

EPUC CHILD CARE CENTRE

COVID-19 Response

EPUC Child Care Centre has developed the following administrative and infection prevention/ control (IPAC) policies and procedures to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Screening

EPUC Child Care Centre will prepare a designate screening area in the lower lobby of the main entrance. Signs will be posted outside the main door, indicating conditions that parents/children are not to enter. Also, due to physical distancing, only one family allowed in the lower lobby at a time, unless a distance of 2 metres can be maintained. Signs will be posted in a visible location clearly explaining the screening process and the rules and conditions for entry.

Please maintain a minimum of two metres/six feet distance between staff conducting in-person screening and the individual being screened.

Parents are responsible to complete the COVID-19 school and child care screening checklist prior to arrival.

How to fill out the screening:

- 1) **parents log into <http://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening> . A QR code for this site is also available on site.**
- 2) **Select 'Start school screening'**
- 3) **Please fill out the next section by selecting ' parent/guardian on behalf of a student/child' and select continue**
- 4) **Please answer the next 8 questions indicated on the screen**
- 5) **If once completed your screen indicates "go to school/child care" with a check mark on a green screen, you may proceed to child care.**
- 6) **If once completed your screen indicates "do not go to school/child care" please follow the instructions on the screen:**

- contact EPUC CCC and indicate the reason for the negative screening
- visit an assessment centre to get a COVID-19 PCR test
- self isolate until the results are in
- if positive, connect with Public Health for further instructions
- if negative, you may return to child care

We will also conduct daily temperature checks of all individuals prior to entry/drop-off

Staff and parents/guardians of children attending the childcare centre **MUST NOT ATTEND** the childcare program when they are ill, and that they should report any symptoms to the Executive Director.

We will actively screen and check the temperature of children, childcare staff, and any other individuals **prior to entry/arrival** to the childcare centre. Temperature must be lower than 37.8C

1. Is the student/child currently experiencing any of these symptoms?

The symptoms listed here are the symptoms most commonly associated with COVID-19. If you have these symptoms, you should isolate and seek testing. Please note that rapid antigen testing is not to be used for those with symptoms of COVID-19 or for contacts of known COVID-19 cases.

Anyone who is sick or has any symptoms of illness, including those not listed below, should stay home and seek assessment from their health care provider if needed.

Choose any/all that are new, worsening, and not related to other known causes or conditions they already have.

Fever and/or chills

Temperature of 37.8 degrees Celsius/100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher and/or chills

Cough or barking cough (croup)

Continuous, more than usual, making a whistling noise when breathing

(not related to asthma, post-infectious reactive airways, or other known causes or conditions they already have)

Shortness of breath

Out of breath, unable to breathe deeply (not related to asthma or other known causes or conditions they already have)

Decrease or loss of taste or smell

Not related to seasonal allergies, neurological disorders, or other known causes or conditions they already have

Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea

Not related to irritable bowel syndrome, anxiety, menstrual cramps, or other known causes or conditions they already have

2. Do any of the following apply to the student/child?

- They are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 (it has been 14 days or more since their final dose of either a two-dose or a one-dose vaccine series)
- They have tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days (and since been cleared) If YES, skip questions 3, 4, 5

Personal health information is not collected when you complete this screening tool. The purpose of this question is to provide accurate isolation instructions, which are based on vaccination status and previous infection history.

3. Is someone that the student/child lives with currently experiencing any new COVID-19 symptoms and/or waiting for test results after experiencing symptoms?

Children (<18 years old): fever and/or chills, cough or barking cough, shortness of breath, decrease or loss of taste or smell, nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea

Adults: (≥18 years old): fever and/or chills, cough or barking cough, shortness of breath, decrease or loss of taste or smell, tiredness, muscle aches

If the individual experiencing symptoms received a COVID-19 vaccination in the last 48 hours and is experiencing only mild fatigue, muscle aches, and/or joint pain that only began after vaccination, select “No.”

4. In the last 10 days, has the student/child been identified as a “close contact” of someone who currently has COVID-19?

If public health has advised you that you do not need to self-isolate, select “No.”

5. In the last 10 days, has the student/child received a COVID Alert exposure notification on their cell phone?

If the student/child has since tested negative on a lab-based PCR test, select “No.”

6. Do any of the following apply?

- In the last 14 days, the student/child travelled outside of Canada and was told to quarantine
- In the last 14 days, the student/child travelled outside of Canada and was told to not attend school/child care

7. Has a doctor, health care provider, or public health unit told you that the student/child should currently be isolating (staying at home)?

This can be because of an outbreak or contact tracing.

8. In the last 10 days, has the student/child tested positive on a rapid antigen test or a home-based self-testing kit?

If the student/child has since tested negative on a lab-based PCR test, select “No.”

As an additional measure of screening, EPUC Child Care Centre is conducting Rapid COVID-19 testing on site for all staff and visitors as well as participating students. Testing is completed prior to entry in the child care centre by the Executive Director.

What is a rapid antigen test?

A rapid antigen POCT can be performed anywhere (i.e., on-site, at the place of employment) by a health professional or trained individual and does not require shipping a specimen to a lab for processing. It is currently administered through an anterior nasal swabbing (both nares) and takes approximately 15 minutes to yield results.

Customers/Employees should continue to adhere to the necessary COVID-19 covid 19 infection prevention and control measures, such as appropriate distancing, use of PPE, and hand washing, to reduce the risk of infection. A positive result on a rapid antigen test is considered a **preliminary positive** and must be followed up with a laboratory-based PCR test to act as a confirmatory test as soon as possible (ideally within 48 hours). The individual who received a positive result on the rapid antigen screening test should isolate until the result of the lab-based PCR test is known.

Benefits

A key benefit of participating in the Provincial Antigen Screening Program is that rapid, on-site antigen screening may facilitate the identification of an individual infected with COVID-19 that regular screening protocols (e.g., symptom screening) might otherwise miss. It may therefore help prevent asymptomatic individuals from unknowingly spreading COVID-19 and break the chain of transmission.

Eligibility

- Any **asymptomatic** individual looking to obtain access to EPUC Child Care Centre.
- Any individual who is currently **symptomatic** or a contact of a confirmed case should be directed to their healthcare provider, to an assessment centre, or participating licensed community lab to obtain a diagnostic test instead of a rapid screening test.

Frequency of specimen collection and screening:

Asymptomatic individuals: specimen collection and screening should be performed 1-2 times per week.

Frequent screening with rapid antigen tests increases the chances of early identification of cases in otherwise asymptomatic individuals and mitigates the lower sensitivity of a single antigen test. Rapid antigen screening tests are less sensitive than lab-based polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests that are performed at COVID-19 covid 19 Assessment Centres and pharmacies.

Specimen Collection

EPUC Child Care Centre will be administering the rapid antigen NP swab as a lower nasal swab, as this has been determined to be an acceptable specimen collection modality by the MOH.

Rapid Antigen specimen advantages include:

- o Increasing the availability of testing as an option by allowing for a broad range of health professionals to collect the specimen
- o Reducing the inconvenience or discomfort due to repeated nasopharyngeal swabs
- o Improved adherence to screening programs
- o Potential for more immediate and robust uptake of this test

Negative Results

If the results on the rapid antigen test yields a negative result, the tested individual will be granted access to EPUC Child Care Centre.

Positive Results

Any positive results from rapid antigen screening must be confirmed with laboratory-based test.

Inconclusive Results

If after 15 minutes the results are inconclusive, a second test will be administered. If after a second test is completed and results are again inconclusive, the individual will be permitted

access to the centre as long as they have no symptoms of COVID-19 and have successfully passed the additional screening questions and temperature check listed in the EPUC IPAC document.

Organizational Responsibilities

Organizations that conduct rapid antigen screening are responsible for:

- Retaining existing public health measures such as symptom screening, appropriate distancing, using personal protective equipment and hand-hygiene activities. Rapid antigen screening is not a replacement for any of these measures.
- Following all public health guidance for managing an individual with a preliminary positive result and requiring that the individual receive a laboratory PCR test within 24 hours.
- Ensuring compliance with any applicable legislation related to the collection of personal health information, including PHIPA
- Cooperating with their local public health unit in the event of a potential workplace exposure of COVID-19 or an outbreak investigation.

Mid-Day Screening Procedure

All children will be temperature checked prior to nap time commencing at 12:30 each day. The All staff leaving the premises in the middle of the day for lunch, will be re-screened prior to re-entering the centre each day.

Attendance Records

EPUC Child Care Centre will maintain daily attendance records of all individuals entering the childcare centre. This includes, but is not limited to, maintenance workers, cleaning/ environmental staff, and government agency employees (e.g. public health inspectors, fire inspectors).

Records will include the following information: name, company, contact information, date, time of arrival/departure, reason for visit, rooms/areas visited, screening and temperature check results. All records will be kept on site.

EPUC Child Care Centre will follow-up with all individuals who report as an unplanned absence, and determine if the absence is due to illness to note any symptoms (e.g. fever, sore throat, cough). This information will be recorded and kept on file.

We will encourage parents of ill children and staff to seek COVID-19 testing at assessment centre and to call Halton Region Public Health to determine if further care is required.

Non-essential visitors will not be permitted to enter the childcare centre.

Hand sanitizer (70-90% alcohol concentration) will be available at the screening station for individuals who have answered NO to all questions for use prior to entry. Hands must be washed once inside the centre and prior to gaining access to a program classroom.

Individuals who answer YES to any of the questions WILL NOT BE PERMITTED to enter the childcare centre.

Parents must not pass the screening area or enter the childcare centre unless there is a specific need to do so, e.g. emergency.

At the end of the day, parents will arrive in their vehicle outside the playground entrance and an assigned staff member will bring the child to the car and greet the parents and from a distance.

The Physical Space

Inside the centre, we will increase space between seating and play areas so that children and staff can maintain two metres/six feet apart. Hand washing will be conducted prior and post group sensory play, and a strong emphasis on regular hand washing throughout the day is key to keeping infection transmission low.

Staff Training

All EPUC Child Care Centre staff will be trained on the signs and symptoms associated with COVID-19. Some people may experience mild or no physical symptoms. Symptoms can take up to 14 days after exposure to COVID-19 to appear, and include:

- o Fever
- o Cough
- o Difficulty breathing

- o Loss of taste or smell
- o Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
- o If you are having difficulty breathing, call 911.

Cohorts

Each class will be cohorted individually and staff/child ratios as designated in the CCEYA will always be adhered to.

Cohorts will be designated to a specific "family group" or area. Programming will be planned in a manner that prevents cohorts from mixing throughout the day and over the course of the childcare program/session.

COVID-19 Exclusion Policy

EPUC Child Care Centre is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for children, families and employees. We will take every reasonable precaution to prevent the risk of communicable diseases within our school including a screening tool upon arrival.

To ensure that all staff are aware of and adhere to the directive established by Halton Region Public Health, and Children's Services Division regarding the exclusion of sick staff and/or children attending EPUC Child Care Centre.

Legislative Authority/ Regulations/ Guidelines

Child Care and Early Years Act

Operational Guidance During COVID-19 Outbreak

Halton Region Child Care Health Resource

Halton Region Health Department

COVID-19 Emergency Child Care Guidance: Emergency Childcare Centres (March 2020)

COVID-19 Reference Document for Symptoms

Procedure

NOTE: Children and staff must not attend the program if they are sick, even if symptoms resemble a mild cold.

As required by the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA), child care employees must separate children of ill health and contact parents/guardians to pick up their child immediately. When children are ill and/or exhibit COVID-19 related symptoms, staff will ensure the following:

- Ill or symptomatic child will be separated into the designated exclusion room, and be removed from other children to be monitored by a staff until parent/guardian pick-up
- Symptoms of illness will be recorded in the child's daily record and in a daily log as per the CCEYA
- The parent/guardian of the ill child will be notified to pick up their child immediately; or
- if it appears that the child requires immediate medical attention, the child will be taken to the hospital by ambulance and examined by a legally qualified medical practitioner or a nurse registered under the Health Disciplines Act. R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 262, s. 34 (3)

If you suspect a child has symptoms of a reportable communicable disease, (refer to Halton Child Care Health Resource), please report these immediately to Halton Region Public Health at 905-825-6000.

When to exclude:

Staff and children should be excluded when there are signs and/or symptoms that are greater than normal, or if a child is unable to participate in regular programming because of illness.

Common symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- Fever (temperature of 37.8°C or greater)
- New or worsening cough
- Shortness of breath (dyspnea)

Other symptoms of COVID-19 can include:

- Sore throat

- Nasal congestion
- Difficulty swallowing
- Loss of taste or smell
- Nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain

How to exclude:

- Supervise the child in a designated room with a hand washing sink and hand sanitizer available
- Notify parents/guardians of the sick child for pick up immediately
- Only one staff should be in the designated room and attempt physical distancing from the ill child maintaining a distance of 2 meters. If physical distancing of 2 meters cannot be maintained, staff should wear a surgical/procedure mask, eye protection and gloves and should perform hand hygiene and attempt to not touch their face with unwashed hands. The ill child should also wear a surgical/procedure mask if it is tolerated and the child is above the age of two
- Staff should not interact with others while waiting with ill child
- Staff should avoid contact with the child's respiratory secretions
- Tissues should be provided to the child for proper respiratory etiquette, with proper disposal of the tissues and proper hand hygiene
- Increase ventilation in the designated exclusion room if possible (e.g., open windows)
- Clean and disinfect the area immediately after the child has been sent home
- Items that cannot be cleaned (paper, books, cardboard puzzles) should be removed and stored in a sealed container for a minimum of 7 days
- Children with symptoms should be tested
- Staff and children who were in the same room with the ill child will be cohorted and Halton Region Public Health will provide further direction on testing and isolation of these individuals
- Contact Public Health to notify of a potential case and seek input regarding the information that should be shared with parents of children in the child care centre
- Children or staff who have been exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19 should be excluded from the child care centre for 14 days
- Children or staff who have been in contact with a probable COVID-19 case should be

- monitored for symptoms and cohorted until test results, if any, have been completed or until directed by Halton Region Public Health
- Staff awaiting test results, who are asymptomatic, may continue to work unless they are a close contact of a case

Reporting:

EPUC Child Care Centre must immediately report the following to HRPD contacting the surveillance unit 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- 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). Any confirmed case of COVID-19 must be reported immediately to the Ministry of Education as a Serious Occurrence.

Communication with families/guardians and other stakeholders

EPUC Child Care Centre will communicate with parents through our parent engagement App to provide program information and protocols on health and safety measures (e.g. screening practices, physical distancing, staying home if you're sick). Other communication platforms will be our websites, email, and telephone. We have rescheduled or cancelled all pre-planned group events and in-person meetings, till further notice. We will use the telephone or Zoom video conferencing when possible for meetings between childcare staff and with parents/guardians and third party stakeholders. Signs will be posted at all entrances instructing participants and their families not to enter if they are sick. We have communicated with East Plains United Church and we have designated separate entrances at the back of the building so there will be no cross-contamination. EPUC Child Care Centre will be assuming cleaning and disinfecting of this entrances, staircase, and elevator as well as the regular childcare centre for the duration of the pandemic

Testing for COVID-19:

- Symptomatic staff and children should be referred for testing. Testing of asymptomatic person should only be performed as directed by Halton Region Public Health as part of outbreak management.
- Those who test negative for COVID-19 must be excluded until 24 hours after symptom

- resolution
- Those who test positive for COVID-19 must be excluded from the child care centre for 14 days after the onset of symptoms and clearance has been received from Halton Region Public Health
 - Asymptomatic contacts of a confirmed case may consider going for testing for COVID-19 within 14 days from their last exposure. If they test negative and become symptomatic after the negative test, they should be re-tested.
 - Asymptomatic contacts must remain in self isolation for 14 days from their last exposure to the case, even if they get a negative test result.
 - Staff who test positive for COVID-19 inform their supervisor of the positive test result
 - Outbreaks should be declared in collaboration with Halton Region Public Health

NOTE: Child care staff who are tested as part of the surveillance screening are not required to self-isolate and may return to work as long as they pass the daily screening for the workplace.

Surveillance:

Ensuring that all environmental conditions are constantly monitored is essential in preventing and reducing illness. Staff must monitor for an increase in above normal amount of illnesses among other staff and children by looking at the normal occurrence of illness at that location and during the specific time period.

Ensure surveillance includes the following:

- Observe children for illness upon arrival
- Active screening is required for anyone entering the childcare centre. Anyone who fails screening criteria will not be allowed into the childcare centre
- Record symptoms of illness for each child including signs or complaints the child may describe (e.g., sore throat, stomach ache, head ache)
- Record the date and time that the symptoms occur
- Keep all screening records on site
- Record the room the child attends (e.g., room number/description)
- Record attendances and absences

Returning from Exclusion Due to Illness:

Staff/children who are being managed by Halton Region Public Health (e.g., confirmed cases of COVID-19, household contacts of cases) should follow instructions from Halton Region Public Health to determine when to return to the facility.

NOTE: A Serious Occurrence is generated through the Child Care Licensing System to report all probable or confirmed cases of COVID-19 for anyone attending or regularly present at the Emergency Child Care Centre including a child, staff or parent/guardian

Hygiene Etiquette

We will enforce regular washing of hands thoroughly with soap and water or use hand sanitizer (70-90% alcohol concentration) provided hands are not visibly soiled.

Encourage covering coughs or sneezes with your elbow or a tissue. Immediately throw the tissue in the garbage and wash hands.

Provide additional hand sanitizer (70-90% alcohol concentration) stations (e.g. wall mounted hand sanitizer dispensers) in supervised areas where children cannot access it independently.

Staff will ensure that proper hand hygiene is practiced often and when necessary (e.g. before and after eating, after using the bathroom, after covering a cough or sneeze). This includes supervising and/or assisting children with hand hygiene.

Environmental Cleaning and Disinfecting Practices

EPUC Child Care Centre has reviewed Public Health Ontario's recommendations related to COVID-19, and has developed procedures to ensure that the learning space is safe and clean for children and staff, such as:

- Staff will be trained on required disinfectant contact times (i.e. amount of time that the product will need to remain wet on a surface to achieve disinfection).
- Directions for where and how to securely store cleaning and disinfectant supplies as well as appropriate PPE.
- Designated staff will be assigned to conduct environmental cleaning and disinfecting throughout the day on high traffic surfaces at least twice a day.
- Staff will clean and disinfect individual items in each room after each play session.

- Cots and cribs will be cleaned and disinfected after each use.
- Maintain logs to track cleaning and disinfecting activities for each room/area, individual/play items and sleeping equipment such as cots and cribs.

Assign childcare staff and children into designated cohorts

Maximum group sizes are to remain at the CCYEA mandated group size for each classroom. Childcare staff and children will be in their designated classrooms, and will be asked to keep to those rooms as much as possible to cut down on cross contamination. Programming must be planned in a manner that prevents groups from mixing throughout the day and over the course of the childcare program/session. Staggered/alternate scheduling including:

- the use of our outdoor playgrounds and play spaces by different cohorts.
- If a childcare staff must cover for a colleague in a different cohort/room they must do so in a manner that maintains physical distancing as best as possible, and they must use a face masks and eye protection.

Toys and Equipment

EPUC Child Care Centre will provide toys and equipment that are made of materials that can be cleaned and disinfected easily. Mouthed toys will be separated, cleaned, and disinfected immediately after the child has finished using it. Toys will be washed and rinsed prior to disinfection and allowed to air dry.

PPE

EPUC Child Care Centre will be providing personal protective equipment (PPE) for use by staff and children when necessary. We will always maintain a two weeks supply of all PPE. Staff are required to wear a mask and eye protection at all times inside. Gloves must be worn when it is anticipated that hands will come into contact with mucous membranes, broken skin, tissue, blood, bodily fluids, secretions, excretions, contaminated equipment, or environmental surfaces. Staff are required to use blankets over clothing if holding or carrying infants or toddlers (blankets must be changed after each child).

Hand sanitizer will be provided throughout the centre, as well as face masks and face shields.

*Only staff who have maintained a medical exemption from a physician will be exempt from wearing PPE but asked to wear a face shield, if possible.

Communication

EPUC Child Care Centre will communicate with parents to provide program information and protocols on health and safety measures (e.g. screening practices, physical distancing, staying home if sick).

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Ontario Ministry of Health COVID-19 Guidance: Emergency Childcare Centres Version 2-May 8 2020. Retrieved from http://health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_child_care_guidance.pdf
- Ontario Ministry of Education (2020). Operational Guidance during COVID-19 Outbreak: Childcare Re-opening. Retrieved from <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/child-care-re-opening-operational-guidance.pdf>

Policy Review:

This policy and procedure will be reviewed and signed off by all staff prior to commencing employment and annually thereafter.

Created: July 29, 2020.

Updated: October 6, 2021.