

GUIDELINES FOR CHILD DAY CARE FACILITIES

In addition to the Safer at Home Order's mandates and Guidelines for Safeguarding All Businesses, the following practices are strongly recommended for all child day care facilities.

These recommendations have been developed in conjunction with the recommendations from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's Guidance on *Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19*, and guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): *Guidelines for Disinfecting Your Facility and Child Care Programs During the COVID-19 Pandemic*. Child care facilities and providers should refer to these guidelines prior to reopening as well as any guidance or regulations provided by their respective state licensing boards, including Alabama Department of Human Resources: Alabama Administrative Code, Chapters 660-5-25 through -27.

These recommendations do not change the Minimum Standards promulgated by the Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR).

In addition to the sanitation requirements established by the state licensing board and the Alabama Department of Public Health, which should be strictly followed, it is recommended that these minimum standards be incorporated:

Promote healthy hygiene practices:

- Teach and reinforce washing hands and covering coughs and sneezes among children and staff.
 - Face coverings are most essential at times when social distancing is not possible. Staff should be frequently reminded not to touch the face covering and to wash their hands frequently. Information should be provided to all staff on proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings.
- Have adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors, including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol, paper towels, and tissues.
 - In order to use hand sanitizer on children, a facility must use DHR's Authorization for Administering Medication/Medical Procedures form (DHR-CDC-1949). This form must be completed and signed by the parent/guardian. All medications, in addition to hand sanitizers, and other sanitizing products, shall be kept under lock and key or combination lock, in a separate location away from toxic chemicals and other harmful items.

Health and safety actions:

- Intensify cleaning, sanitation, disinfection, and ventilation.
 - Clean, sanitize, and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (for example, playground equipment, door handles, sink handles, drinking fountains) multiple times per day and shared objects between use.
 - Avoid use of items (for example, soft or plush toys) that are not easily cleaned, sanitized, or disinfected.
 - Social distancing. Use increased spacing, small groups, and limited mixing between groups.
 - Ensure that classes include the same group of children each day and that the same child care providers remain with the same group each day, if possible.

- Space out seating and bedding (head-to-toe positioning) to six feet apart if possible.
- Stagger arrival and drop-off times or put in place other practices to limit direct contact with parents as much as possible. Parents should drop off and pick up children at the door whenever possible.
- Restrict nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving several groups at the same time.
- Cancel all field trips, inter-group events, and extracurricular activities involving more than one classroom at a time.
- Avoid immediate contact (such as shaking or holding hands, hugging, or kissing).
- Limit the number of children playing together in outdoor spaces.
- Designate seating and table space for each child.
- Limit sharing.
 - Keep each child's belongings separated and in individually labeled storage containers, cubbies, or areas and have them taken home each day and cleaned, if possible.
 - Adjust activities and procedures to limit sharing of items such as toys, belongings, supplies, and equipment and clean and disinfect between use.
 - If food is offered at any event, have pre-packaged boxes or bags for each child. Avoid sharing foods and utensils.

Protection of employees and children:

- Train all employees on health and safety guidelines.
- Take steps to limit risk of exposure to children and employees at higher risk for severe illness, such as people with diabetes, heart disease, and other chronic conditions, and people 65 or older.
- Screen children and employees each day upon arrival for history of exposure and symptoms, including temperature checks. Facilities must use DHR's Authorization for Administering Medication/Medical Procedures form (DHR-CDC-1949). The form must be completed and signed by the parent/guardian before a child's temperature is checked.
 - Any child or employee with a temperature of 100.4 degrees or above should not be permitted to attend and should immediately be sent home. Children or employees who are sent home with a fever should receive medical clearance from a physician before returning.

Ongoing monitoring:

- Children who are sick should be separated and cared for by a staff member until a parent can arrive. Parents should be notified immediately of any illness and should pick the child up within 60 minutes of the notification. Rooms and materials used to care for sick children should be thoroughly disinfected after use. CDC recommends waiting 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting, if possible.
- Encourage anyone who is sick to stay home.
- Monitor child and employee absences, and have a pool of trained substitutes and flexible leave policies and practices for employees who may become ill.
- Regularly communicate and monitor developments with local authorities, employees, and families regarding cases, exposures, and updates to policies and procedures.