

CIRCULAR

Date: November 4, 2020

CIRCULAR NUMBER: COVID-19 2020-173(r): **UPDATED**
(new and revised information in bold font)

To: Early learning and child care providers

Subject: **Child care centre staff in ~~Winnipeg Metropolitan Region~~ in Manitoba
required to wear medical-grade masks**

Program(s): Early Learning and Child Care

Type: Policy

Procedure

Effective Date: November 4, 2020

As of Monday, November 2, the Winnipeg Metropolitan Region was raised to the Critical (red) level, according to the #RestartMB Pandemic Response System. **All other regions of the province are at the Restricted (orange) level. Please note that although the Winnipeg Metropolitan Region is at the Critical (red) level**, child care facilities in the region remain at the Restricted (orange) level and no changes will be made to cohort sizes.

As of October 26, teachers and staff in schools who move between cohorts of students are required to wear medical-grade masks. Given the common children and families served between child care centres and schools as well as co-location, consistency is important.

In the past week, all child care centres in the Winnipeg Metropolitan Region were provided with medical-grade masks for use by staff. Beginning immediately, the Department of Families will be distributing medical-grade masks to child care centres across the province (i.e., all those outside of the Winnipeg Metropolitan Region).

As soon as your child care centre receives this delivery, the continuous use of medical-grade masks by staff will be required (until receipt of a public directive that this is no longer required).

As many child care centres work with more than one cohort of children and child care providers cannot always distance from the children they care for, this added proactive measure will help keep children and staff healthy. Extended use of the same mask for repeated interactions with multiple children is permitted. The mask must be changed if it

becomes wet, damaged or soiled. Eye protection is not required unless caring for a child who falls ill while at the centre.

For information on how to properly put on (don) and take off (doff) a medical-grade mask, see: <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/extended-use-of-face-masks.pdf>.

Medical-grade masks are not required and will not be provided to child care homes in Manitoba. This is because the number of children being cared for is much smaller.

We would also like to take this opportunity to remind child care providers to continue to practice the fundamentals:

- self-screening for symptoms before attending work each day, using the questions at www.gov.mb.ca/asset_library/en/coronavirus/covid19_screening_checklist.pdf or the online assessment tool at <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>;
- staying home and not going to work when ill, even if your symptoms are very mild;
- staying home and not going to work if you have been tested for COVID-19 and have not yet received the results;
- washing/sanitizing your hands and covering your coughs and sneezes;
- properly and consistently using personal protective equipment (as directed by the Department of Families);
- implementing increased environmental cleaning/disinfection; and
- clearly communicating to families the need to monitor their child daily for symptoms before sending them to child care.

Thank you for your diligence and commitment to maintaining a safe, caring environment for children throughout this challenging time.

If you have questions, please email cdcinfo@gov.mb.ca or call 204-945-0776 or 1-888-213-4754.

Sincerely,
Early Learning and Child Care Program