



CHILD CARE CENTERS

Prepare for When Someone is Sick with COVID-19

COVID-19 Exposure, Symptoms, and Positive Tests

Contact Tracing Process

If a child or staff person enrolled in your child care center receives a positive COVID-19 test, the individual's local health department will be alerted. Public health departments receives notification and contact information for all positive cases within the county. Once a positive case is reported, a case investigator is assigned to the case. They provide information about COVID-19 and isolation and ask the case about who they had contact with while infectious. If the individual identifies that they were at a child care site while infectious, the case investigator would link the positive case to the site and then reach out directly to your site.

A person is considered infectious 2 days prior to symptom onset. If they are asymptomatic, they are considered infectious 2 days prior to a positive test.

REQUIRED: When sites are aware of an attendee or staff person who tested positive for COVID-19 that was at the site while likely infectious, the site should report the case to PHMDC. There are two options for reporting a case for child care sites in Dane County: 1. Report the case through this short [survey online](#) with information about your center and the person who tested positive or 2. Report the case calling the Communicable Disease Nurse on-call line at (608) 266-4821. During business hours, ask for the Communicable Disease Nurse on-call. After business hours, leave a message. Any message left after business hours or during the weekend will be returned on the next business day. After reporting the case, your site will be assigned a site investigator. This investigator will follow up with your site to determine what further precautions you may need to take. It may take a few days to hear from the site investigator.

What to do if someone has COVID-19 Symptoms or Tests Positive in Dane County

For information on COVID-19 symptoms, exclusion criteria and flow chart, reference the [Guidance for When a Child/Youth or Staff Member Can Return to School or Child Care](#).

Steps your child care site in Dane County should take if someone tests positive and was at your child care site while they were likely infectious:

1. If the child or staff member has a positive COVID-19 test, report the case to PHMDC through this [survey online](#) or by calling (608) 266-4821 (see Contact Tracing Process in the section above).
 - If the individual lives outside of Dane County, you should also call the local health department in the county where they live.
2. Do not allow children or staff that test positive or are close contact to come to the child care site.
 - The positive case must remain out of the facility for at least 10 days from the onset of symptoms AND at least 1 day (24 hours) have passed since the person has not had a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in other symptoms. People who test positive do not need a negative test before returning.
 - The child care site should identify close contacts (see definition in next section below) at the

child care site and inform the close contacts that they were exposed and [should quarantine](#). You should exclude these individuals from the center and when the Public Health case/site investigator contacts your child care site, Public Health will provide a letter to give to families and staff members. The child care site will need to provide the names and other information for close contacts to public health.

- If the person who tested positive has symptoms, they are considered infectious two days prior to symptom onset. If the person who tested positive is asymptomatic, they are considered infectious two days prior to test date.
 - Siblings or household members of close contacts can still attend the child care site
 - Close contacts of close contacts do *not* need to quarantine since they were not exposed to someone with COVID-19.
- 3. The child care site should remove everyone from the areas that the person who tested positive was in and clean those areas according to [CDC guidelines](#).
- 4. It is recommended that each child care site has a room or space separate from others where children or employees (if the employee cannot leave right away) who may have COVID-19 wait to be evaluated or for pick-up. Only essential employees and children assigned to the room should enter, everyone should sign in and out so that there is a record of the persons who entered the room, and the room should be disinfected several times throughout the day. Everyone should maintain physical distancing and employees should wear appropriate PPE. Children who are ill should be walked out of the building to their parent or guardian.

For additional information, reference the [Q&A about Child Care Centers that have someone with COVID-19 \(in Spanish\)](#).

Definition of a Close Contact

If the case investigator determines that a child was at your site while infectious, they will work with you to determine if the child had close contact with others in your site. An individual is considered a close contact if any of the following is true:

- Were within 6 feet of a positive person for more than 15 minutes total in a day
- Had physical contact with the person
- Had direct contact with the respiratory secretions of the people (i.e., from coughing, sneezing, contact with dirty tissue, shared drinking glass, food, or other personal items)

This definition applies even if any or all parties were wearing face coverings or if physical barriers were used. These measures reduce the risk of spread but do not eliminate it. If the investigation identifies others in your site to be a close contact, they should quarantine for 14 days since being exposed to the positive case. While Public Health Madison & Dane County recommends a 14 day quarantine, you can refer to the [CDC Quarantine Guidelines](#) for alternative [quarantine timeline options](#).

Facility Protocols

If there is a case of COVID-19 among children or staff, programs should consider whether a short-term (less than one week) or long-term (two weeks or more) closure will allow for sufficient cleaning and disinfection. Public Health Madison & Dane County can also use this time to trace close contacts of the case and determine if others could be at risk. Advantages of long-term closures must be weighed against the economic burden placed on staff and children's families, loss of key members of the workforce, and impacts on learning. If local closures are

pursued because of community transmission, the geographic extent of closures should be informed by local epidemiologic data.

5. **Assess the impacts of any decisions you make on the families you serve.** There are equity implications for any decision you may make, and the families you work with will be able to provide you the best feedback on and guidance on how to move forward in a child- and family-centered way
6. If extended facility closures are recommended by public health, programs should implement continuity of operations plans
 - Ensure continuity of meal programs and returning of any medications stored at the center
 - Continue providing necessary services for children with special healthcare needs
7. Parents of children at increased risk of severe illness should consider implementing plans to remove children from the program
8. Maintain regular communications with parents and your local public health department