

COVID-19 Mitigation Plan for BSACAP Head Start

According to the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), influenza and corona viruses have been shown to be capable of causing rapid, wide spread, morbidity and mortality among infected humans. A pandemic happens when a new (novel) virus emerges, which can infect people easily and spread from person to person in an efficient and sustained way. It is a serious threat to public health and can be fatal under certain circumstances. Education and prevention are the greatest tools in stopping a viral pandemic. Daily health checks, hand washing, proper sanitation, and a face mask (if recommended) can be very effective in preventing the spread of pandemic viruses as well as many other illnesses. Head Start will refer to the CDC, KY.gov, Office of Head Start, local health departments and other appropriate health sites for directions if a pandemic should occur.

Note: All information contained in this document including planned procedures and instructions are subject to change based on individual circumstances, program limitations, and updated information from local, state, and federal health agencies.

Considerations During a Pandemic Outbreak

Isolation and sanitization are the most important things during a pandemic outbreak. Anyone showing symptoms will be isolated immediately, while sanitation efforts will be increased. Children's activities in the classroom need to limit physical contact with others. Materials offered will be limited to easily sanitized items.

- Contact parents and encourage them to keep their children home if any member of the household is showing virus symptoms.
- Extend the time of the daily health check by observing the child more thoroughly and asking questions, taking child temperature before entering the bus or at drop off before a parent can leave the child at the site. If a child has a temperature of 100.4, shortness of breath, coughing or appears sick, do not accept the child.
- Staff will wash hands or use hand sanitizer more frequently and sanitize common areas and toys as often as possible.
- Staff will be encouraged to wear a disposable or cloth mask on site. If using a cloth mask, it must be washed daily. Disposable masks will be on hand if no cloth mask is available.
- Lesson plans will incorporate personal hygiene to the greatest extent possible. Special emphasis will be given to handwashing and covering coughs.
- Any children showing symptoms will be removed to the designated isolation area. Their parents will be called to pick them up immediately. Staff will care for the children until their parents arrive.
- Staff caring for the ill child will limit their contact with other staff and children.
- Staff showing virus symptoms will be sent home immediately.

- Staff will notify their program director or supervisor if any of their children or staff show symptoms while at the center.
- Staff will continue to offer support and assist children and families with educational items, health and safety information.
- Depending on the severity of the situation, a determination may be made to temporarily close a center. Contact the program director for directions. Staff will notify parents of the closure and keep them updated as to when the site will be reopening.

The Kentucky Department of Public Health (KDPH) provides state guidance with recommendations from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on a weekly basis. They display the “COVID-19 Community Level” model each week (updated on Friday) to inform the community about the number of new COVID-19 cases in each county of the state along with guidance on how to remain safe. According to the model, there are 3 levels of COVID-19 infection rates given for individual counties – **Low**, **Medium**, **High**. Our agency will monitor the “COVID-19 Community Level” on a weekly basis and send the information out to all staff and parents to inform them of the current levels. The following information describes how our agency will proceed in each situation:

Level - Low

- Reinforcement of hand hygiene behavior and respiratory etiquette
- Supervised handwashing and hand-sanitizing for children
- Posters in the classroom that instruct children and staff on appropriate health procedures such as handwashing and covering coughs
- Staff and parent health information will be posted in the classroom and on the parent board following instructions from KY.gov, CDC, etc.
- Routine cleaning and disinfection efforts (e.g., with toys, frequently touched surfaces, and bedding)
- Daily health check screening procedures on arrival for children
- Normal drop-off and pick-up procedures by parents
- Monitoring child & staff daily absenteeism to determine possible outbreaks
- Maintain a back-up plan for excessive staff absences
- Monitoring and restocking of health and safety materials
- Assuring appropriate ventilation
- Maintain 60 minutes of outdoor play daily
- Ensure that all water systems are safe to use
- Remain aware of state and local regulations concerning public safety
- Frequent training of staff on all safety protocols
- Notification plan for the sudden closure of any classroom or program due to health concerns
- Normal procedures for toothbrushing
- Assure that each child has 2 emergency contact individuals in addition to the parents

- Routinely discuss health & safety procedures with children
- Monitoring of classrooms to confirm that all health & safety procedures are posted and followed

Level - Medium

- Enhanced cleaning and disinfection efforts (e.g., with toys, frequently touched surfaces, and bedding)
- Limit items that can be brought into the classroom from home
- Limited drop-off and pick-up flexibility for parents. Parents will be encouraged to drop children off to staff at the front of the school to avoid congested hallways during the morning period
- Encourage staff to open windows in the classroom when weather and circumstances permit
- Take steps to decrease occupancy in areas without increased ventilation
- Encourage staff to consider extended daily outdoor play for children
- Suspend large group activities that require touching by the children (*i.e. Duck-Duck-Goose, hands on shoulders walking like a train, etc.*)
- Allow staff to replace sand in the sand table with materials that can be more easily sanitized such as beads, aquarium rock, etc.

Level - High

- Staff will provide children with individual supplies for use (crayons, pencils, etc.) instead of sharing materials
- High-touch materials, such as manipulatives or fine-motor, will be sanitized after each child use
- Enhanced monitoring of possible symptoms during the morning daily health check
- Place a bin in the room where children will be instructed to deposit their toy when they finish playing with it. Staff will clean and sanitize the toys in the bin before putting them back out for other children to use
- Toothbrushing will be suspended and oral health materials (*toothbrushes & toothpaste*) will be sent home for parents to use with the children
- Masks will be encouraged for all staff members
- Materials will be cleared from the top of all learning center shelves to allow easier, more frequent sanitizing
- Soft materials (*i.e. stuffed animals, dress-up clothes, etc.*) that receive frequent child touch may be reduced in the learning centers
- Large group activities may be limited to avoid children sitting in close proximity
- The daily schedule may be adjusted to allow additional outdoor time each day
- Windows will be opened in the classroom when weather and circumstances permit

- Children may be given individual bottles of drinking water instead of using water fountains
- Child seating at the classroom tables will be spaced further apart
- Request that the cafeteria staff provide children with disposable plates and utensils at meal times
- Children will not be permitted to assist with serving during meal times

When An Individual Becomes Ill

- COVID-19 point of contact identified
- Staff members have been trained in COVID-19 safety protocols and will rely on the procedures in place
- Require ill children and staff members to stay at home
- Inquire to parents about whether children have been tested for COVID-19 when symptoms are present
- Prepare to isolate and safely transport those who are sick to their home or to a healthcare facility
- Identification of isolation location for children showing symptoms
- Follow directions from local health department for reporting COVID-19 cases
- Distribute parent instructions for children with a positive COVID-19 diagnosis or direct contact with a positive individual
- Encourage individuals who are sick to follow CDC guidance for caring for oneself and others who are sick
- Advise individuals who are sick when it would be safe for them to return based on CDC and local health department criteria to discontinue home isolation
- Distribute instructions or guidance for home isolation
- Plan to return for children with a positive COVID-19 diagnosis
- Flexible COVID-19 medical leave policies for staff members in collaboration with local school district policies

Communications and Support

- Training and ongoing reinforcing of standard operating procedures and mitigation measures with teaching staff and other staff members
- Vigilance and training for the identification of COVID-19 related symptoms
- Masks and other personal protective equipment provided to teachers and other staff members
- Monthly information sent to teaching staff from the grantee office concerning health & safety procedures for the classroom setting

What to Do If You Were Exposed to COVID-19

If you have tested positive or are showing symptoms of COVID-19, isolate immediately.

If you were exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19 or have been told by a healthcare provider or public health authority that you were exposed, here are the steps that you should take, regardless of your vaccination status or if you have had a previous infection.

After Being Exposed to COVID-19

START PRECAUTIONS

- Immediately
- Wear a mask as soon as you find out you were exposed
- Start counting from Day 1
 - Day 0 is the day of your last exposure to someone with COVID-19
 - Day 1 is the first full day after your last exposure

CONTINUE PRECAUTIONS

- 10 Full Days
- You can still develop COVID-19 up to 10 days after you have been exposed
- Take precautions
- Wear a high-quality mask or respirator (e.g., N95) any time you are around others inside your home or indoors in public
- Do not go places where you are unable to wear a mask
- Take extra precautions if you will be around people who are more likely to get very sick from COVID-19.

WATCH FOR SYMPTOMS

- Fever (100.4°F or greater)
- Cough
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Fatigue
- Chills
- Muscle or body aches
- Congestion
- Runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Shortness of breath
- Other COVID-19 symptoms

IF YOU DEVELOP SYMPTOMS

- Isolate immediately
- Get tested
- Stay home until you know the result

IF YOU TEST POSITIVE

- Isolate immediately

- Get tested on day 6, at least 5 full days after your last exposure
- Test even if you don't develop symptoms.
- If you already had COVID-19 within the past 90 days, see [specific testing recommendations](#)

IF YOU TEST NEGATIVE

- Continue taking precautions through day 10
- During that time, wear a high-quality mask when around others at home and indoors in public
- As noted in the Food and Drug Administration labeling for authorized over-the-counter antigen tests, negative test results do not rule out SARS-CoV-2 infection and should not be used as the sole basis for treatment or patient management decisions, including infection control decisions.

You can still develop COVID-19 up to 10 days after you have been exposed.
