

SAFETY & HEALTH GUIDANCE

COVID-19 Infection Prevention in Childcare Programs

California employers are required to establish and implement an Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP) to protect employees from all worksite hazards, including infectious diseases. This guidance contains information and recommendations for childcare programs on how to update their IIPPs to include information on employee training and preventing the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace.

Employee Training on COVID-19

Childcare program administrators should train employees on the following:

- Information related to COVID-19 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), including how the illness is spread, how to prevent its spread, symptoms, and when to seek medical assistance for sick children or employees:
 - **How COVID-19 is spread.**
 - **Preventing the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick.**
 - **Symptoms of COVID-19 and when to seek medical attention.**

NOTE: Hand sanitizers are less effective than handwashing in preventing the spread of COVID-19

- The importance of frequent handwashing with soap and water (or using hand sanitizer where soap and water are not available), including:
 - When employees arrive at the facility and before they leave the facility.
 - Before and after handling food, feeding a child, or eating.
 - Before and after using the toilet, changing a diaper, or helping a child use the bathroom (also wash the child's hands after helping the child use the bathroom or changing their diaper).
 - After helping a child wipe their nose or mouth or tending to a cut or sore.



- After working in sandboxes and similar children's play areas.
- Before and after giving medicine to a child.
- After handling wastebaskets or garbage.
- Methods to avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Limiting close contact with others as much as possible and maintaining more than six feet of separation.
- Coughing and sneezing etiquette.
- Safely using cleaners and disinfectants on surfaces and objects, which includes:
 - The hazards of the cleaners and disinfectants available for use at the worksite.
 - Wearing personal protective equipment (such as gloves).
 - Ensuring cleaners and disinfectants are used in a manner that does not endanger employees or children at the facility.
- The importance of staying home if they have a frequent cough, sneezing, fever, or difficulty breathing.
- The employer's plan and procedures to follow when children become sick at the facility.
- The employer's plan and procedures to protect employees from COVID-19 illness.

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Procedures to Help Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 at the Worksite

IIPP childcare program administrators should establish and implement the following procedures to help prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Establish a plan for sharing information and guidelines with parents and guardians that includes:
 - Establishing a system to check with parents and guardians daily on the status of their children when children are dropped off at the facility.
 - Ensuring information and communication can be provided in the primary languages spoken by the parents and guardians.
 - Obtaining email addresses and home, work, and mobile phone numbers from parents and guardians of children at the facility so the facility can reach them at all times.
 - Creating and testing communication systems with parents and guardians, children at the facility, employees, facility management, and emergency medical services.
 - Providing parents and guardians with information from the CDC on COVID-19 symptoms, transmission, prevention, and when to seek medical attention. Encouraging parents and guardians to share the information with their children as appropriate.
 - Communicating with parents and guardians that children should stay at home if they are sick, have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus, or if someone in the household has symptoms (cough, fever, shortness of breath).
 - Establishing voluntary methods for parents and guardians to help screen their children for flu-like symptoms. Communicating such methods with parents and guardians. (For example, ask parents and guardians to take their children's temperatures every day before coming to childcare and to keep their children at home if their temperature is over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit.) Asking the local health officer for assistance with these methods.
- Establish procedures to notify local health officials upon learning that someone who has been at the childcare facility has a COVID-19 infection. These officials will help administrators determine a course of action.
- Prevent the introduction of COVID-19 and other viruses into your childcare facility*
 - Children who are known to have been in close proximity to a confirmed case of COVID-19 must be excluded from group childcare for 14 days from the date of last exposure.
 - Children who are home with a respiratory illness other than confirmed COVID-19 must remain at home until afebrile for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications and symptoms (e.g., cough, wheezing, shortness of breath) have improved.
- Establish a curriculum and educational methods to inform children on how they can help prevent the spread of COVID-19, including:
 - Frequent hand washing.
 - Avoiding close and direct contact with other children and facility staff.
 - Telling their teacher as soon as possible if they feel sick.
 - Coughing and sneezing etiquette (cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or sleeve; not hands).
 - Discouraging children from sharing food, drinking cups, eating utensils, towels, toothbrushes, etc.
- Establish a plan for children who become sick at the facility. The plan should include:
 - Procedures for contacting parents and guardians immediately and criteria for seeking medical assistance.
 - Designated areas where sick children can be isolated and attended to by a limited number of trained staff.
 - Masks for sick older children to use if they agree, since masks worn by sick persons help prevent the spread of germs to others (but do not effectively protect the wearer from getting COVID-19 so people who are not sick should not wear them).
 - Staff tending to sick children should also wear a mask and gloves if they anticipate touching the children/holding hands, and eye protection if the child is unable to wear a mask*
- Establish procedures to routinely clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects (e.g., doorknobs, light switches, classroom sink handles, countertops, shared toys). These procedures should include:
 - Using products that are **EPA-approved** for use against the virus that causes COVID-19.
 - Providing EPA-registered disposable wipes for employees to wipe down commonly used surfaces (e.g., keyboards, desks, remote controls) before use.
 - Following the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., safety requirements, protective equipment, concentration, contact time).
 - Ensuring there are adequate supplies to support cleaning and disinfection practices.

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Additional COVID-19 Resources for Childcare Programs

Childcare Programs and Schools

- California Department of Public Health. **School Guidance on Novel Coronavirus or COVID-19:** www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/School%20Guidance_ADA%20Compliant_FINAL.pdf
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. **Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19): Interim Guidance for Administrators of US K-12 Schools and Childcare Programs:** www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-schools.html
- U.S. Department of Education. **COVID-19 (“Coronavirus”) Information and Resources for Schools and School Personnel:** www.ed.gov/coronavirus

General Information

- American Academy of Pediatrics. **2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19):** www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/chest-lungs/Pages/2019-Novel-Coronavirus.aspx
- California Division of Occupational Safety and Health. **Cal/OSHA Interim Guidelines for General Industry on 2019 Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19):** www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/coronavirus/General-Industry.html
- California Labor and Workforce Development Agency. **Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) Resources for Employers and Workers:** www.labor.ca.gov/coronavirus2019/
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. **Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19): Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers:** www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. **Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19): Symptoms:** www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. **Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19): How It Spreads:** www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/transmission.html
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. **Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19): Steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick:** www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html
- New York Times: **How to Stop Touching Your Face:** www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/health/stop-touching-your-face-coronavirus.html
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. **Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2** (the virus that causes COVID-19): www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2

