

Frequently Asked Questions Concerning Child Care and COVID-19
Week of May 25-29, 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.healthhymms.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.

Q: What should we do if a child or staff member tests positive for COVID19?

A: The individual should be quarantined for 14 days and anyone that had close contact would need to be quarantined as well. Close contact is when an individual has been within 6 feet of the person who tested positive for an extended period of time.

Q: If a facility has a positive test result from an individual working or attending the facility they are required to close?

A: Facilities are not mandated to close due to having a positive case, however, if the staffing capacity does not allow them to adhere to requirements concerning staff-to-child ratio (due to cases and contacts being in isolation or on quarantine orders) it may be necessary to close for a brief period of time.

Q: Per the governor's executive order indoor groups are restricted to 10 and outdoor groups to 20. Can a facility take out 20 children on the playground at a time?

A: Facilities can take out groups of 20 on the playground, however, please keep in mind that one of the best tools for keeping children healthy in a child care setting during this time is keeping classroom groups separate and not allowing co-mingling. Ideally, 2 groups can go outside at the same time if there are separate areas for play for each class group.

Q: If a parent tests positive of a child attending the facility and the child is showing no symptoms what should we do?

A: The child of a positive parent would be considered a close contact and would need to be quarantined for 14 days. If the parent had any direct/close contact with any other individuals at the facility those contacts would need to be quarantined as well. If the child of the positive parent developed symptoms or tested positive the other children or staff in the classroom as well as, any other close contacts would need to be quarantined.

Q: Do children over the age of 2 have to wear a mask?

A: It is recommended that children over the age of 2 wear a mask if they can reliably wear the mask without touching their faces. The American Academy of Pediatrics has some helpful tips on how to help with the decision on whether children need to wear the mask and if so how to make them more comfortable. Additional information is available at this link [Children and Masks During COVID19](#)

Q: Once we open how should we go back to doing tornado drills and fire drills?

A: Fire drills can be done by taking children outside in a quick manner and keeping the class groups separate once outdoors. When conducting tornado drills consider doing them with one class at a time or if possible, determine different locations in the building that children/staff can go.