

DELAWARE INSTITUTE FOR  
*Excellence in*  
Early Childhood



Delaware  
Department of Education



## RE-OPENING DELAWARE CHILD CARE SAFELY

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*A BLUEPRINT FOR SUPPORTING OUR EARLY  
CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONALS DURING  
COVID-19*

*WEBINAR 2 - JUNE 18, 2020*

# WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Panel Members:

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# THANK YOU TO DELAWARE'S CHILD CARE PROFESSIONALS!



# WEBINAR OBJECTIVES

- Talk through Delaware requirements and additional recommendations for requested topic areas
- Share answers and responses to questions submitted by early childhood professionals

# BLUEPRINT ORGANIZATION

What questions will this answer?



# CONTENT AREAS

- Who can I provide care for?
- How should I change my operating procedures?
  - Revised Group Size, Ratio Requirements, and Staffing
  - Minimize Risk at Drop Off and Pick Up Times
    - Facility Access
    - Screening Procedures
  - Guidelines for Cleaning and Disinfecting the Environment
  - Handwashing
  - Diapering and Toileting
  - Minimize Risk While Caring for Children
    - Healthy Hygiene Practices
    - Physical Distancing
    - Outside Play
    - Meals & Snacks
- What should I do if someone in my program gets sick?

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES (APPENDIX)

How can I support the social and emotional needs of everyone in my program?

Supporting Early  
Childhood  
Professionals

Talking with  
Children about  
COVID-19

How can I make sure my program is ready?

Preparedness  
and Planning

Arrival/Drop-  
off and  
Screening

Stable Groups  
and Social  
Distancing

Sanitation and  
Cleaning  
Practices

# PRESENTATION OF HEALTH AND SAFETY PRACTICES



## REQUIRED

Specific practices required by OCCL and DPH

Mandated for all Delaware child care programs open and serving children



## RECOMMENDED

Practices to consider from other respected sources, such as the CDC

Specific ideas for implementation that may be helpful if feasible in your program

**NOT REQUIRED**

# FAMILY CARE GROUP SIZE, RATIOS, AND STAFFING

## DELAWARE REQUIRED



Family and Large Family Child Care Homes must follow DELACARE Regulations regarding the number and ages of children served, while practicing social distancing to the extent practical given the age, ability, and social and emotional needs of the children in care.



# CENTER-BASED GROUP SIZE, RATIOS, AND STAFFING – DELACARE REQUIRED

	Age of Child	Minimum Staff/Child Ratio	Maximum Group Size
Infant	Under 12 months	1:4	8
Young toddler (1 year old)	12 through 23 months	1:6	12
Older toddler (2 years old)	24 through 35 months	1:8	15
Young preschool child (3 years old)	36 through 47 months	1:10	15
Older preschool child (4 years old)	48 months or older, not yet attending kindergarten or higher	1:12	15
School-age child	Attending kindergarten or higher	1:15	15

Programs must ensure that they have adequate staff each day to meet the restricted ratios and group sizes

# GROUP SIZE, RATIOS, AND STAFFING

## CDC RECOMMENDATIONS



Consider keeping siblings together, if possible, to limit the people that the family group has contact with (American Academy of Pediatrics)

Develop plans to cover classes in the event of increased staff absences. Reach out to substitutes to determine their anticipated availability if regular staff members need to stay home if they or their family members are sick or vulnerable.

Implement flexible sick leave policies and practices if feasible

Designate an individual to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. Employees should know who this person is and how to contact them

Create a communication system for staff and families for self-reporting of symptoms and for notifications of exposures or closures



# PROVIDER QUESTIONS: GROUP SIZE, RATIOS, AND STAFFING

- How can we recruit new families if we have to maintain the same group of children?
  - The restriction on group size is anticipated to be temporary. If you have vacancies based on the reduced group size, then you can recruit additional children. Otherwise, increasing enrollment will have to wait until group size returns to the usual number.
- For centers: staffing is still a big concern, as we started with a staffing shortage and we now have staff calling out with possible covid symptoms or not wanting to return to work for fear of getting sick. What is your guidance for recruiting and maintaining staff in this context to make sure we're able to maintain the required group sizes and ratios and have consistent groups?
  - Unfortunately, staffing concerns were an issue prior to Covid-19. While this topic has been a source of conversation and concern among several government agencies and higher education, OCCL has no solution to offer at this time.

## PROVIDER QUESTIONS: GROUP SIZE, RATIOS, AND STAFFING

- Can summer youth workers (youth participating in a work program with the City of Wilmington or City of Dover, for example) work in child care this summer? These individuals have a regular schedule and attend the child care facility daily. A rotating series of workers would not participate in the program. Some child care facilities have 1-2 workers and it is the same persons each day at the facility.
  - Yes, if the individuals meet the age requirements in DELACARE Regulations, if the individuals are the same each day, and if the daily health screenings are performed before the youth workers are admitted to the building. It is not permitted if the program wants to supply a series of different youth workers to the program. Consistency is required.

# FACILITY ACCESS

## DELAWARE REQUIRED



Programs must suspend the use of all outside contractors, enrichment programs, and entertainment, both indoors and outdoors, except:

- Contractors doing work outside of child care hours (ensure that proper cleaning/sanitizing has been conducted before children re-enter the facility or areas where work was being done)
- Physical therapy/Occupational therapy appointments
- Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants

Adults who drop off and pick up children must do so at the entrance to the facility, not the classroom, unless the classroom has its own separate entrance where the child can be safely dropped off

Staff will receive the children and see that they arrive safely in their classrooms



# FACILITY ACCESS

## CDC RECOMMENDATIONS



Stagger arrival and drop off times and plan to limit direct contact with parents as much as possible.

- Have child care providers greet children outside as they arrive.
- Infants could be transported in their car seats. Store car seat out of children's reach.

Ideally, the same parent or designated person should drop off and pick up the child every day.

If possible, older people such as grandparents or those with serious underlying medical conditions should not drop off or pick up children because they are more at risk due to severe illness from COVID-19



## PROVIDER QUESTIONS: FACILITY ACCESS

- Should we suspend tours to the facility at this time?
  - Outside persons are not permitted inside the facility at this time. Unless you can conduct virtual tours, they are not permitted right now.
- For family care with only one provider, leaving children inside during drop off and pick up times in order to receive another child creates a safety concern. Without other staff, what is the recommendation?
  - Children may not be left alone without adult supervision, even for brief periods of time. The configuration of a family child care can differ greatly from home to home and the safety of all children in care must be the first consideration. Depending on the home, it may be necessary for a single family member for the child to come inside the family child care home by a few steps to bring the child to the provider.

## PROVIDER QUESTIONS: FACILITY ACCESS

- What would be the safest way for infants to be handed off to the provider without use of a car seat, considering safe distancing?
  - Parents and providers should both be masked. The parent could place the infant in a stroller and the staff member would take the infant to the classroom. The stroller must be disinfected before another child is placed in it. Or, when the child has a car seat or carrier that is specific to them, the carrier could be placed on the floor or other safe surface, the handle could be wiped, and then the carrier can be used to transport the child. The provider should sanitize their hands before and after removing the child from the carrier. A last alternative would be that the masked parent simply hands the infant safely to the masked provider; no social distancing is maintained for this brief period of time.
- I need an electrical inspection. Is that allowed to happen if I take all of the children outside?
  - The child care area would have to be properly cleaned and disinfected before the children are permitted to return inside the child care facility. If the electrical inspection cannot be conducted outside of child care hours, then OCCL will grant an extension for you to get the inspection later.

# GUIDELINES FOR CLEANING AND DISINFECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

## DELAWARE REQUIRED

Suspend use of sand and water tables.

- Water tables may be used if proper social distancing can be maintained, such as only one child using the water table at a time, and water tables are cleaned between each child's use and sanitized at the end of the day.

Suspend use of play-doh or other clay-like materials

Suspend use of shared toys that children wear on their faces unless worn by an individual child and stored separately for that child

Staff and children **MUST** wash hands upon entering the class and upon leaving.

All hard surfaces must be sanitized twice a day and as needed

Toys should be separated for sanitizing immediately after being placed in a child's mouth

All frequently touched surfaces (doorknobs, light switches, faucets, phones) should be sanitized frequently throughout the day

Access to food preparation areas should be restricted to only staff who are essential to food preparation

Programs must ensure they have adequate supplies to meet these additional requirements

# GUIDELINES FOR CLEANING AND DISINFECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

## CDC RECOMMENDATIONS



Do not share toys between groups of children unless they are washed and sanitized between groups

Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized should not be used

Keep children's belongings separated and in individually labeled containers or areas and taken home each day and cleaned, if possible

Ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing high touch materials (e.g., art supplies), or limit use by one group of children at a time and disinfect between

Ensure that ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible

Open outside doors and windows as long as doing so does not pose a health or safety risk to children in the program



# PROVIDER QUESTIONS: GUIDELINES FOR CLEANING AND DISINFECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

- We are having everyone entering the building remove their shoes and place on “indoor shoes” that have been cleaned and disinfected or wear booties to cover their shoes. Is there any advantage to doing this or is this unnecessary?
  - According to guidance provided by Public Health, they would not discourage facilities from taking this step, but they are not aware of this being a standard recommendation from CDC. The risk from transfer that this prevents is likely minimal.

# HEALTHY HYGIENE PRACTICES: FACE COVERINGS - DELAWARE REQUIRED

- All child care providers and/or staff working in child care facilities must wear cloth face coverings while at work
- Business owners must provide these cloth face coverings to staff if staff do not already have them
- Business owners must deny entry to anyone over the age of 12 who is not wearing a face covering, if one is not available to be provided to that person

# HEALTHY HYGIENE PRACTICES: FACE COVERINGS - DELAWARE REQUIRED

- Children under age 2 should NOT wear face coverings.
- Children age 2 years and older who can wear a cloth face covering safely and consistently should wear one in accordance with [CDC guidance](#). There are a variety of [strategies](#) parents/guardians and child care providers can use to assist children with becoming comfortable wearing cloth face coverings. Parents/guardians are encouraged to practice these strategies at home to help their child become comfortable with wearing a cloth face covering prior to use of a cloth face covering in a child care.
- Cloth face coverings are recommended for children ages 2-4 when feasible.
- It is strongly recommended that children ages 5-12 in child care wear face coverings, if doing so will not either pose a health risk to them, encourage unnecessary touching of the face, create behavioral challenges, or if they cannot safely put on and take off the face covering.
- Face coverings are required for children older than age 12.

# HEALTHY HYGIENE PRACTICES: FACE COVERINGS - DELAWARE REQUIRED

- A child should not wear a face covering if it poses any health risks, such as choking, strangulation, difficulty breathing, constant touching of the face, or inability to remove or put on a mask without assistance.
- Face coverings should never be worn during nap time or during meals and may be removed for outdoor activities if social distancing can be maintained.
- For questions or guidance, child care facilities should contact [HSPContact@delaware.gov](mailto:HSPContact@delaware.gov).
- Parents/guardians and child care staff should discuss the considerations in this document for each individual child, and consult with the child's health care provider if necessary (e.g., for children with certain conditions such as asthma), to determine if an individual child is able to safely and consistently wear a cloth face covering while in child care.

## PROVIDER QUESTIONS: FACE COVERINGS

- If the children are napping and the provider is more than 6 feet away (cleaning, sitting, etc.), can the provider take their face covering off?
  - According to guidance provided by Public Health, yes, in general, if the provider is able to maintain a 6 feet distance, the mask may be removed. Nap time is a good time for removal or a break from the mask since the children are more stationary (hopefully), but Public Health would encourage providers to have the mask at the ready to be put on if needed to respond to a child.

# PHYSICAL DISTANCING

## DELAWARE REQUIRED



Adults who drop off and pick up children must do so at the entrance to the facility, not the classroom, unless the classroom has its own separate entrance where the child can be safely dropped off. Staff will receive the children and see that they arrive safely in their classrooms.

The maximum allowable group size is 15 children (or smaller, as indicated by DELACARE regulations).

Groups should consist of the same children and staff each day, and mixing of groups should be restricted as much as possible

Groups must be kept at least 6 feet apart if using shared spaces.

Providers may seek a variance from OCCL if they must have a group size larger than 15. Providers must follow the variance process outlined in DELACARE Regulations.



# PHYSICAL DISTANCING

## CDC RECOMMENDATIONS



If possible, the same child care providers should remain with the same group each day.

Space out seating to 6 ft. apart, if possible.

Consider cancelling or postponing special events such as performances, field trips, and extracurricular activities

If possible, at nap time, ensure that children's naptime mats (or cribs) are spaced out as much as possible, ideally 6 feet apart.

Consider placing children head to toe in order to further reduce the potential for viral spread.



## PROVIDER QUESTIONS: PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- Can centers take school-age children on buses to locations that are open and that are practicing social distancing? How can children be safely transported?
  - Field trips are not expressly prohibited. Maintaining social distancing is the issue in taking children to other locations. Unless each family provides their own transportation, maintaining social distancing during the transporting of children is an issue as well as maintaining social distancing while at the site.

Public Health has recommended that when transporting children on a school bus, for example, there should be one child per seat or alternating seats if possible. The proximity when being transported would increase the importance of masks being worn by those children that can wear them.

Drivers and other adults on the bus must be masked, hand sanitizer should be available, and the seats and other contact surfaces should be disinfected between groups. If one group is using the bus for a round trip, then Public Health recommends assigned seats and the bus be cleaned after the round trip is complete.

# OUTSIDE PLAY – DELAWARE REQUIRED

Public playgrounds are recommended to remain closed. Child care programs may continue to use their playgrounds with restrictions.

- Groups of children should be separated from each other throughout the day, including during outdoor play
- Only one group of children may be on a single playground at one time
- The equipment should be wiped down to the greatest extent possible between classes.

Use of sprinklers is permitted, if social distancing is maintained.

Face coverings may be removed for outdoor activities if social distancing can be maintained

If the facility has multiple playgrounds, one group may be on each playground provided the two groups remain at least six feet apart. The number of children in each group is limited to the maximum group size for that age group, and children from different classrooms may not be combined or mixed.

At this time, OCCL will not cite non-compliance to DELACARE Regulations if the requirement for daily moderate to vigorous physical indoor or out is not met

# OUTSIDE PLAY

## CDC RECOMMENDATIONS



Consider staggering playground times to limit the mixing of children

Clean high touch surfaces made of plastic or metal, such as grab bars and railings, routinely.



## PROVIDER QUESTIONS: OUTSIDE PLAY

- Public playgrounds are starting to open up at the town's discretion. Are child care programs allowed to utilize their playgrounds if they're not accessible to the public?
  - If a public playground is not currently accessible to the public, then a child care facility may not use it. If the question is asking if a child care facility may use their own playground, then the answer is yes, with a few restrictions. Groups should not be mixed while on the playground and social distancing should be observed as much as practical. Contact surfaces should be disinfected between uses by different groups

# WHAT SHOULD I DO IF SOMEONE IN MY PROGRAM GETS SICK?

## DELAWARE REQUIRED



If a child or employee tests positive for COVID-19, contact the Division of Public Health at **1-888-295-5156** or [dphcall@delaware.gov](mailto:dphcall@delaware.gov)

Facilities with positive cases should contact DPH at [dphcall@delaware.gov](mailto:dphcall@delaware.gov) or **2-1-1** for cleaning guidance specific to their facility



# WHAT SHOULD I DO IF SOMEONE IN MY PROGRAM GETS SICK?

## CDC RECOMMENDATIONS



Establish procedures to ensure children and staff who come to the child care sick or become sick are sent home as soon as possible. Consider establishing procedures for safely transporting anyone sick to their home, or to a healthcare facility, as appropriate

Keep sick children and staff separate from well children and staff until they can be sent home

Identify an area to separate anyone who exhibits COVID-19-like symptoms during hours of operation, ensuring that children are not left without adult supervision

Thoroughly clean and disinfect surfaces in the “sick area” after the sick individual has gone home

Identify areas the sick person had access to, so they can be cleaned and disinfected



# PROVIDER QUESTIONS: WHAT SHOULD I DO IF SOMEONE IN MY PROGRAM GETS SICK?

- What happens if an employee has been exposed to someone that tested positive for COVID-19?
  - According to guidance provided by Public Health, if the employee would be considered a close contact (less than 6' away for more than 10 minutes) then they should follow advice from DPH or their medical provider. The standard requirement is to self-isolate for 14 days, but there are allowances for critical workers.

# WE ARE HERE TO HELP



## OFFICE OF CHILD CARE LICENSING

Please contact your licensing specialist for questions, clarification, and support



## DIEEC - DELAWARE STARS

Technical Assistants are available to:

- Support individual programs with implementation
- Facilitate discussion and peer support through Communities of Practice



## DIEEC-PD

Trainings and coaching will be available to support content as needed



## FOLLOW-UP WEBINARS

EVERY WEEK FOR THE NEXT FOUR WEEKS



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# THANK YOU



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