

Frequently Asked Questions Concerning Child Care and COVID-19 Week of May 18 – 22, 2020

At this time, we have not mandated any closures of child care facilities. We are not conducting inspections at this time and we have also postponed training through June. We are keeping in contact with our centers for updates on closures and answering questions as they come in. We are taking self-reports and providing technical assistance by phone and email. We are keeping track of the closures of facilities, so if you are closed and have not reported it or were closed and have reopened please contact your license official so they can update your status. We want you all to know that we are here to answer questions and provide technical assistance as needed. We want to encourage you to reach out to your licensing officials when you have a question or concern. Please continue to follow the guidelines from CDC, those on our webpage (www.healthys.com), and those from your local officials. We are working hard to ensure that we make the best decisions for the children of Mississippi as we know you are as well. As we move forward, we will continue to assess the current situation and make changes as needed. We appreciate your patience and hard work during this time.

General

Q: Can you help with what the child care requirements are regarding the number of people in the classroom, how to maintain or adhere to the social distancing requirements, and will child care centers be penalized if they are found out of compliance.

A: Please refer to the CDC guidelines for recommendations on staying open and operating a child care facility. We also recommend that each facility develop an updated Health and Safety plan outlining the measures they plan to take regarding cleaning, disinfecting, pick-up/drop-off times, and reporting illness procedures. These are recommendations and not following the guidelines provided by CDC will not result in being penalized, however, we ask that you please continue to follow child care regulations to help ensure the safety of children.

Licensing

Q: Has MSDH made any updates specific to summer camp/school-age care?

A: At this time, a final decision has not been made regarding summer camps. As soon as we receive the information we will send out to the providers.

Q: Are there any licensing requirements for centers to reopen that specifically state what we need to do: i.e. masks must be worn by staff, temperature checks, etc. or do we simply follow what the CDC has put out and any ordinances by our mayor?

A: At this time MSDH recommends that facilities follow the recommendations listed on the CDC website and any ordinances put in place.

Q: Can a person roll their own fingerprints and send them into the fingerprint unit?

A: The short answer is, yes. However, they need the proper ink to do it. Fountain pen ink will not work. There is a special kind of ink for rolling prints. Also, the prints must be on an MSDH fingerprint card.

CCAIR

Q: Can we receive contact hours for watching the YouTube CCAIR webinars?

A: The only CCAIR training that providers can receive contact hours for is located at <https://www.mdhs.ms.gov/CCAIR/>

Q: Are there any guidelines, policies, or advice for providers concerning children being exposed to Covid19 in their family environment?

A: Providers should follow CDC guidelines and monitor children and staff for signs and symptoms daily. If someone in the child's home test positive for COVID19, the child should be quarantined for 14 days before returning to care.

Q: When a parent tests positive for Covid19, what should be required for the children to return to daycare?

A: Children who have had a parent to test positive should be quarantined for 14 days before returning to care.

Q: Does that policy change if the parent is asymptomatic?

A: No, the policy is the same regardless of if the parent is displaying symptoms.

Q: We know that there is a 14-day quarantine period, but could the child get Covid-19 on the parent's 13th day of quarantine? Instead wouldn't a child need a 28-day quarantine period?

A: At this time, the requirement is that a child who has a parent to test positive should be quarantined for 14 days before returning to care.

Q: If a parent is asymptomatic, I guess a child could be asymptomatic also. Should they be required to have a Covid19 test before returning to a center?

A: It is recommended that all facilities perform wellness checks for all children and staff entering the system.

Q: One of my teachers has been exposed to someone who tested positive. We reopen next week, so she hasn't been around anyone at this point. What is the protocol? She was tested yesterday morning, so can she come back if it comes back negative or does, she has to stay out 14 days.

A: She should not come back until she has received her test results. If her test comes back negative, she can come back. We still recommend checking temperatures upon entry/re-entry of the facility and paying attention to potential signs of COVID-19 symptoms.

Q: Since the Gov. has reopened parks and is allowing 20 people to practice sports outside, does that loosen the number of kids who can be on the playgrounds at one time?

A: No changes have been made to regulations concerning the capacity or staff-to-child ratio. We recommend following the governor and CDC recommendations.

Q: Can we have parents to sign a waiver saying we will not be held liable for any conditions resulting from Covid-19?

A: We recommend contacting legal representation for questions concerning liability and Covid-19.

Q: Will the CCAIR be allowed to remain a permanent child care location or will the location have to go through the initial MSDH temporary license process?

A: All CCAIR sites are temporary locations and will be required to close once the state of emergency has been lifted. If a CCAIR site would like to become a permanent child care facility, they need to go to the MSDH site and apply for a license at <https://www.msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite>

Q: When will the documents concerning COVID-19 supplies be active on the website?

A: Please contact DHS for questions concerning supplies. 601-359-4500

Q: How long will the CCAIR site be allowed to operate?

A: When the state of emergency is lifted MDHS will send out notices for closure.

Nutrition

Q: Are they able to require their students to bring their own lunches?

A: As of now we are asking that facilities continue to follow nutritional guidelines and if they have been providing meals before Covid-19 they continue to do so. All requests for any type of exemption to child care regulations would need to be sent to the licensing official.