

CHAPTER TWO: HEALTH AND SAFETY

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| Approval Date: June 2020 Revision Date: August 2020 Revision Date: October 2020 Revision Date: February 2021 Revision Date: April 2021 Revision Date: August 2021 Revision Date: September 2021 | Policy: PANDEMIC PLANNING COVID-19 – PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT USE |
| | Policy Number: 2.5.3 |

Policy Statement

Child Care Algoma is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for children, families and employees. Child Care Algoma will take every reasonable precaution to prevent the risk of communicable diseases within all our locations.

Purpose

To ensure that all employees are aware of, and adhere to, the directive established by Algoma Public Health (APH) and Canada's Chief Public Health Officer, regarding the wearing of medical masks and eye protection in all Child Care Algoma programs.

Application

This policy applies to all employees, students, essential visitors, community members, and any other persons engaged in business with Child Care Algoma.

Definitions

1. The Ministry of Education requires all adults to wear a medical mask both indoors and outdoors at child care centres. All adults including employees, essential visitors and parents/guardians are required to wear a medical mask upon entering and remaining within Child Care Algoma Programs and buildings. The mask must cover the nose, mouth and chin. Eye protection (i.e. face shield or goggles) is mandatory both indoors and outdoors as well. Face shields must be worn over the brow, cover the sides of the face and extend below the chin to provide adequate protection. Goggles must not have gaps around the eyes and must fit snugly on to the wearer's face around their eyes. Prescription eye glasses and sun glasses are not considered eye protection and do not fill the requirement for eye protection. Individuals who wear prescription eye glasses must ensure the eye protection fits properly over their glasses. Medical masks (surgical/procedural) are required to be worn by child care and early years staff/providers outdoors if two metres of distance from others cannot be maintained. Eye protection is also required if a staff member/ provider comes within two metres of an unmasked individual both indoors and outdoors, as per Occupational Health and Safety requirements.
 - a. The following adults are exempted from the requirement to wear a mask:
 - i. Persons with medical conditions who cannot safely wear a mask or face covering (e.g. due to breathing difficulties, cognitive difficulties, hearing or communication difficulties);

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- i. Persons who cannot wear or remove a mask or face covering without assistance, including people who are accommodated under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) or are protected under the Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c.H. 19 as amended;
- ii. Employees who are in an area of the child care centre that is designated to be used by employees only and where employees are able to physically distance themselves from one another (e.g. office space, cook in the kitchen, staff room with one staff in it)

iv. Staff members may have a reasonable exemption to mask use, such as a medical condition. However, at this time, **staff who are unable to wear a mask must maintain a 2m distance from children or other staff both inside and outside the centre.** Anyone that has close (i.e., within 2m) and consistent contact with individuals who are not wearing a mask (e.g., young children) must wear both a medical mask and eye protection. The use of a medical mask and eye protection is required to help protect the individual wearing them from COVID-19. The medical mask also protects the children who are unable to mask and other staff from the wearer's germs which may potentially include COVID-19. Staff are required to wear medical mask and eye protection when:

- Within 2 m (6ft) of a symptomatic child
 - Cleaning blood or bodily fluid spill
- b. Under no circumstances will an employee accompanying a symptomatic child to the isolation space or will an employee clean and disinfect the isolation space without a medical mask or eye protection on. There are no exemptions for mask use while performing these tasks.
 - c. Any employee that presents with symptoms throughout the day **MUST** put on a medical mask immediately if not already wearing one.
 - d. Face shields and goggles are not permitted as a replacement for mask use; however employees who are unable to wear a mask due to an above noted reason must still wear a face shield while inside Child Care Algoma Programs and buildings.
 - e. Temporary removal of the mask and face shield is permitted where necessary for the following purposes:
 - i. For any emergency or medical purpose.

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f. Parents/guardians are required to wear a mask (medical or non-medical) upon entry into the screening area while dropping their child off. If a parent/guardian must enter the facility, beyond the screening area, due to extenuating circumstances they must wear a medical mask. They must also wear eye protection.

g. Staff are not allowed to eat at the dining tables with the children during meal times. Staff must wear a medical mask and eye protection if within 2m of an unmasked child (or other staff member). Use of a medical mask and eye protection is required by staff at all times while inside the centre unless eating; however, time with the mask off should be limited and staff must maintain a physical distance of 2m from every other person. Therefore, staff may eat in the classroom if they consistently and adequately stay 2m away from every other person but they cannot sit and eat with the children during meal times.

2. This policy will be implemented and enforced by all employees within the child care centre.
 - a. Signs about the requirement to wear medical masks and eye protection (in high-risk exposure scenarios) shall be posted at all public entrances.
 - b. Persons without a medical mask will not be allowed into the centre, beyond the screening area.
 - c. Employees will be trained on the policy, including where and how to properly wear a medical mask and eye protection.

Procedures

Child Care Algoma will ensure that medical masks and eye protection are available at all times. All employees will adhere to the following appropriate mask etiquette and use:

- Due to supply limitations, a single mask may be worn for an extended period as long as it is not visibly soiled, damp or damaged.
- The medical mask is to be donned when entering the facility and removed when leaving the facility at the end of the day.
- Perform hand hygiene (using soap and water or hand sanitizer) immediately before putting the mask on, before adjusting it, and before taking it off.

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- If a mask is to be re-used, keep it from being contaminated by storing in a cleanable container with a lid when not in use
- Reusable containers are to be cleaned and disinfected at the end of the day. Bags and or containers need to be labelled with individual's name to prevent accidental misuse.

How to wear mask:

- Make sure your medical mask completely and comfortably covers the nose and mouth without gaping and allows for easy breathing.
- Do not adjust your medical mask to expose your nose
- Your nose and mouth must be covered at all times.
- Make sure your medical mask is secured to your head without the need to adjust frequently.
- Pinch the metal strip over the nose to ensure a closer fit to your nose.
- Do not let your mask hang around your neck when not in use.
- Do not store mask in your pocket
- Dispose mask in a lined garbage can
- Do not transport disposable masks home, dispose before leaving.

When to take mask off:

- Make sure to wash your hands first
- Remove before leaving the building at the end of the day

Re-place mask when:

- It becomes damp or dirty
- It becomes damaged

To manage masks while outside during the cold winter weather:

Masks will get wet quickly when staff is outside with the children. Moisture from warm breath will collect on the mask in cold conditions making it wet. Our recommendations are as follows:

- bring a clean, covered container with extra medical masks outside when you go
- bring hand sanitizer and a garbage bag
- when your mask gets wet, sanitize your hands, remove and discard your mask, re-sanitize your hands and put on a new mask.

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As a result, staff will most likely be going through lots of extra medical mask over the course of the winter. Do not use neck warmers or scarves in place of masks because they do not form a seal around the nose and mouth and may not be made of the recommended material.

Eye Protection:

- Face shields will be assigned to a staff member and labeled with the staff members name so that they can be reused. Manufacturer's instructions for use for reusable face shields will be followed. In the absence of manufacturer's instructions please follow the steps provided below. When not in use, store eye protection in a sealable container or Ziploc bag and label the container/bag with the staff member's name. Clean and disinfect the container daily, replace the Ziploc bag weekly.

Eye protection must be cleaned and disinfected at least at the end of every day and:

- After escorting a child to the isolation space
- If soiled with bodily fluids
- After cleaning up a bodily fluid spill
- If using a Ziploc bag to store the face shield, the face shield must be clean and disinfected every time before putting it in the Ziploc bag

The process for cleaning and disinfecting reusable face shields or goggles is:

1. Child Care Algoma will have eye protection (face shield or eye goggles) dedicated to each staff member. Assigning a single-use face shield that is cleaned or disinfected to extend its use to a single user will potentially reduce the risk for germ transmission between staff.
2. Remove eye protection and place on surface that can be cleaned or disinfected afterwards. The eye protection must be completely disassembled as per manufacturer's instructions to properly clean and disinfect
3. Perform hand hygiene
4. Put on a pair of gloves
5. Using a clean cloth, wipe the eye protection with soap and water cleaning from the inside to the outside.

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6. Using a disinfectant wipe or spray disinfectant, wipe/spray the eye protection on the inside and outside ensuring all surfaces remain wet for the appropriate contact time (as per the manufacturer's instructions). If face shield has foam on it, ensure it does not get wet during cleaning and disinfection.

7. It is not necessary to clean the strap, Velcro, foam, components of the face shield. If these components are visibly soiled or contaminated, the face shield must be discarded.

8. Take off gloves and perform hand hygiene

9. Rinse the eye protection with water if visibility is compromised by residual disinfectant.

10. Place eye protection on a clean surface to air dry (or use a clean, single-use, disposable towel)

11. Disinfect the contaminated surface the dirty eye protection was placed on.

12. Store cleaned and disinfected eye protection properly to reduce possible contamination in a Ziploc bag or in a clean and disinfected container with a lid until next use.

(Children are encouraged to wear a mask when they become symptomatic on site, over the age of 2, does not have difficulty breathing or required assistance, received parental consent, and fits)

Masking (Before and After School Programs):

All students in grades 1-3 are now required to wear a mask (in addition to students in grades 4-12); reasonable exceptions on the requirement to wear masks will apply (e.g., medical exemption). Students in JK/K are encouraged but will not be required to wear masks. Students are required to wear their mask outside if physical distancing cannot be maintained.

Policy and Procedure Review

This policy and procedure will be reviewed and signed off by all employees before commencing employment/unpaid placement in a Child Care Algoma emergency child care centre, and at any time where a change is made.