

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Jeanne M. Lambrew, Ph.D.
Commissioner



Maine Department of Health and Human Services
Child and Family Services
11 State House Station
2 Anthony Avenue
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011
Tel.: (207) 624-7900; Toll Free: (877) 680-5866
TTY: Dial 711 (Maine Relay); Fax: (207) 287-5282

Updated Guidance for Childcare Providers

RELEASE DATE: June 30, 2021

Note: This document incorporates source documents from U.S. CDC, Maine CDC, and Maine's COVID-19 Response websites, and aligns with Maine DOE guidance.

Updates can be found on the [OCFS COVID Response Page](#)

The Department of Health and Human Services recognizes the vitally important role of childcare providers for Maine's children, their parents, and employers. The Department has updated this guidance document to provide clear guidelines in order to ensure the health and safety of staff and children. This guidance is applicable both to providers that have continued to operate and those that closed temporarily and are re-opening. Providers should follow these guidelines, as well as continuing to monitor US and Maine CDC guidance. The recommendations regarding COVID-19, including the prevention of transmission, continue to evolve as experts learn more about the virus. As a result, this document and the guidance contained within it are subject to change. Please note the areas of guidance in this document that have changed are identified by the section header **highlighted in yellow**, as well as the specific guidance updates/changes identified in **red**.

There continues to be cases of COVID-19 in Maine and timely notification to CDC and Children's Licensing is important in controlling the spread of COVID-19. Please notify local health officials (Maine CDC: 1-800-821-5821), staff, your Child Care Licensing Specialist, and families as soon as possible of any confirmed cases of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable federal and state privacy laws.

COVID-19 Vaccination

Maine residents age 12+ are encouraged to make an appointment at a vaccination site as soon as possible. COVID -19 vaccination sites in Maine can be found at:
<https://www.maine.gov/covid19/vaccines/vaccination-sites>

Mask Use

As of June 30, 2021, the face covering requirement, which currently applies to indoor Pre-K-12 schools and child care settings, will end. However, the Maine CDC continues to recommend, though not require, that unvaccinated people – including those under 12 who are not yet eligible

for a COVID vaccine, wear face coverings indoors. Child care settings can continue to require face coverings if they choose.

- Masks should NOT be worn by children under age 2 or anyone who has trouble breathing. Cloth face coverings should not be put on babies and children under age 2 because of the danger of suffocation.
- Masks should not be worn at rest time, meal time, or during swimming activities.

Reduce the Spread of COVID-19

The actions put in place by your child care program and taken by the staff and families will help reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19. Using many of the following prevention strategies at the same time can lower the risk of transmission of COVID-19 in your child care program.

- Stay home when sick.
- Continue [daily screening procedures](#) for children, staff and parents.
- When possible, in multi-site child care programs limit staff working at more than one site.
- [Wash hands frequently](#).
- Develop a [schedule](#) for increased frequency of routine cleaning of high-touch surfaces.
- Avoid shared objects when possible.
- Limit the use of communal spaces or ensure proper disinfection in between groups.
- Stagger use of outdoor play areas when possible and disinfect between use.
- Limit mixing between groups such that there is minimal or no interaction between groups or cohorts.
- Limit any nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations or offer virtual events.
- Ensure [State of Maine travel guidance](#) is being followed by staff and families.
- [Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19](#).

Actions to take when someone has COVID-19

- Isolate the sick child or staff member if they are present at the program.
- Notify the Maine CDC and your Child Care Licensing Specialist.
- Identify close contacts and notify families of potential exposure.
- Determine in conjunction with the Maine CDC and you Child Care Licensing Specialist if a full or partial closure of the program is necessary.

- Clean and disinfect all child care space according to CDC guidance.

BinaxNOW Testing

BinaxNOW remains an available option within child care facilities for use for screening asymptomatic employees who have been identified as a close contact to a COVID-19 positive case.

If you are interested, you should complete the following steps:

1. Complete the Application for the CLIA Waiver: (detailed instructions are on page 6/16 of the guidance document linked below): <https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Legislation/CLIA/Downloads/HowObtainCertificateofWaiver.pdf>
2. Identify the staff member who will administer the testing, and have this staff member complete the BinaxNOW Online training: <https://www.globalpointofcare.abbott/en/support/product-installation-training/navica-brand/navica-binaxnow-ag-training.html>
3. Apply for the BinaxNOW Ag Cards using the Maine DHHS online application form: https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=q6g_QX0gYkubzeoajy-GTseHDCzroMNHqsaKj3vr645UNjFHU0NRR01UR0k5OTdBWEdaVk5DVjZFW54u
4. Register for the REDCap reporting system to report results from tests done in your facility: https://redcap.link/MECDC_POC_Registration

As a reminder, for more detailed instructions please reference the guidance document linked below:

<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/epi/airborne/documents/Binax-Guidance.pdf>

For more information regarding COVID – 19

- If you're looking for general information about COVID-19, call 211, text your zip code to 898-211, or email info@211maine.org.
- The following U.S CDC guidance outlines strategies that child care programs can use to maintain healthy environments and operations, lower the risk of COVID-19 spread in their programs, prepare for when someone is sick with COVID-19, and support coping and resilience. [Guidance for Operating Child Care Programs during COVID -19](#)

Additional Resources

Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open

Please review the US CDC guidance for [Childcare Providers](#). You may also find this guidance from US CDC helpful: [Prepare your Small Business and Employees for the Effects of COVID-19](#).

Additional guidance related to COVID-19 more generally is available from the [US CDC](#) and the [Maine Department of Health and Human Services](#).

CDC has provided additional resources for providers who remain open:
[CDC Recommendations for Childcare Facilities with COVID-19 Positive Staff or Children](#)
[CDC Infographic on Childcare: Who can be in my facility?](#)
[CDC Infographic on Childcare: What if a child or staff member tests positive?](#)

Testing Resources:

<https://www.maine.gov/covid19/restartingmaine/keepmainehealthy/testing>

Contact Tracing:

<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/epi/airborne/coronavirus/contact-tracing.shtml>

Quarantine and Isolation information:

<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/epi/airborne/coronavirus/covid.shtml>

COVID-19 Basics:

- [COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Latest COVID-19 Information](#)
- [Managing Stress and Coping](#)
- [Children and COVID-19](#)
- [Talking with children about Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)

For Child Care Providers and Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers:

- [Quick Guide: Help Protect Your Family Child Care Home from COVID-19 pdf icon](#)[2 MB, 1 Page]
- [Quick Guide: Help Protect Your Child Care Center from COVID-19 pdf icon](#)[1 MB, 2 Pages]
- [COVID-19 Child Care Symptom Screening Flowchart pdf icon](#)[56 KB, 1 Page]
- [What to Do if a Child Becomes Sick or Receives a New COVID-19 Diagnosis in your Child Care Program Flowchart pdf icon](#)[55 KB, 1 Page]

- [What to Do if a Child Becomes Sick or Receives a New COVID-19 Diagnosis At Your Family Child Care Home](#)
- [My Child is Showing Signs of COVID-19 in Child Care: What Should I Do? Quick Guide for Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers pdf icon\[1.4 MB, 1 Page\]](#)
- [A Child is Showing Signs of COVID-19 in my Child Care Program: What Should I Do? Quick Guide for Providers pdf icon\[4.9 MB, 1 Page\]](#)
- [Ventilation in Schools and Child Care Programs](#)
- [Guidance for Schools and Child Care Centers](#)
- [Guidance for Direct Service Providers, Parents, Caregivers, and Guardians, and People with Developmental and Behavioral Disorders](#)
- [Guidance for Direct Service Providers](#)
- [Pregnancy, Breastfeeding, and Caring for Newborns](#)

For Businesses and Workplaces:

- [Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#)
- [HIPAA and COVID-19](#)
- [OSHA Guidance on Mitigating and Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 in the Workplace](#)
- [U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission: Coronavirus and COVID-19](#)

Everyday Steps to Slow the Spread:

- [Cleaning and Disinfection](#)
- [COVID-19 Prevention](#)
- [Use of Masks to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19](#)
- [Handwashing Information](#)

COVID-19 Fact Sheets, Posters, and Videos:

- [CDC Communication Resources](#)
- [CDC COVID-19 Communication Toolkit](#)

Sources:

Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970: Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility

United States Environmental Protection Agency:

[List N: Disinfectants for Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

References:

CDC's COVID-19 Data Tracker: <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#demographics> and COVID-NET US COVID-19 Hospitalization Data.

Leeb RT, Price S, Sliwa S, et al. COVID-19 Trends Among School-Aged Children — United States, March 1–September 19, 2020. *MMWR (Morb Mortal Wkly Rep)* 2020;69:1410–1415. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6939e2>.

Laws L, Chancey RJ, Rabold EM, et al. Symptoms and Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 Among Children — Utah and Wisconsin, March–May 2020. *Pediatrics* 2020. DOI:10.1542/peds.2020-027268.

L'Huillier AG, Torriani G, Pigny F, et al. Culture-Competent SARS-CoV-2 in Nasopharynx of Symptomatic Neonates, Children, and Adolescents. *Emerging Infectious Diseases* 2020;26(10):2494-2497. DOI:10.3201/eid2610.202403.

Assaker, Rita, Anne-Emmanuelle Colas, Florence Julien-Marsollier, Béatrice Bruneau, Lucile Marsac, Bruno Greff, Nathalie Tri, Charlotte Fait, Christopher Brasher, and Souhayl Dahmani. Presenting Symptoms of COVID-19 in Children: A Meta-Analysis of Published Studies. *British Journal of Anaesthesia* 2020 <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0007091220304086?via%3Dihub>.

Kim L, Whitaker M, O'Halloran A, et al. Hospitalization Rates and Characteristics of Children Aged <18 Years Hospitalized with Laboratory-Confirmed COVID-19 – COVID-NET, 14 States, March 1-July 25, 2020. *MMWR (Morb Mortal Wkly Rep)* 2020; 69:1081-1088. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6932e3>

Link-Gelles R, DellaGrotta AL, Molina C, et al. Limited Secondary Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in Child Care Programs — Rhode Island, June 1–July 31, 2020. *MMWR (Morb Mortal Wkly Rep)* 2020;69:1170–1172. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6934e2>

Lopez AS, Hill M, Antezano J, et al. Transmission Dynamics of COVID-19 Outbreaks Associated with Child Care Facilities — Salt Lake City, Utah, April–July 2020. *MMWR (Morb Mortal Wkly Rep)* 2020;69:1319–1323. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6937e3>

Gilliam WS, Malik AA, Shafiq M, et al. COVID-19 transmission in US Child Care Programs. *Pediatrics* 2020. DOI: 10.1542/peds.2020-031971

Coronado F., Blough S., Bergeron D., et al. Implementing Mitigation Strategies in Early Care and Education Settings for Prevention of SARS-CoV-2 Transmission – Eight States, September-October 2020. *MMWR (Morb Mortal Wkly Rep)* 2020;69:1868–1872. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6949e3>

Davies, N.G., Klepac, P., Liu, Y. et al. Age-Dependent Effects in the Transmission and Control of COVID-19 Epidemics. *Nat Med* 2020 <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41591-020-0962>