



## Office of Children and Family Services

**KATHY HOCHUL**  
Governor

**SHEILA J. POOLE**  
Commissioner

August 22, 2022

Dear Licensed, Registered or Legally Exempt Group Provider:

This letter contains the most recent COVID-19 requirements for child care programs. It replaces all prior guidance, including the letter that OCFS sent to you on May 31, 2022. Please read this information carefully and share it with families.

On August 11, 2022, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) revised their COVID-19 guidance for schools and child care programs. This information can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-childcare-guidance.html>. The New York State Department of Health has adopted these guidelines.

**Effective immediately, all OCFS child care programs are recommended to follow these revised CDC protocols:**

- Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 should stay out of the child care program for 5 days OR until they receive a negative COVID-19 test (whichever is first). Before returning to program, symptoms should be improving and you should be fever-free for at least 24 hours;
- Anyone who comes to the child care program with symptoms or who develops symptoms while at the program should be sent home and encouraged to get tested. Symptomatic children or staff who are able to wear a mask should do so while at the program. If possible, children with symptoms who cannot wear a mask should be separated from others and provided supervision while waiting to leave the program;
- Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 should remain isolated at home for a period of at least 5 days and symptoms should be improving and be fever-free for at least 24 hours before returning to the child care program;
- Anyone who tested positive for COVID-19 and is returning to program between days 5 and 10 should wear a well-fitting mask, up through day 10, if they are able to tolerate one; OR may remove their mask following two negative COVID tests taken 48 hours apart. Children who are unable to wear a mask may still return to the child care program if they do not have symptoms;
- Anyone who has had close contact with someone with COVID-19 (this means when they were within six feet of someone with COVID-19 for more than 15 minutes in a 24-hour period) should wear a mask for 10 days whenever feasible. If they do not have symptoms, they do not need to quarantine and can attend the child care program.

**The new guidance also changes several prior recommendations, including:**

- Removing the recommendation to cohort children;
- Removing the recommendation to quarantine close contacts for most settings (including schools and child care); and
- Adding detailed information on when to wear a mask, managing cases and exposures, and responding to outbreaks.

Please visit the CDC website and familiarize yourself with the content.

Though this guidance is written for COVID-19 prevention, many of the layered prevention strategies described in this guidance can help prevent the spread of other infectious diseases, such as influenza (flu), respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and norovirus, and support healthy learning environments for all. Please encourage all who are eligible to vaccinate and remind staff and families to stay home when they experience symptoms of illness. Information about COVID-19 vaccines for children 6 months and older can be found here: <https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/covid-19-vaccines-children-6-months-and-older>.

If you have any questions about the most recent COVID-19 updates, please do not hesitate to contact your regulator. Your commitment to the health and wellness of children is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nora Yates". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

Nora K. Yates  
Acting Deputy Commissioner  
Division of Child Care Services