



## **Policies and Procedures**

**Section: Operations**

**Issued: June 24, 2020**

**Subject: PLASP COVID 19 – Outbreak  
Management Policy**

### **POLICY**

This Policy is being implemented to ensure the health and well-being of children and staff within the child care centres, during COVID 19. Child Care Services will adhere to all guidelines and will monitor the care of children for emerging signs or symptoms of any illness, including COVID-19. Children and/or staff who become ill while at the centre must self-isolate at home. The Program Director will initiate the centre's illness management policies, related to outbreak management for COVID-19.

### **PURPOSE**

To ensure that all employees are aware of and adhere to the directive established by Public Health and PLASP regarding the management and reporting of communicable and infectious diseases and outbreaks in PLASP programs.

### **SCOPE**

This policy applies to all PLASP employees.

### **PROCEDURES**

#### **Health Checks for Children in Care**

Staff will ensure that all children in care are monitored for illness, with a temperature taken as appropriate, and monitor for the following signs and symptoms of COVID-19:

- Fever (temperature  $\geq 37.8^{\circ}\text{C}$ )
- New or worsening cough or shortness of breath

- Lethargy (lack of energy) or difficulty feeding (if an infant and no other diagnosis)
- **Any** of the following symptoms:
  - sore throat
  - Difficulty swallowing
  - Pink eye (conjunctivitis)
  - Chills
  - Headaches
  - Unexplained fatigue/malaise/ muscle aches
  - Abdominal pain
  - Croup (respiratory infection resulting in barking cough and difficulty breathing)
  - Diarrhea/nausea/vomiting
  - Decreases or loss of sense of taste or smell
  - Running nose/sneezing without other known cause
  - Nasal congestion without other known cause

Staff must ensure that hand hygiene is performed before and after each health check with each child. If thermometers with single use tips are used, the tips must be discarded after each use. Thermometers must be cleaned with 70% alcohol wipes with a one-minute contact time for each use. Staff are only required to document the health check or take a temperature if symptoms are noted. Staff must document any symptoms observed on the child's [Illness Tracking Form](#).

### **Children Who Display COVID-19 Related Symptoms During Care**

If **ANY ONE** of the symptoms related to COVID-19 are present in a child, the child must be immediately isolated and sent home. If the child has siblings who attend the same centre, all siblings must also be isolated. Staff are required to:

- Isolate the child with symptoms immediately from other children and staff into a designated isolation room (e.g. sick room).
  - Move the cohort of children who were in the program room with the symptomatic child to the vacant program room and immediately clean and disinfect the impacted room.
  - Increase ventilation in the isolation room if possible (e.g., open windows).
  - Keep the child comfortable by providing a separate cot and toys. Clean and disinfect the cot and all toys after the child leaves the centre.
- While waiting for the child to be taken home, the child must be supervised by one staff person until the child leaves while maintaining a physical distance of 2 meters, if possible.
- Ensure the child wears a surgical-type or non-medical face mask, (if tolerated) to cover the child's nose and mouth. Cloth face coverings should not be placed on children under the age of 2 or on anyone who has trouble breathing, is unconscious, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance. The staff caring for the child should also wear a face mask. Hands must be washed before and after taking off a mask. A cloth scarf (e.g. made of cotton) may also be used.
  - In addition, staff must perform hand hygiene and attempt to not touch their face with unwashed hands. Disposable gloves may be used when there is close contact with the child. Staff must ensure that they wash their hands or use hand sanitizer (if hands not visibly soiled) immediately upon removal of the gloves. The most important measures are proper hand hygiene and maintaining a 2 meter distance as much as possible.

- Respiratory etiquette should be practiced while the child is waiting to be picked up. Tissues will be provided to the child and disposed of properly after use in a lined, covered garbage container.
- Staff to notify the parent/guardian to arrange for immediate pick-up of the child. If a parent cannot be reached, an emergency contact person will be contacted to pick up the child.
- Staff will document the symptoms observed, the date and time that symptoms occurred, and the program room the child attended on the [Illness Tracking Form](#).
- Once the child has been picked up, the Supervisor will ensure that the isolation room (i.e. room where child was separated ) and any other surfaces that the child had contact with are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.
- The child should be excluded from the centre and self-isolate for 14 days from the start of symptoms and be tested for COVID-19 before returning to the centre. The Supervisor will provide the parent/guardian with contact information for Peel Public Health (905 799-7700) or Toronto Public Health (416 338-7600) for direction.
- If tested negative, and free of symptoms for 24 hours, the child must pass re-entry screening (refer to COVID-19 Re-Entry Screening Form for Previously Ill Children/Staff) to return to the centre.
- If tested positive, Public Health will provide direction on when the child can return to the centre.
- Alternatively, a medical note from a physician stating that either the child is fit to return to the centre or is free from communicable disease may be provided to access child care.

### **Staff Who Display COVID-19 Related Symptoms While at Work**

Any staff person who presents symptoms of COVID-19 including fever, new or worsening cough or shortness of breath and other symptoms as described in the **COVID-19 Active Screening Form for Staff** must stay home. In the event that a staff person becomes ill while at the centre:

- Staff should isolate themselves as quickly as possible until they are able to leave the centre and wear a surgical-type or non-medical face mask covering the nose and mouth.
- COVID-19 testing will be required for any staff experiencing symptoms before returning to work. The Program Director will provide the staff person with contact information for Public Health and a referral letter for COVID-19 priority testing.
- Staff must remain off work until symptoms are fully resolved and negative laboratory tests have been confirmed. If the staff person tests negative, they should not return to work until free of symptoms for 24 hours.
- **If the staff tests negative for COVID-19**, and is free of symptoms for 24 hours, s/he must pass re-entry screening (refer to **COVID-19 Re-Entry Screening Form for Previously Ill Children/Staff**) to return to work.
- **If the staff tests positive**, Peel Public Health will provide direction on when s/he can return to work.

### **When a child or staff person becomes ill, the Program Director will report the illness to:**

- **Public Health**
  - The Program Director will contact Public Health to notify them of a potential COVID-19 case and seek advice regarding the information that should be shared with staff and parents/guardians of children enrolled at the centre.

- Other children and staff in the centre who had close contact with a child or staff person who became ill should be grouped together. Public Health will provide any further direction on testing and isolation of close contacts.
  - Children or staff who have been exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19 should be excluded from the child care setting for 14 days.
- **Ministry of Education**
  - Follow the regular Serious Occurrence (SO) reporting requirements (including submitting a SO report in CCLS and posting the SO Notification form).
- **Region of Peel Early Years and Child Care Services Division**
  - Notify Service Manager at Early Years System [Division@peelregion.ca](mailto:Division@peelregion.ca) that a Serious Occurrence has been filed with Ministry of Education.
- **Toronto Public Health**
  - Child care centres must immediately report the following to TPH by contacting the surveillance unit at **416-392-7411** during work hours (8:30am to 4:30pm, Monday to Friday) or **3-1-1** after hours:
    - Clusters of suspected cases (e.g. two or more children or staff with COVID-19 symptoms within a 48-hour period).
    - Cases of COVID-19 among staff or child attendees that are laboratory-confirmed or probable (symptoms occurring among a staff or child who has been exposed to a person with confirmed COVID-19).
- **PLASP's Health, Safety & Wellness Specialist**
  - Submit an Incident Report to Josie Fontana ([josiefontana@plasp.com](mailto:josiefontana@plasp.com)) to ensure that cases are monitored and reporting requirements to the Ministry of Labour, Joint Health & Safety Committee/H & S Representative and WSIB, as applicable, can be initiated.

### **Instructions for a Child or Staff with Confirmed COVID-19 Illness**

If the Program Director is notified that a staff or child has tested positive for COVID-19, the following steps will be taken:

- Exclude the person with the confirmed case from the centre until further notice.
- The Program Director will call the contact provided for Public Health to ensure an investigation is conducted and necessary measures are taken to notify each of the ill child's or staff person's contacts (i.e. other staff, children and close family). Public Health will provide advice and the steps necessary to control the outbreak.
- Provide Public Health with the most current [Illness Tracking Form](#)
- Notify cleaning staff to increase cleaning and disinfection practices. Refer to the **General Sanitary Precautions and Physical Distancing Measures to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 in Child Care Centres Policy**.
- Use a disinfectant with a Drug Identification Number (DIN), check expiry date, and follow manufacturer's instructions.
- A note should be posted at the front entrance of the child care centre for at least 7 days notifying parents and caregivers of the situation (*i.e. there was one confirmed case of COVID-19 at the centre on a specific date and the child or staff person affected are self isolating for 14 days. The environment has been cleaned and disinfected*).
- In consultation with Public Health, child care centres must consider a single, symptomatic, laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19 in a staff person or child as a confirmed COVID-19

outbreak. Outbreaks should be declared in collaboration between the centre and Public Health.

- Consult with Public Health to prepare and provide fact sheets and letters to parents/guardians and staff about the situation and the response measures taken by the emergency child care centre.

### **Occupational Health and Safety for Staff**

- When the Program Director is notified that a staff person has tested positive for COVID-19, they should advise their Area Manager, PLASP's Health, Safety & Wellness Specialist and consult with Public Health to determine when the staff can return to work. Staff should also report to Health, Safety & Wellness Specialist (Josie Fontana – [josiefontana@plasp.com](mailto:josiefontana@plasp.com)) prior to returning to work.
- If the staff person's illness is determined to be work-related – in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and its regulations – the PLASP's Health, Safety & Wellness Specialist must provide a written notice within four days of being advised that the staff person has an occupational illness, including an occupationally-acquired infection, or if a claim has been made to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) by, or on behalf of, the staff with respect to an occupational illness, including an occupational infection, to the:
  - Ministry of Labour; and
  - Joint health and safety committee (or health and safety representative)
- Any instances of occupationally acquired infection shall be reported by PLASP's Health, Safety & Wellness Specialist to WSIB within 72 hours of receiving notification of the illness.

### **Closure of an Early Learning and Child Care Centre**

The decision to close the centre will depend on several factors and will be determined on a case-by-case basis in consultation with Public Health. Case scenarios could include, but are not limited to, a case with an ill staff person with exposure to multiple children, or two or more cases within the centre.

## **RESOURCES**

### **Ministry of Education**

[Operational Guidance for Child Care Re-Opening](https://www.plasp.com/Files//child-care-re-opening-operational-gu.pdf) (<https://www.plasp.com/Files//child-care-re-opening-operational-gu.pdf>)

### **Peel Region**

[COVID-19 Enhanced Health and Safety Protocols for Licensed Child Care Centres](https://www.plasp.com/Files//LCCCCOVID-19EnhancedHealthandSafetyPr.pdf) (<https://www.plasp.com/Files//LCCCCOVID-19EnhancedHealthandSafetyPr.pdf>)

### **Toronto**

[COVID-19: Guidance for Child Care Settings](https://www.plasp.com/Files//9571-COVID-19-Guidance-for-Child-Car.pdf) (<https://www.plasp.com/Files//9571-COVID-19-Guidance-for-Child-Car.pdf>)