

Orchard Hill Christian Preschool and Child Care Center

COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan

Monitoring Symptoms: As children and staff arrive daily, they will be assessed at the entranceway of the center by the Administrative Office. This assessment will include a monitoring of body temperature, visual inspection of child/adult for symptoms and questioning of parents regarding the child's possible exposure recently:

Children

- Fever is the key indicator for young children. If a child's temperature is above 100.4 degrees, the child will be excluded from care. Cough and/or diarrhea in addition to fever is suggestive of coronavirus.

- When children arrive:

- o Staff will perform temperature checks. The center will have multiple thermometers available for screening. Thermometers will be cleaned and disinfected between uses, following the manufacturer's instructions. Temperatures can be taken orally or by a body scan.

- o Staff will ask parents: ▪ Has your child been in close contact with a person who has COVID-19? (If yes, the family should self-quarantine for 14 days.) ▪ Has your child felt unwell in the last 3 days? (persistent cough, temperature, difficulty breathing, cold, diarrhea and/or vomiting)

- o Staff will visually check the child for signs of illness, including flushed cheeks, rapid or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity), fatigue, or extreme fussiness.

- As young children are not reliable reporters of their symptoms, asking children about additional coronavirus symptoms is not useful (for example, shortness of breath, change in taste).

- Continue to monitor symptoms throughout the day and monitor temperatures when children appear ill or "not themselves."

- Children with a fever alone, or a fever with a cough and/or diarrhea should be isolated from the group and their parents contacted for prompt pick up. Their parents should contact their primary care physician/medical provider.

Staff

- When staff members arrive:

- o They should perform temperature checks on themselves upon arrival. The center will have multiple thermometers available for screening. Thermometers will be cleaned and disinfected between uses, following the manufacturer's instructions.

o Staff will be screened for cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, change in smell or taste, and diarrhea.

o Staff arriving with fever above 100.4 or other symptoms must be sent home.

- Staff should report contact with anyone outside of work who has had a documented case of COVID-19. Staff should be instructed to self-quarantine for 14 days if they have been exposed to COVID-19.

Because childcare staff members are part of Michigan's essential workforce, they are eligible to be tested for COVID-19. Find a test site here: <https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus/0,9753,7-406-98189---,00.html>

Practicing Social Distancing:

- The center will limit, or eliminate, use of common spaces. When possible, large group spaces will be divided to allow more children to safely use the space. For example, the use child-sized furniture, such as rolling shelves and kitchenettes, to divide a room and prevent mixing between groups of children. If common spaces must be used, the center will consider rotating the use of the space.

- The center will rearrange seating to seat children six feet apart (when possible) and limit the number of children sitting together.

o This is especially true for mealtimes.

o Family-style mealtimes will be modified so that students may eat together, but not serve themselves.

- The center will maintain consistent groups throughout the day. It has been strongly recommended that group sizes be kept below 10 and providers reduce the number of children in groups and/or spread out classes/groups across multiple rooms. This is especially important in classes with more children (for example, preschool classrooms.) As much as possible, classrooms should include the same group of children and caregivers. The center will make every effort to abide by these group size recommendations.
- Our center will continue to utilize consistent adults with groups of similar aged children.
- Contact with external adults and between groups of children will be limited. For example, playground time will be rotated between groups and specialist teachers (e.g. music, art) will be limited.
- Rest cots will be placed at least six feet apart, when possible. The center will place bedding in head-to-toe positioning.
- The center will adhere to strict hand hygiene, social/physical distancing, no mixing of groups, and cloth face coverings (for staff and those children that can tolerate).

Limit, or Eliminate, Use of Common Spaces

- As recommended in the “physical space” section, the Center will consider closing common spaces when they are able. The Center may also cancel or delay field trips or special events that convene larger groups of children or families.
- The Center will create smaller child use areas when using large spaces to keep children from gathering outside of their group.
- The Center will also stagger times for outdoor play or gym time, if possible.
- The Center will consider eliminating use of water and sensory tables and frequently touched objects.
- If common spaces remain in use, the Center will clean the space in between groups.

Ensuring Hygiene: (including cleaning and disinfecting)

Hand Washing: The Center will reinforce regular health and safety practices with children and staff. All staff and children will wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. This is especially important after blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.

- The Center will continue to implement CDC handwashing guidelines. Please note that wearing gloves does not replace appropriate hand hygiene.
- Soap and water are the best option, especially if hands are visibly dirty. If hand sanitizer is used it should be an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry.
- All staff and children will continue to cover coughs with a tissue or sleeve.

Cleaning and Disinfecting: The Center will continue to use robust cleaning protocols on at least a daily basis for items touched frequently. We will designate cleaning staff that will float through the Center and repeatedly re-sanitize high frequency touched items. Research does indicate that children touch items at significantly higher rates than adults.

- Common areas will get at least a daily deep clean (for example, sinks, bathrooms, doorknobs, tabletops, and shared items). The Center will use these guidelines from the CDC for cleaning and disinfecting.
- Staff will clean toys frequently, especially items that have been in a child’s mouth. These items will be set aside as “dirty” and run through the center’s automatic dish washer or sanitized with bleach water during the day before returning to the classroom for play.

Items from Home:

The Center will encourage parents to leave children's personal items at home.

- Families may want to consider leaving a pair of shoes or slippers at the facility for their child. If possible, they should be washed or sanitized weekly.
- Comfort items may be especially needed during this time of transition as they may reduce stress for children and staff members. To avoid these items encountering many children, the Center will place these items in the child's cubby or Orchard Hill cloth bag and they may be used at naptime or as needed. If possible, a comfort item should remain at the childcare facility to avoid cross contamination from another site. Items should also be washed at least weekly.
- Soft materials (such as blankets, soft comfort items, or clothing) should be washed daily, either at the Center or the child's home.

Using Appropriate Safety Equipment:

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is necessary in many settings to keep individuals safe. Childcare providers do not need to wear N95 or surgical masks, smocks, or face shields, however, other protective equipment is appropriate.

Masks or Cloth Face Coverings: For Staff Members

- Childcare providers are required by executive order to establish (and consistently enforce) a policy on when staff members should wear cloth face coverings whenever they are in contact with the children or other adults at the Center.
- The Center will provide cloth facing coverings to staff. By Executive Order, Governor Whitmer has required all employers whose workers perform in person work to provide non-medical grade face coverings to their workers. This includes childcare providers. Cloth face coverings, such as a homemade mask, scarf, bandana, or handkerchiefs, are best. N95 masks and surgical masks are not recommended at this time.
- Childcare providers will use strategies to prepare children for seeing their caregivers in masks and attend to children's emotional responses to this new normal. One option is for caregivers to share a picture of themselves from their ID badge with and without the mask in advance of a child's return to care. Another option is to use pediatric appropriate masks (for example, with child friendly designs or characters) made by community members who will donate them or produce them at an affordable price for providers.

Masks or Cloth Face Coverings: For Children

Children do not need to wear a mask when with their consistent group. Medical professionals recognize that many young children will not reliably wear a mask, and a mask

may result in increased touching of the face which would negate the purpose of the mask. Young children will take the masks off multiple times a day and in the process the mask will touch the floor and other objects making them a potential source of infection.

- If children do wear masks, the Center staff will ensure children can remove the face covering without assistance. Cloth face coverings should never be placed on young children under age 2 years old.

Gloves: It is recommended that providers wear gloves in a manner consistent with existing licensing rules (for example, gloves should be worn when handling contaminants, changing diapers, cleaning or when serving food). Staff members should wash hands before putting gloves on and immediately after gloves are removed. Gloves are not recommended for broader use.

Communication with Families

Families will be informed in advance of daily temperature checks and the protocol for sending children and staff home. This communication will be achieved via email, text, news media announcement or phone when necessary.

Families should report possible illness if anyone in their household shows symptoms or has tested positive for COVID-19, including the child or family members if they or their children experience possible symptoms or have a positive test. These incidents may be reported via phone or email to our Administrative Office: (616)-784-4061 jenniferg@orchardhill.org; morgant@orchardhill.org; or emilyd@orchardhill.org

Respond to Possible or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19: Childcare providers are a critical part of helping communities limit the spread of the virus. Therefore, the following is our procedure for responding to any possible or confirmed cases of COVID-19:

- The Center will send anyone who becomes symptomatic home immediately. If possible, children and staff should leave care right away if they are ill.

- The Center will isolate people who become ill while in care but can't leave immediately.

o For children: The child will be isolated in one of the Administrative Offices until the child can be picked up. The child will not be left alone.

o For staff: If a staff member begins to feel ill during the day, they should go home.

Administrative staff will assist to maintain ratios in classrooms if necessary.

- **Report exposure.** If a child, staff member, family member, or visitor to our Center becomes ill with COVID-19 symptoms, we will contact your local health department and licensing consultant for our next steps. Staff and families of children in care are also required to report to the provider if they become symptomatic or receive positive COVID-19 test results.

- After contacting the Kent County Health Department and State of Michigan Licensing agency the Center will determine whether to close the classroom or facility based on guidance from the health department. If an individual in a classroom is identified with a positive test for COVID-19 the classroom will be closed, cleaned and everyone in that classroom should be quarantined for 14 days initially.

The center will contact our local health department for guidance and best practices and to determine if our entire facility must close.

Guidelines for Returning to Care and Work:

Center staff members and children should stay home and self-isolate if they show symptoms of COVID19. It can be challenging to determine when to isolate young children because they are ill more often than adults, and the cause of a fever is sometimes unknown.

If a staff member or child has a fever or a cough, the Center will follow their child and staff illness policy. At this time, it is recommended that children be fever free for 72 hours before returning to care (even if other symptoms are not present).

If a staff member or child exhibits multiple symptoms of COVID-19, you suspect possible exposure, or an individual tests positive for COVID-19, the individual must stay home until:

- Has been fever-free for at least 72 hours without the use of medicine that reduces fevers AND
- Other symptoms have improved AND
- At least 10 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared.

Most children and staff members can return to care/work based on improved symptoms and the passage of time. Local health departments may recommend that some individuals (for example, immunocompromised individuals) receive two negative tests in a row, 24 hours apart.

Families are encouraged to have back-up childcare plans if the child or a family member becomes ill or is required to self-quarantine due to possible COVID-19.

The CDC recommends people use the following guidelines to determine when to return to childcare or work after showing symptoms of COVID-19. You can view the full recommendation from the CDC here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>