

The Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS) will continue to provide you with the most current information pertaining to Child Care programs. We will continue to remain diligent in keeping this site current.

CDC Supplemental Guidance for Child Care Agencies Who Remain Open

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has posted a Supplemental Guide for Child Care. This guidance was written in collaboration with the Offices of Child Care and Head Start to provide resources and information specific to child care on issues associated with COVID-19. We have pulled highlights from this website <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html> on the major topics as listed below. We encourage you to visit the CDC page to see the full scope of information provided.

Social Distancing Strategies

- If possible, child care classes should include the same group each day, with the same child care providers each day. Consider creating a separate classroom or group for the children of healthcare workers and other first responders. If your program is unable to create a separate classroom, consider serving only the children of health care workers and first responders.
- Keep each group of children in a separate room.
- Limit the mixing of children, such as staggering playground times and keeping groups separate for special activities such as art, music, and exercising.

Clean and Disinfect

- Intensify cleaning and disinfection efforts:
 - Facilities should develop a schedule for cleaning and disinfecting. An example can be found [here](#).
 - [Routinely clean, sanitize, and disinfect](#) surfaces and objects that are frequently touched, especially toys and games. This may also include cleaning objects/surfaces not ordinarily cleaned daily such as doorknobs, light switches, classroom sink handles, countertops, nap pads, toilet training potties, desks, chairs, cubbies, and playground structures. Use the cleaners typically used at your facility. Guidance is available for the selection of appropriate [sanitizers or disinfectants](#) for childcare settings.
 - Use all cleaning products according to the directions on the label. For disinfection, most common EPA-registered, fragrance-free household disinfectants should be effective. A list of products that are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 is available [here](#). If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for concentration, application method, and contact time for all cleaning and disinfection products.
 - All cleaning materials should be kept secure and out of reach of children.

- Cleaning products should not be used near children, and staff should ensure that there is adequate ventilation when using these products to prevent children from inhaling toxic fumes.

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.

Clean and Disinfect Bedding

- Use bedding (sheets, pillows, blankets, sleeping bags) that can be washed. Keep each child’s bedding separate, and consider storing in individually labeled bins, cubbies, or bags. Cots and mats should be labeled for each child. Bedding that touches a child’s skin should be cleaned weekly or before use by another child.

Parent Drop-Off and Pick-Up

- Hand hygiene stations should be set up at the entrance of the facility, so that children can clean their hands before they enter. If a sink with soap and water is not available, provide hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol next to parent sign-in sheets. If possible, place sign-in stations outside. Keep hand sanitizer out of children’s reach and supervise use. Consider staggering arrival and drop off times and/or plan to limit direct contact with parents as much as possible.
 - Have child care providers greet children outside as they arrive.
 - Designate a parent to be the drop off/pick up volunteer to walk all children to their classroom, and at the end of the day, walk all children back to their cars.
 - 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 should not pick up their children, because they are more at risk for [serious illness](#).
- Persons who have a fever or other signs of illness should not be admitted to the facility. Encourage parents to be on the alert for signs of illness in their children and to keep them home when they are sick. Screen children upon arrival, if possible.

Caring for Infants and Toddlers

- When [diapering](#) a child, [wash your hands](#) and wash the child's hands before you begin, and wear gloves, if possible. Follow safe diaper changing procedures. Procedures should be posted in all diaper changing areas. Steps include:
 - Prepare (includes putting on gloves)
 - Clean child and remove gloves
 - Remove trash (including gloves)
 - Replace diaper
 - Wash child's hands
 - Clean up diapering station
 - Wash hands
- After diapering, wash your hands (even if you were wearing gloves) and disinfect the diapering area with a fragrance-free bleach that is EPA-registered as a sanitizing or disinfecting solution. If other products are used for sanitizing or disinfecting, they should also be fragrance-free and EPA registered. If the surface is dirty, it should be cleaned with detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- If reusable cloth diapers are used, they should not be rinsed or cleaned in the facility. The soiled cloth diaper and its contents (without emptying or rinsing) should be placed in a plastic bag or into a plastic-lined, hands-free covered diaper pail to give to parents/guardians or laundry service.

Food Preparation and Meal Service

- If a cafeteria or group dining room is typically used, serve meals in classrooms instead. If meals are typically served family-style, plate each child's meal to serve it so that multiple children are not using the same serving utensils.
- Food preparation should not be done by the same staff who diaper children.
- Sinks used for food preparation should not be used for any other purposes.
- Caregivers should ensure children wash hands prior to eating.
- Caregivers should wash their hands before preparing food and after helping children to eat.

Infectious Diseases Reporting Requirement

During these extraordinary times of COVID-19, we want to remind you of the requirement for Child Care Agencies when an Infectious Disease (communicable disease) has been introduced into the child care agency and the requirement to report.

The child care agency must notify immediately the parents/guardians of every child enrolled if one of the following communicable diseases has been introduced:

1. Hepatitis A;
2. Food-borne illness (food poisoning);

3. Salmonella;
4. Shigella;
5. Measles, mumps, and/or rubella;
6. Pertussis;
7. Polio;
8. Haemophilus influenza type B;
9. Meningococcal meningitis;
10. Chickenpox; and
11. Any other illness so identified by the state or local Department of Health (includes COVID-19).

Additionally, the child care agency shall report the occurrence of any of the above diseases to their local health department no later than the end of the day on which it is discovered.