removing gloves.

### Personal Hygiene

- Promote physical distancing as much as possible.
- Cough and sneeze into your sleeve and not your hand. Provide tissues and dispose of used tissues in plastic-lined receptacles.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or use an at least 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water is not available.
  - at the start of shifts
  - before eating or drinking
  - before preparing food
  - after cleaning up meal and snack times
  - after touching shared items
  - after using the washroom, changing diapers, or helping others with toileting
  - after handling garbage, and
  - before leaving your workspace.



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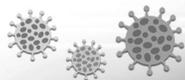
- Set up hand hygiene stations near the entrance of the facility so children and staff can clean their hands before entering.
- Designate a clean and disinfected area for storing food or other items brought from home.
- Remove work clothes and wash them as soon as you get home.
- Include infection prevention as part of daily lessons and activities, while making sure that content is age appropriate.
- Train all staff should on how COVID-19 can spread, the risk of exposure, and proper procedures to follow including hand hygiene and other routine practices for infection control. Post signage at entrances and other areas as reminders.

## Daycare Hygiene

- Develop a cleaning schedule and document when cleaning has taken place.
- Make sure washrooms are cleaned frequently and stocked with soap and paper towels. Disinfect diaper changing areas.
- Disinfect commonly touched surfaces, shared toys, tables, chairs, plates, cups, door handles, light switches, etc.
  - Use approved hard-surface disinfectants that have a Drug Identification Number (DIN. This number means that it has been approved for use in Canada.
  - Read and follow manufacturer's instructions for safe use of cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., wear gloves, use in well-ventilated area, allow enough contact time for disinfectant to kill germs based on the product being used).
  - If approved household or commercial disinfectant cleaning products are not available, hard surfaces can be disinfected using a mixture of 5 mL of bleach (5% sodium hypochlorite) and 250 mL of water. Test surfaces before using a bleach solution. Bleach can be corrosive. Follow instructions for safe handling of bleach.
  - If liquids can be withstood, disinfect high-touch electronic devices (keyboards, tablets, smartboards) with alcohol or disinfectant wipes.
  - Only use toys or equipment that can be easily cleaned and disinfected.
- Use disposable cleaning cloths and gloves.
- Regularly wash blankets, face cloths, towels, smocks, bibs, etc.
- Promote individual activities or increase the number of toys available to minimize sharing.
- Remove toys and books that are difficult to sanitize, such as plush toys, sand/water tables, and playdough. Encourage children to not touch others or put toys in their mouths.
- Open windows to increase fresh air flow and ventilation in the building and classrooms when possible and if weather permits.
- Discourage activities that involve singing or yelling.
- Safely dispose of garbage at least once a day.
- Provide workers with adequate supplies, training on cleaning protocols, and personal protective equipment as needed.

## Screening and Care

- Do not allow individuals to enter the daycare if they have symptoms or have had exposure in the past 14 days.
- Use screening measures, including passive screening (e.g., posing signs to remind others to not enter if they feel ill), or active screening (e.g., asking questions about symptoms or using a self- assessment questionnaire).
- Keep records of attendance, both for children and staff. These records may be needed by local public health agencies for contact tracing if a case is identified.
- Should someone develop a cough, fever, or other symptoms, isolate them from others.
  - Provide medical masks (preferred, if available) or non-medical masks to the staff and the ill person if COVID is suspected and you are providing direct care. Only ask the ill person to wear a mask if they are comfortable wearing it and can remove it themselves without assistance.
  - Remain in a designated space until they can safely leave.



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- If the ill person is a child, contact their parent/caregiver to take them home immediately and to seek appropriate medical attention. In an emergency, individuals may need to be sent directly to the hospital.
  - Continue to practice hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette. Provide tissues, and dispose of the tissue properly, and wash hands after coughing or sneezing.
  - Consult the local public health authority for advice.
  - Do not encourage the use of public transit.
  - Clean and disinfect the space or areas the person was in that day, and any shared items.
- If a person at the school is confirmed to have COVID-19, contact your public health agency for guidance.
  - Continue to use appropriate precautions and procedures for safety, providing assistance for minor injuries, or emotional distress.

## General Recommendations

- In the event of an emergency, follow established emergency response procedures.
- Perform regular inspections and hazard assessments to identify potential ways individuals may be exposed to COVID-19.
- Evaluate new COVID-19 preventative measures before using them to make sure new health and safety risks are not created.
- Make sure there are enough staff to support new measures.
- Regularly communicate COVID-19 news and measures to all parties to help manage stress and anxiety.
- Special considerations are required for individuals at higher risk (e.g., underlying medical conditions, immunocompromised, aged 65 and over, etc.).
- Consult with your health and safety committee or health and safety representative (if you have one) to address concerns and to implement preventative measures.
- Understand that in some situations, recommendations and measures may change or vary depending on the current stage of the pandemic, as well as the child's age and their abilities.
- Develop a business continuity plan to minimize disruptions including increased staff absenteeism, and procedures for periods of higher restrictions based on public health measures.
- Promote mental health services for staff and families.

**Provide mental health support to all workers, including access to an employee assistance program (EAP) if available.**



**For further information on COVID-19, refer to the Public Health Agency of Canada**

<https://www.canada.ca/coronavirus>

**Note that this guidance is just some of the adjustments organizations can make during a pandemic. Adapt this list by adding your own good practices and policies to meet your organization's specific needs.**

Disclaimer: As public and occupational health and safety information is changing rapidly, local public health authorities should be consulted for specific, regional guidance. This information is not intended to replace medical advice or legislated health and safety obligations. Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy, currency and completeness of the information, CCOHS does not guarantee, warrant, represent or undertake that the information provided is correct, accurate or current. CCOHS is not liable for any loss, claim, or demand arising directly or indirectly from any use or reliance upon the information.