

## COVID-19 Guidance: Child Care Centers and Homes Health & Safety Concerns 03/27/2020

Any child care program in any community might need to implement short-term closure procedures due to COVID-19. You will be directed to close and will be told the length of the closure in the following circumstances:

- Statewide child care closure - Governor's proclamation
- Local Public Health order
- Local Public Health recommendation due to community spread

There may be situations where a child care program determines it is in their best interest to implement a short-term closure. The decision to close is difficult. The following guidance will help to make that decision:

- **An infected person (child, staff, visitor) has been in the child care facility**
  - An infected person is someone who has symptoms of COVID-19 (cough, fever, shortness of breath) or
  - An infected person has tested positive for COVID-19
- **A child or staff lives with someone who has symptoms of COVID-19 or has tested positive for COVID-19 and the child/staff has been directed by their health care provider or public health to self isolate**

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and IDPH recommends the following procedures if a child care program implements a short-term closure:

- Notify local public health. Find your local public health at [Local Public Health Agencies Map](#)
- Close the facility for 2-5 days for children and some staff. This initial short-term closure allows time for local health officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation impacting the child care program and community. You may need to close longer (14 days or longer).
- Communicate with staff and families. Follow your emergency preparedness communication plan.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Share COVID-19 information with staff and families. Information is available at <https://idph.iowa.gov/Emerging-Health-Issues/Novel-Coronavirus/Public>

- Follow DHS Guidance for reporting closure. DHS *Childcare Guidance* at <https://dhs.iowa.gov/childcare-covid-19>

During closure clean and disinfect thoroughly:

- Close off areas used by the infected persons and wait as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection to minimize potential for exposure to respiratory droplets. Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area. If possible, wait up to 24 hours before beginning cleaning and disinfection.
- Clean and disinfect all areas (e.g., offices, bathrooms, and common areas) focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.
- If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- For disinfection, use an EPA-registered disinfectant or a bleach mixture. Please see the IDPH Environmental Cleaning Guidance at <https://idph.iowa.gov/Emerging-Health-Issues/Novel-Coronavirus/Prevention>
- Your local Child Care Nurse Consultant (CCNC) is available for guidance on cleaning and disinfecting as well as health policies. Find your local CCNC at [HCCI - Child Care Nurse Consultants](#)

Temporary closure of child care programs is a strategy to stop or slow the further spread of COVID-19 in communities. During closure (after cleaning and disinfection), child care programs may stay open for some staff members (unless ill) while children stay home.

- Staff should practice social distancing staying out of congregate areas (front desk, break room) maintaining at least 6 feet away from others.
- Staff should continue to:
  - Monitor temperature for fever (100.4°F) prior to entering the child care facility.
  - Wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
  - Avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
  - Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
  - Stay home when sick.
  - Cover their mouth with their upper arm or tissue when coughing or sneezing.
  - Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Reference: CDC *COVID-19 Guidance for Schools and Child Care Programs*  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html> (retrieved 03/27/2020)