

CIRCULAR

Date: August 10, 2020

CIRCULAR NUMBER: COVID-19: 2020-121

To: All child care facilities, ELCC program staff

Subject: **Public Health Protocols**

Program(s): all

Type: Policy For Internal Reference Only
 Procedure Information Only

Effective Date Immediately

Issue: Protocols for positive COVID tests connected to child care facilities

The media has recently reported on a COVID-19 case connected to a child care facility. We want to assure you that appropriate steps are being taken and Public Health is monitoring the situation. As the COVID-19 response and recovery continues it is not unexpected that there will be occurrences of positive tests connected to child care facilities, whether it is a parent, staff member, or child.

Throughout this response the child care sector has gone above and beyond to support and protect families and children in Manitoba by adhering to the public health guidelines. The protocols that are in place substantially reduce the risk of transmission within a child care facility.

The key public health protocols include:

Prevention:

- Screen daily, using the [COVID-19 Screening Tool](#)
- Continue to practice good hygiene and robust cleaning protocols
- Do not come to work, or allow children to attend, if they are sick

If a child or staff member at your facility exhibit symptoms:

- Refer to the direction in the [ELCC practice guide](#), pages 14 & 15.
- The parent should be notified to come pick up the child immediately.
- Staff members exhibiting symptoms should leave the facility.
- Ask the parent or guardian to contact Health Links – Info Santé (204-788-8200 or 1-888-315-9257) or the child's health care provider for direction. A staff member with symptoms should do the same.
- If the sick child or staff member is confirmed to have COVID-19 through laboratory testing, Public Health will follow up with any identified contacts. Follow up will typically occur within 24 to 48 hours after receiving the individual's

laboratory results. If there is no notification by Public Health, you can assume no contacts within the centre have been identified or the sick child or staff member has been confirmed not to have COVID-19.

- If a child or staff member tests positive, please notify the ELCC program immediately.

If there is a positive COVID-19 case connected to your facility:

- Public Health will provide additional guidance including ensuring that appropriate supports are in place to coordinate the response.
- Public Health actions and directions are based on the specific circumstances and may include, but are not limited to:
 - case investigation, which involves interviewing the affected individual to determine where they may have been exposed or acquired the virus, when they were potentially infectious to others and identifying potential contacts,
 - contact tracing, which involves identifying contacts of a positive case and contacting those individuals,
 - requesting records that identify cohorts/groups of staff and children in the child care setting for a specified time frame,
 - testing of staff and children who may have been exposed to a positive case,
 - enhancing environmental cleaning, and
 - assessing need for facility closure. Note that facility closure is not required unless directed by Public Health.
- ELCC workforce and families of child care facilities will only be contacted by Public Health for contact tracing purposes if Public Health concludes that there was a risk of exposure to children or staff in the centre.
- Public Health will advise whether you need to share information about the COVID-19 case. If you are uncertain, please clarify directly with Public Health whether the information should be shared and if so, with who.

It is critical to keep good attendance records to facilitate contact tracing should it be necessary. Child care facilities are expected to work with Public Health to ensure a prompt response to cases of COVID-19 that may have been exposed in or may have attended a child care facility.

For the latest provincial public health information on COVID-19, including helpful information for citizens, service providers and employers, please regularly visit the Manitoba government's website at: www.manitoba.ca/covid19. Early Learning and Child Care specific resources and circulars can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/covid-circulars.html>.