

Updated: September 22, 2020

**Children and Family Services Division  
Early Childhood Services**

**Child Care Provider Frequently Asked Questions**

**Healthy Practices for Back to School:**

**Q1 Do I have to assist with distance learning if I have school age children attending my program.**

Each program has different staffing needs and program needs. The decision to have this option available will be left up to the individual programs.

**Q2 How can I safely transition children into my program when they arrive after school?**

For any child that enters the childcare facility, utilize the modified [“Daily Health Check”](#) procedure for children. Children should wash hands upon arrival.

- If a child exhibits two or more of the indicated symptoms or screened “yes” the child should not be allowed to remain at the childcare facility.
- Keep sick child comfortable and supervised in an area 6 feet away from other children until the child is picked up. Clean area after sick child is picked up.

**Q3 I provide transportation for after school children that attend my program, should I conduct a daily health check before allowing children on the van or bus?**

Before any child that enters the van or bus, utilize the modified [“Daily Health Check”](#) procedure for children.

- It is important to remember to provide supervision for both the children in the van/bus and for the sick child.
- For the children who answer “no” and are allowed to enter the van/bus, it is recommended for the child to sanitize their hands before they enter, along with wear a mask if they are not able to socially distance in the van/bus.

**Q4 What should I do if a child reports symptom during the Health Check, do I allow them on the bus or van?**

No, call the child’s parents and if possible, wait with the child at the school until the child’s parent arrives.

You must always provide supervision for both the sick child and the children in van/bus .

If this is not possible it will be important for you to create a plan with the school so the ill child is taken care of and you can continue your school pick up route.

**Q5 Should I have staff and children wear masks in the van or bus?**

It is strongly recommended that everyone on a van or bus wear a mask if you will be unable to be socially distant.

**Q6 How can I safely provide in-person orientation/open house for my families?**

- Ask individuals the same screening questions as used for children and staff each day before they can enter your facility or home. If they do not pass the screening questions, then the individuals should not enter the facility/home.
- Individuals should wash their hands or use hand sanitizer upon entering.
- Stagger Attendance
- Limit time in classroom
- Require Masks
- Practice Social Distancing
- Clean frequently touched items/surfaces (using soap and water) between groups of families

**Q7 What if there are multiple groups using shared spaces such as gyms, bathrooms, playgrounds and classrooms?**

- Cleaning (using soap and water) shared outdoor toys and playground equipment (frequently touched surfaces such as railings/grab bars) between groups of children.
- Indoor gyms/gross motor rooms (frequently touched items/surfaces) are recommended to be cleaned (using soap and water) between groups of children.
- Shared bathrooms should be disinfected between groups of children

**Cleaning/Sanitizing/Disinfecting**

**Q8 What is the difference between cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting?**

Sometimes these terms are used as if they mean the same thing, but they are not the same.

**Cleaning** with soap and water should always be the first step prior to sanitizing or disinfecting. Cleaning uses soap and water and accomplishes the removal of dirt and impurities, including germs, from surfaces which will enable the sanitizer or disinfectant product to properly work. Cleaning alone does not kill germs, but it decreases their number.

**Sanitizing** is the use of a product that reduces but does not eliminate germs on inanimate surfaces to levels considered safe by public health codes or regulations. A sanitizer may be appropriate to use on food contact surfaces (dishes, utensils, cutting boards, highchair trays) and toys that children may place in their mouths. Sanitizing for these purposes must always be done with a product that has been labeled for this purpose and all manufacturer's instructions should be followed.

**Disinfecting** is the use of a product that destroys or inactivates germs (but not spores) on an inanimate object. A disinfectant may be appropriate to use on hard, non-porous surfaces such as diaper change tables, counter tops, door & cabinet handles, and toilets and other bathroom surfaces. **Disinfectants should not be used on food contact surfaces or mouthed toys.** Disinfecting must always be done with a product that has been labeled for this purpose and all manufacturer's instructions should be followed.

Utilize this link from CDC to determine when something should be sanitized versus disinfected: <https://nrckids.org/files/appendix/AppendixK.pdf>

Utilize this link from the CDC regarding cleaning and disinfecting your facility: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fprepare%2Fdisinfecting-building-facility.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fprepare%2Fdisinfecting-building-facility.html)

**Q9 Are there alternatives to chlorine bleach?**

A product that is not chlorine bleach can be used in childcare settings IF:

- it is registered with the EPA (<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>)
- it is also described as a sanitizer or as a disinfectant

Check the label to see how long you need to leave the sanitizer or disinfectant in contact with the surface you are treating, whether you need to rinse it off before contact by children, for any precautions when handling, and whether it can be used on a surface that may come in contact with child's mouth or food.

**Q10 Can hydrogen peroxide be used instead of chlorine bleach?**

You can use products with hydrogen peroxide as the active ingredient instead of chlorine bleach, however, check to see if the product has an EPA registration number and follow the manufacturer's instructions for use and safe handling. Remember that EPA- registered products will also have available a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) that will provide instructions for the safe use of the product and guidance for first aid response to an accidental exposure to the chemical.

**Q11 How do I safely prepare bleach solutions?**

- **Follow the manufacturer's instructions for dilution and contact time, bleach concentrations normally range from 5.25 to 8.25% active sodium hypochlorite and this will determine how to correctly mix the solution.**
- Protect yourself from exposure to bleach (wear gloves, eye protection, and make sure the room is ventilated)
- Dilute bleach with cool water
- Add bleach to the water rather than the water to bleach to reduce fumes
- Never mix any other chemicals with bleach
- Bleach solution must be mixed fresh daily to be effective
- Label the solution container (bleach sanitizer or bleach disinfectant) and the date mixed
- Never mix or store ammonia with bleach or products that contain bleach.

**A. Preparation for Sanitizing:**

- Prior to mixing the solution you must determine the concentration of the bleach product. Recipes for the most common concentrations are below, please confirm the concentration of sodium hypochlorite on your product prior to mixing.
- Sanitizer solution for use on food contact surfaces and mouthed toys must be made with unscented regular bleach formulas and should be 50-100 ppm but no greater than 200 ppm as measured by test strips.

Amount of Water	Amount of Bleach Product by Concentration	
	5.25 %	8.25 %
1 gallon	1 Tablespoon	1 teaspoon
1 quart	$\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon	$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon

### B. Preparation for Disinfecting:

- Prior to mixing the solution you must determine the concentration of the bleach product. Recipes for the most common concentrations are below, please confirm the concentration of sodium hypochlorite on your product prior to mixing.
- Disinfection solution should be used for high touch surfaces such as light switches, door handles, railings, desks, chairs, sinks, faucets, bathrooms, and diapering surfaces.

Amount of Water	Amount of Bleach Product by Concentration	
	5.25 %	8.25 %
1 gallon	5 Tablespoons (1/3 cup)	$3 \frac{1}{4}$ Tablespoons
1 quart	4 teaspoons	$2 \frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons

### Q12 How do I safely use bleach solutions?

- Use only on hard non-porous surfaces in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Protect yourself from exposure to bleach (wear gloves, eye protection, and make sure the room is ventilated) when using bleach solution.
- Apply the bleach dilution after cleaning the surface with soap or detergent and rinsing with water if visible soil is present.
- If using a spray bottle, adjust the setting to produce a heavy spray instead of a fine mist.
- Allow for the contact time specified on the label of the bleach product.
- Apply when children are not present in the area.
- Ventilate the area by allowing fresh air to circulate and allow the surfaces to completely air dry or wipe dry after the required contact time before allowing children back into the area.
- Store all chemicals securely, out of reach of children and in a way that they will not tip and spill.

Remember that any cleaning, sanitizing or disinfecting product must always be safely stored out of reach of children. Always follow the manufacturer's instruction for safe handling to protect yourselves and those in your care.

### Q13 How do I clean and sanitize toys?

- Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized should not be used.
- Toys that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion should be set aside until they

are cleaned by hand by a person wearing gloves. Clean with water and detergent, rinse, sanitize with an EPA-registered disinfectant, and air-dry or clean in a mechanical dishwasher. Be mindful of items more likely to be placed in a child's mouth, like play food, dishes, and utensils.

- Machine washable cloth toys should be used by one individual at a time or should not be used at all. These toys should be laundered before being used by another child.
- Do not share toys with other groups of infants or toddlers, unless they are washed and sanitized before being moved from one group to the other.
- Set aside toys that need to be cleaned. Place in a dish pan with soapy water or put in a separate container marked for "soiled toys." Keep dish pan and water out of reach from children to prevent risk of drowning. Washing with soapy water is the ideal method for cleaning. Try to have enough toys so that the toys can be rotated through cleanings.
- Children's books, like other paper-based materials such as mail or envelopes, are not considered as a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfection procedures.

**Q14 How should I care for items such as nap items (sheets, pillows, blankets, etc.) and bibs?**

Keep each child's nap items separate, storing in individually labeled bins, cubbies, or bags. Nap items should be laundered weekly, sooner if soiled. Labeled cots/mats should be cleaned weekly, sooner if soiled. Unlabeled cots/mats should be cleaned daily. Bibs should be laundered after every use. Do not shake dirty items to minimize the possibility of dispersing the virus through the air. Wash items as appropriate in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Items should be laundered in the warmest appropriate water setting and dried in a dryer completely. Store clean items away from any soiled items that have not yet been laundered or cleaned.

## **Food**

**Q15 How often should I change gloves when preparing food?**

Gloves should be only worn when directly touching food. Gloves should not be re used once removed. Gloves are not necessary if a utensil or tongs are used.

Example, a person making toast should wash their hands, then open the bag of bread with bare hands, then put on their gloves to touch the bread and put in the toaster. If the person can stay at the toaster and keep making toast, then one pair could be worn until all the pieces of toast are made. If the person places the bread in the toaster and then touches other things such as cartons of milk, jars of jelly, etc. then the gloves should be removed and then replaced with a clean pair before handling the toast.

**Q16 How can children safely bring their own lunch or snacks to share with their class?**

If food is provided by children to share (ex. snack/birthday treat), the food is recommended be store bought and pre-packaged (sealed in a box, bag, can, or another container by the manufacturer) and served by the provider following sanitary procedures.

- If children bring their own food (ex. sack/cold lunch), the food is recommended to be removed from the lunch bag/box/tote and placed on a paper barrier on the table. The lunch bag/box/tote is considered contaminated so it should not be placed on the table during meals.

## **Masks**

### **Q17 How can masks be worn safely in a child care setting?**

When a child wears a mask, it is important to remove the mask for eating/drinking, toothbrushing, using a tissue, active physical play, playing on playground/climbing equipment and for sleeping/preparing to sleep.

- ***Masks should NOT be worn by children under 2 years of age because of the danger of suffocation or strangulation.***

If children or staff have any special needs (asthma, sensory disorders, anxiety disorders, etc.) where masks may worsen their condition, masks may not be feasible or recommended for those individuals. If masks are worn by individuals with those conditions, close supervision should be given. If there is a question whether a mask should be worn by an individual due to their condition, it is recommended to consult that individual's health care provider. Masks should not be worn by anyone who is having trouble breathing, unconscious or is unable to remove their mask without assistance. Caution should also be taken if a mask is worn during temperatures of high heat to prevent heat related illness.

When masks are worn, it is important to follow guidelines to use, handle, clean, and store them properly.

### **Guidance for using, handling, storing, and cleaning masks:**

Masks should be labeled with the individual's name with a permanent marker.

Wash or sanitize your hands before you put on your mask or after you take it off or adjust it.

Try not to touch your mask when wearing it.

Put the mask on and adjust it properly before entering a classroom or before coming within 6 feet of another adult or child.

Individuals should be careful not to touch their eyes, nose, mouth or the inside of the mask when putting on their mask, adjusting their mask or removing their mask.

Fold the mask in half, face side together after removing the mask.

Prevent the masks from touching each other once they have been removed. Here are some examples:

- Place mask on a paper barrier (paper towel, paper napkin, piece of paper, etc.) instead of placing directly on another surface. Label the paper barrier if needed to prevent masks from being mixed up.
- Place each mask in an individual labeled Ziploc bag or paper bag.
- Hang masks individually on adhesive hooks or small nails on the wall with each individual's name.

Keep the masks out of the reach of children.

Try to keep your mask on the entire time you are in a classroom. If you need to take your mask off, try to stay 6 feet away from children and adults.

Masks are recommended to be replaced if wet/soiled. It is recommended for everyone to have at least two masks available each day.

Cloth Masks should be laundered daily.

### **CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

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