

COVID-19 Requirements and Best Practices for Group Child Care and School-Based Child Care Programs

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Bureau of Child Care

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Purpose of New York State (NYS) Requirements and Best Practices

- To prevent the spread of COVID-19 in child care settings by implementing infection control measures, such as physical distancing, face coverings, and frequent hand-washing

This presentation contains a summary of many NYS reopening requirements.

**A full list of NYS requirements is available at:
forward.ny.gov/statewide-guidelines**

Review These Documents

- [Interim Guidance for Child Care and Day Camp Programs During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#)
- [Summary Guidelines](#)
- [Business Safety Plan Template](#)

Interim Guidance for Child Care and Day Camp Programs During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

- You must **read** and **affirm** that you have reviewed and understand the NYS guidelines



When you have read this document, you can affirm at the bottom.

As of June 8, 2020

Purpose

This Interim Guidance for Child Care and Day Camp Programs during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency ("Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Child Care and Day Camp Programs") was created to provide owners/operators of child care and day camp programs and their employees, parents/guardians and visitors with precautions to help protect against the spread of COVID-19.

This guidance applies only to day child care and camp programs. It does not include overnight child care and camp programs, which are not authorized to operate at this time.

These guidelines are minimum requirements only and any employer is free to provide additional

Business Affirmation Form



New York Forward

Business Affirmation

Use this form to affirm business compliance with the New York Forward reopening guidance.

What industry does your company belong to? *

- Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting
- Arts & Entertainment - Low-Risk: Indoor
- Arts & Entertainment - Low-Risk: Outdoor
- Child Care and Day Camps
- Commercial Building Management
- Construction
- Dentistry
- Dining - Outdoor and take-out/delivery food services
- Personal Care Services
- Private operator of lake or ocean beach
- Professional Sports Competitions - No Fans
- Professional Sports Training
- Public Transportation
- Racing - Auto Racetracks
- Racing Activities
- Real Estate

Safety Plan

- Can use NYS template to create safety plan
- Must be posted on site



Each business or entity, including those that have been designated as essential under Empire State Development's Essential Business Guidance, must develop a written Safety Plan outlining how its workplace will prevent the spread of COVID-19. A business may fill out this template to fulfill the requirement, or may develop its own Safety Plan. **This plan does not need to be submitted to a state agency for approval** but must be retained on the premises of the business and must be made available to the New York State Department of Health (DOH) or local health or safety authorities in the event of an inspection.

Business owners should refer to the State's industry-specific guidance for more information on how to safely operate. For a list of regions and sectors that are authorized to re-open, as well as detailed guidance for each sector, please visit: [forward.ny.gov](https://www.forward.ny.gov). If your industry is not included in the posted guidance but your business has been operating as essential, please refer to ESD's [Essential Business Guidance](#) and adhere to the guidelines within this Safety Plan. Please continue to regularly check the New York Forward site for guidance that is applicable to your business or certain parts of your business functions, and consult the state and federal resources listed below.

COVID-19 Reopening Safety Plan

Name of Business:

Industry:

More Resources

- [Checklist](#)
 - Contains steps to be completed before reopening and steps to be completed daily once open
- [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#)
 - Addresses questions and concerns across business sectors

Training Goal

To familiarize you with the NYS guidance:

- Mandates and best practices
- Main sections: physical distancing; personal protective equipment (PPE); child care program activities; proper hygiene, cleaning and disinfection; communication; and screening

Must versus Should

- Mandate = Must
- Best Practice = Should

**Remember to follow Article 43/47
of the NYC Health Code**

Physical Distancing — Must

- Maximum group size is 15 children
 - Have the same group of children stay with the same staff as much as possible (static group)
 - Eliminate or minimize contact between each static group of children, including by limiting use of common spaces at the same time.
- Reconfigure space to limit overall density of rooms to 15 or fewer children per group.

Physical Distancing — Must

- Implement practices to maintain adequate physical distancing, such as in restrooms and breakrooms; add signage and systems to restrict occupancy (e.g., flagging when occupied) when physical distancing cannot otherwise be maintained in small areas.
- Prohibit non-essential visitors.

Physical Distancing — Should

- Ensure employees maintain a distance of at least 6 feet at all times from one another, except for safety reasons.
- Restrict or modify the number of work areas and seating areas for employees to maintain 6 feet of distance.
- Reduce bi-directional foot traffic using tape or signs with arrows in any areas in which lines are commonly formed or people may congregate (e.g., in vestibules).

Physical Distancing — Should

- Establish designated no-contact areas for pick-ups and deliveries.
- Limit in-person gatherings of employees (e.g., breaks, meetings).

Physical Distancing — Should

- Limit on-site interactions (e.g., designate separate entrances and exits for employees and for people picking up and dropping off their children).
- Put in place child drop-off and pick-up procedures to allow for a strict 6 feet of distance between parents/guardians and program staff.

Physical Distancing — Should

- Stagger arrival and drop off times.
- Maintain a staffing plan that does not require employees to “float” between different groups of children except for staff absences.
- At naptime and rest time, make sure children are at least 6 feet apart, head-to-toe.
- On rainy days, set capacity of program or activity to allow for appropriate physical distancing between static groups of children, when groups must remain indoors or under shelters (e.g., park pavilions).
 - Stagger trip schedules to maintain static groups of children.

When Physical Distancing Isn't Possible When Caring for Young Children — Should

- Wear a large button-down, long sleeves shirt or smock and put long hair up off the collar in a ponytail or other updo.
- Have multiple changes of clothes on hand for employees and children in the program.
- Place contaminated clothes in a plastic bag and send home for laundry or wash on premises.

Personal Protective Equipment — Must

- Staff must wear face coverings at all times when interacting with children and when within 6 feet from other staff.
- Face coverings should not be used by children 2 years of age or younger or by anyone who cannot medically tolerate one.
- Children over the age of 2 do not need to wear face coverings while in the child care facility or in outdoor spaces exclusively used by the program.

Personal Protective Equipment — Must

- Provide acceptable face coverings to employees at no cost and maintain an adequate supply for replacement.
 - Acceptable face coverings include cloth (e.g., homemade sewn, quick cut, bandana) or masks
- Prohibit sharing of face coverings.
- Train staff on how to put on, take off, and clean or discard PPE.
- Limit the sharing of objects and discourage touching of shared surfaces; or require employees to wear gloves when in contact with shared objects or frequently touched areas; or require employees and children to wash hands before and after contact.

Personal Protective Equipment — Should

Install non-flammable barriers at reception and security desks, in accordance with [OSHA guidelines](#).

Child Care Activities

Examples (not limited to the following):

- Sport and athletic activities
- Food services
- Excursions

Sport and Athletic Activities — Must

When applicable:

- Keep static group of children separated.
- Focus on activities with little or no physical contact (e.g., running).
- Encourage sports that involve less physical closeness over those that require close contact or shared equipment.
- Encourage activities that are lower risk such as skill-building and conditioning.
- Enhance cleaning and disinfection protocols.
- Refer to [CDC guidelines](#).

Food Service — Must

- Serve individual portions to children.
- Keep static groups of children separated.
- Stagger meal and snack times to reduce occupancy/ congregation.
- Separate tables with seating at least 6 feet apart from other tables.

Excursions — Must

- Discourage field trips and other off-site activities.
- If transportation occurs, make all reasonable efforts to maintain static groups of children in vehicles.
 - If groups of children must be in the same vehicle, seating must be arranged to maximize distance between different groups of children and employees.
 - All individuals (driver, employees and children) over age 2 and able to medically tolerate a face covering must wear face coverings.

Excursions — Should

If transportation occurs:

- Ensure that when children are boarding the vehicle, they are occupying seats from back to front, where possible.
- Increase ventilation, when weather permits, within any vehicle (e.g., opening the top hatches of buses or opening windows).

Hygiene, Cleaning and Disinfection — Must

- Adhere to hygiene, cleaning and disinfection requirements from the [CDC](#) and [NYS Department of Health](#) and maintain logs on site that document date, time and scope of cleaning and disinfection.
 - The NYC Health Department has a [model cleaning/disinfection log](#). Visit nyc.gov/health/coronavirus and review the “Guidance for Businesses” tab.

Hygiene, Cleaning and Disinfection — Must

- Provide and maintain hand hygiene stations: hand-washing with soap, running warm water, and disposable paper towels; alcohol-based hand sanitizer for areas where hand-washing is not available or practical.
- Make hand-washing stations or hand sanitizer is available throughout common areas.
- Employees and children must perform hand hygiene immediately upon entering the program.

Hygiene, Cleaning and Disinfection — Must

Require staff and children to practice hand hygiene in the following instances:

- Upon arrival to the first program activity
- Between all program activities
- After using the restroom
- Before eating
- Before departing the last program activity

Hygiene, Cleaning and Disinfection — Must

- Provide appropriate cleaning/disinfection supplies for shared and frequently touched surfaces (e.g., door handles, art supplies) and encourage employees to clean/disinfect before and after touching such surfaces and object, followed by hand hygiene.
- Regularly clean and disinfect equipment and toys using the Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) [list of products](#) identified by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as effective against COVID-19.

Hygiene, Cleaning and Disinfection — Must

- Limit children from using toys that can't be cleaned/sanitized (e.g., dress-up clothes, puppets).
- For programs with rest periods for children, make individual clean bed coverings available for each child, and do not allow bedding to be shared unless cleaned/disinfected.

Hygiene, Cleaning and Disinfection — Should

- Strongly encourage parents/guardians to not allow children to not bring toys from home.
- If staff eat separately from the children, encourage staff to bring lunch from home.
- Place hand sanitizer in convenient locations (e.g., entrances and exits, security and reception desks).

Hygiene, Cleaning and Disinfection — Should

- Place signage near hand sanitizer stations indicating that visibly soiled hands should be washed with soap and water, as hand sanitizer is not effective on visibly soiled hands.
- Place receptacles around the facility for disposal of soiled items, including single-use PPE.

Communication — Must

- **Affirm** that you have reviewed, understood and will implement NYS-issued guidelines.
- **Train** all employees on applicable precautions/policies in NYS guidance remotely or in-person using appropriate physical distancing and requiring face coverings for all participants.
- **Complete** the NYS safety plan and post it on site. NYS has a template you can use. You must also have a child care safety plan as required by the NYC Health Code.

Communication — Must

- **Post** signage inside and outside of the facility to remind individuals to adhere to proper hygiene, physical distancing, appropriate use of face coverings, and cleaning and disinfecting protocols.
 - [Signs](#) are available for download on the Health Department website and by calling **311**. Visit nyc.gov/health/coronavirus and review the “Posters and Flyers” tab.

Communication — Should

- Develop a communications plan for employees, parents/guardians and children that includes applicable instructions, training, signage, and a static means to provide information.
- Train staff on how to support children's development of good public health behaviors and social interaction practices in congregate settings to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- Designate a staff person to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. Employees and parent/guardians should know who this person is and how to contact them.

Health Screening — Must

- Instruct staff to stay home if they are sick and remind parents/guardians to keep sick children home.
- Implement mandatory health screening assessment (e.g., questionnaire, temperature check) for employees and visitors (e.g., contractors, vendors), and for children, either directly or through their parent/guardian.

Health Screening — Must

- Review the FAQs on health screening and consider using or adapting this sample [COVID-19 Symptom Screening Tool](#).
- Staff can assess their own health before arriving to work, and parents can assess the health of their children before arriving at the child care program.
 - Document that screening was done – a [model documentation log](#) is on the NYC Health Department’s webpage (visit nyc.gov/health/coronavirus and review the “Guidance for Businesses” tab).
 - For children arriving to a program via bus transportation and for employees who provide supervision on the bus, screening must be completed prior to boarding the bus, when feasible.

Health Screening — Must

- In the event that a parent/guardian of a child must be isolated because they have tested positive for, or exhibited symptoms of, COVID-19, the parent/guardian must be advised that they cannot enter the site for any reason, including picking up their child.
 - Have an emergency contact authorized by the parent pick up the child.
 - As a close contact, the child must not return to the child care for 14 days from last time they were in close contact with the person with COVID-19 (if in same household or is otherwise a close contact).

Health Screening — Must

- If the parent/guardian — who is a member of the same household as the child — is being quarantined as a precautionary measure, without symptoms or a positive test, staff should walk out or drop off the child to the parent/guardian at the boundary of, or outside, the premises.
- As a “contact of a contact,” the child may return to the child care program during the duration of the quarantine.

Health Screening — Must

- If a child has symptoms of COVID-19 or has a positive diagnostic test, the child must isolate and may not attend the child care until:
 - It has been at least 10 days from symptom onset, with the last three days fever-free (without use of fever-reducing medicine) and an overall reduction in symptoms.
 - If no symptoms, 10 days from the date they were tested
- If an employee or child tests positive for COVID-19:
 - Email the NYC Test and Trace Corps at CovidEmployerReport@nychhc.org.
 - Let your [Borough Office](#) know.

Health Screening — Should

- Perform screening remotely (e.g., by telephone or electronic survey) before individuals arrive, if possible.
- Prevent individuals from interacting in close contact with each during screenings, if on site.
- Maintain a continuous log of every person, including employees, parents/guardians, children, and any essential visitors who may have close contact with other individuals at the work site or area, excluding contactless deliveries.
- Refer to the NYC Health Department [guidance](#) regarding protocols and policies for employees, parents/guardians or children seeking to return to work or the site after a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 or after such person had close contact with a person with COVID-19.

If There Is A Case Of COVID-19 In Your Child Care Program

- Identify all close contacts. This includes all adults and children in the same static classroom group as the person with COVID-19 and any other person who has been within 6 feet of the person diagnosed with COVID-19 for at least 10 minutes.
- All close contacts must stay home for 14 days from the last contact with the individual who has COVID-19.
- Maintain static groups of children to avoid creating more close contacts.

There is a lot to do, but we are in it together and the Bureau of Child Care is here to help.

Resources

- [Interim Guidance for Child Care and Day Camp Programs During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#)
- [COVID-19 Mental Health Resources](#)
- [COVID-19 and the Mental Health of Children](#)
- [Reopening Checklist](#)
- [Business Reopening Safety Plan Template](#)
- [Reopening NYC FAQ](#)
- [Sample COVID-19 Symptom Screening Tool](#)
- [New York State Registered Disinfectants Based on EPA List](#)
- [CDC Recommendations](#)
- nyc.gov/health/coronavirus

Questions?

If you have additional questions,
please email
childcareinfo@health.nyc.gov.