



COVID-19 Case and Exposure Guidance **EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION (ECE) PROGRAMS**

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for COVID-19 cases and exposures in the setting of an Early Care and Education (ECE) program.

Per Ohio Revised Code, ECE programs are required to track communicable disease cases among staff and students for all reportable infectious diseases. Examples of reportable infectious diseases include measles, mumps, varicella (chicken pox), tuberculosis, and COVID-19.

COVID-19 Cases

Specifically, for COVID-19, ECE programs are required to report any cases to the local health district within 24 hours. COVID-19 remains a Class A reportable infectious disease in Ohio. See Director's order-[2nd-Amended-Reporting-Requirements-COVID-April22.pdf \(ohio.gov\)](#).

COVID-19 cases should follow the isolation guidance as described in the following link: [DPHD-COVID-19-Isolation-and-Exposure-Guidance.pdf \(delawarehealth.org\)](#). This document can be found on the DPHD website under COVID-19.

Cases are required to isolate at home for at least 5 days. Once the criteria for ending isolation have been met, a case may return to school with a mask for days 6-10. For times when a mask will not be worn at the ECE (napping and eating), the case is required to be a minimum of 6 feet from others.

The CDC does not recommend mask wearing for children younger than 2 years. Additionally, other very young children may not be able to consistently and correctly wear a well-fitting mask. If a case is unable to wear a mask, he or she must isolate at home for the full 10 days.

COVID-19 cases: please fill out a COVID-19 self-report form at the following link. This information is kept confidential and will help prevent further spread.

[New Submission \(delawarehealth.org\)](#)

Covid-19 Exposures

ECE programs will notify families of children exposed to a case of COVID-19. Children exposed to a case should follow the exposure guidelines as described in the following link: [DPHD-COVID-19-Isolation-and-Exposure-Guidance.pdf \(delawarehealth.org\)](#)

If an exposed individual is asymptomatic, that person may return to school regardless of whether he or she is able to consistently wear a well-fitting mask. The CDC does not recommend mask wearing for

children younger than 2 years. Additionally, other very young children may not be able to consistently and correctly wear a well-fitting mask.

For those able to do so, exposed individuals should wear a mask for 10 days from the date of last exposure. For exposed children unable to wear a mask, they may return to school. However, in those situations, it is recommended that the ECE program employ other prevention strategies, such as improving ventilation and avoiding crowding. [Operational Guidance for K-12 Schools and Early Care and Education Programs to Support Safe In-Person Learning | CDC](#). **Note: this only applies to exposed individuals. COVID-19 cases unable to mask must isolate at home for 10 days.**

ECE programs are required to follow Delaware Public Health District (DPHD) COVID-19 guidance. ECE programs do have the authority to enact additional safety and mitigation requirements at their discretion to suit the needs of the facility and protect the families they serve.

After an ECE program reports cases, DPHD will then determine how to proceed with the investigation. If an ECE program is experiencing a COVID-19 outbreak, DPHD has the authority to enact additional restrictions to prevent further spread of the illness. This may include temporarily closing one or more classrooms or potentially closing the entire building.

If you have questions, please email COVID19@delawarehealth.org or call 740-368-1700.