**California Department of Industrial Relations
Division of Occupational Safety & Health
Publications Unit**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
CAL OSHA
DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

SAFETY & HEALTH GUIDANCE
COVID-19 Infection Prevention in Child Care Programs

October 27, 2020

California employers are required to establish and implement an Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP) to protect employees from all worksite hazards, including infectious diseases. This guidance contains information for child care programs on ways to update their IIPPs to include information on employee training and preventing the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace. This is mandatory in most California workplaces since COVID-19 is widespread in the community.

Employee Training on COVID-19

Provide training in a form readily understandable by all employees on the following topics:

- Information related to COVID-19 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), including how the illness is spread, how to prevent its spread, symptoms, and when to seek medical assistance for sick children or employees:
  - **How COVID-19 is spread**.
  - **Preventing the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick**.
  - **Symptoms of COVID-19 and when to seek medical attention**.
- California's COVID-19 **guidance for childcare programs**.
- The importance of frequent handwashing with soap and water (or using hand sanitizer where soap and water are not available), including:
  - When employees arrive at the facility and before they leave the facility.
  - Before and after handling food, feeding a child, or eating.
  - Before and after using the toilet, changing a diaper, or helping a child use the bathroom (also wash the child's hands after helping the child use the bathroom or changing their diaper).

> **NOTE: Hand sanitizers are less effective than handwashing in preventing the spread of COVID-19**

  - After helping a child wipe their nose or mouth or tending to a cut or sore.
  - After working in sandboxes and similar children's play areas.
  - Before and after giving medicine to a child.
  - After handling wastebaskets or garbage.
- Methods to avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Limiting close contact with others as much as possible and maintaining more than six feet of separation.
- The mandatory use of cloth face covers, as required by the **California Department of Public Health (CDPH) guidelines**, including:
  - **CDC guidelines** that everyone should use cloth face covers when around other persons.
  - Cloth face covers can help protect persons around the user of the cloth face cover when combined with physical distancing and frequent hand-washing.
  - Cloth face covers are not protective equipment and do not protect the person wearing a cloth face cover from COVID-19.
- Coughing and sneezing etiquette.
- Safely using **cleaners and disinfectants** on surfaces and objects, which includes:

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- The hazards of the cleaners and disinfectants available for use at the worksite.
- Ventilation requirements.
- Wearing personal protective equipment (such as gloves).
- Ensuring cleaners and disinfectants are used in a manner that does not endanger employees or children at the facility.

- The importance of not coming to work if they have **symptoms of COVID-19** as described by the CDC, such as a fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea or if they live with or have had close contact with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- To seek medical attention if the symptoms become severe including persistent pain or pressure in the chest, confusion, or bluish lips or face. Updates and further details are available on **CDC's webpage**.
- The employer's plan and procedures to follow when children become sick at the facility.
- The employer's plan and procedures to protect employees from COVID-19 illness.
- Information on employer or government-sponsored leave benefits the employee may be entitled to receive that would make it financially easier to stay at home. See additional information on **government programs supporting sick leave and workers' compensation for COVID-19**, including employees' sick leave rights under the **Families First Coronavirus Response Act**, and employees' rights to workers' compensation benefits and presumption of the work-relatedness of COVID-19 pursuant to the **Governor's Executive Order N-62-20** while that Order is in effect. Some cities and counties also require employers to provide sick leave benefits to employees.

Procedures to Help Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 at the Worksite

Establish and implement the following procedures to help prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Establish a plan for sharing information and guidelines with parents and guardians that

includes:

- Establishing a system to check with parents and guardians daily on the status of their children when children are dropped off at the facility.
- Ensuring information and communication can be provided in the primary languages spoken by the parents and guardians.
- Obtaining email addresses and home, work, and mobile phone numbers from parents and guardians of children at the facility so the facility can reach them at all times.
- Creating and testing communication systems with parents and guardians, children at the facility, employees, facility management, and emergency medical services.
- Providing parents and guardians with information on the statewide requirement to use cloth face coverings (for adults and children over the age of 2).
- Providing parents and guardians with information from the CDC on COVID-19 symptoms, transmission, prevention, and when to seek medical attention. Encouraging parents and guardians to share the information with their children as appropriate.
- Communicating with parents and guardians that children should stay at home if they are sick, have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus, or if someone in the household has symptoms (cough, fever, shortness of breath).
- Establishing voluntary methods for parents and guardians to help screen their children for flu-like symptoms. Communicating such methods with parents and guardians. (For example, ask parents and guardians to take their children's temperatures every day before coming to child care and to keep their children at home if their temperature is over 100.4°F.) Asking the local health officer for assistance with these methods.

- Establish procedures to notify local health officials upon learning that someone who has been at the child care facility has a COVID-19 infection. These officials will help administrators determine a course of action.

- Ensure that employees who received a COVID-19 diagnosis return to work only after meeting the criteria in the **CDPH Guidance on Returning to Work or School Following COVID-19 Diagnosis**.

- Establish a curriculum and educational methods to inform children on how they can help prevent the spread of COVID-19, including:

  ◦ Frequent hand washing.

  ◦ Avoiding close and direct contact with other children and facility staff.

  ◦ Telling their teacher as soon as possible if they feel sick.

  ◦ Coughing and sneezing etiquette (cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or sleeve; not hands).

  ◦ Discouraging children from sharing food, drinking cups, eating utensils, towels, toothbrushes, etc.

- Establish a plan for children who become sick at the facility. The plan should include:

  ◦ Procedures for contacting parents and guardians immediately and criteria for seeking medical assistance.

  ◦ Designated areas where sick children can be isolated and attended to by a limited number of trained staff.

  ◦ Masks for sick children over 2 years of age to use if they agree, since masks worn by sick persons help prevent the spread of germs to others (but do not effectively protect the wearer from getting COVID-19).

- Establish procedures to routinely clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects (e.g., doorknobs, light switches, classroom sink handles, countertops, shared toys). These procedures should include:

  ◦ Using products that are **EPA-approved** for use against the virus that causes COVID-19.

  ◦ Providing EPA-registered disposable wipes for employees to wipe down commonly used surfaces (e.g., keyboards, desks, remote controls) before use.

  ◦ Following the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., safety requirements, protective equipment, concentration, contact time).

  ◦ Ensuring there are adequate supplies to support cleaning and disinfection practices.

- Creating procedures to close access and deep clean, preferably with a professional cleaning service, an area where a person confirmed or presumed to have COVID-19 has been.

- Establish and implement procedures for physical distancing such as:

  ◦ Arrange developmentally appropriate activities for smaller group activities and rearrange furniture and play spaces to maintain 6 feet of separation, when possible.

  ◦ For napping, place cots, cribs, and mats 6 feet apart, with heads in opposite directions.

  ◦ Use opportunities to reduce time spend indoors by bringing children outside, weather permitting.

  ◦ Offer more opportunities for individual play.

  ◦ Plan activities that do not require close physical contact between multiple children.

  ◦ Stagger indoor and outdoor play and adjust schedules to reduce the number of children in the same area.

  ◦ Ensure all outdoor play equipment is cleaned and disinfected between use by different groups of children.

  ◦ Develop spacing instructions in both indoor and outdoor spaces that are developmentally appropriate and easy for children to understand.

Additional COVID-19 Resources for Child Care Programs

Child Care Programs and Schools

- California Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response. **COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Child Care Programs and Providers**
- California Department of Public Health. **School Guidance on Novel Coronavirus or COVID-19**
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. **Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open**
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. **Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19): Interim Guidance for Administrators of US K-12 Schools and Child care Programs**
- U.S. Department of Education. **COVID-19 ("Coronavirus") Information and Resources for Schools and School Personnel**

General Information

- American Academy of Pediatrics. **2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)**
- California Department of Public Health. **Asthma-Safer Cleaning and Disinfecting**
- California Department of Public Health. **Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings**
- California Department of Public Health. **Guidance on Returning to Work or School Following COVID-19 Diagnosis**
- California Division of Occupational Safety and Health. **Cal/OSHA Interim Guidelines for General Industry on 2019 Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)**
- California Labor and Workforce Development Agency. **Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) Resources for Employers and Workers**
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. **Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19): Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers**
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. **Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19): Symptoms**
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. **Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19): How It Spreads**
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19): **Steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick**
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration. **Protecting Workers Who Use Cleaning Chemicals**
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. **Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2** (the virus that causes COVID-19)

This document is available with active links at www.dir.ca.gov/COVID19CHILD
For assistance regarding this subject matter, employers may contact
Cal/OSHA Consultation Services at: 1-800-963-9424 or **InfoCons@dir.ca.gov**
www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/consultation.html

Guidance Revision and Updates

- June 18, 2020: Added mandatory statewide requirements for face coverings.

- July 22, 2020: Added information about the following:
  - Use of face coverings as reflected in the June 18, **CDPH Face Covering Guidance**.
  - Government-sponsored leave benefits and Governor's Executive Order N-62-20.
  - Circumstances that require workers to stay home and conditions for returning to work after illness.
  - Use of physical distancing in a child care setting.

- October 27, 2020: Updated criteria for when to return to work after a COVID-19 diagnosis, adding reference to **CDPH Guidance on Returning to Work or School Following COVID-19 Diagnosis**.

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