



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD



DATE: June 28, 2023

TO: Providers of services to young children

FROM: Beth Bye, Commissioner

RE: Coronavirus Memo #50
End of the Public Health Emergency Declaration for COVID-19

As you may know, the Public Health Emergency Declaration in response to COVID-19 ended May 11, 2023. Child care providers should continue to incorporate respiratory health practices and the COVID-19 reporting requirements into their policies and procedures as part of their ongoing effort to manage all respiratory diseases.

The CT Department of Public Health (DPH) created a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document to advise child care providers. This resource provides links to COVID and health related information including the [Positive COVID-19 Case Reporting Form](#) which must still be used by licensed providers through June 30, 2023

After June 30, 2023 only suspected or confirmed outbreaks in a child care program or youth camp need to be immediately reported to both DPH and the local health department where the program is located.

The OEC's webpages are re-configured to reflect the end of the emergency. We built a new section under Provider Resources called Health & Safety. There you will find information on Air Quality and Ventilation, and COVID-19 guidance moved from our COVID section, and other content on related health topics. We also maintained a Frequently Asked Questions section, which will hold the FAQs provided by DPH on the actions required regarding reportable diseases. And finally, an archive remains to explain each of the OEC's Covid support programs.

Please continue to reference as needed the COVID-19 guidance found on the CDC's [main COVID-19 information page](#), the [information page for schools and child care](#), or reach out to your local health department with any questions or concerns.

End of the Public Health Emergency Declaration for COVID-19:

FAQ's for Childcare and Camps

Since President Biden's announcement earlier this year that the public health emergency will expire on May 11, the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) has been working on plans to wind down some of the COVID-19 response initiatives that have been occurring in our state. One of those areas is in the development and delivery of state-specific guidance for COVID-19 prevention and response activities. Although state specific guidance was often needed early in the pandemic when less information was readily available from federal agencies, our CT-specific guidance has largely mirrored guidance from federal agencies and professional medical societies for well over a year at this point.

As we approach the end of the school year, this FAQ document is being distributed to answer some of the lingering questions DPH and the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) have received in the past several months, and to pivot our reference for COVID-19 guidance in the future to the CDC's main COVID-19 information page, which can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/covid19>.

1. Does the end of the Public Health Emergency Declaration mean that COVID-19 is no longer a concern?

The end of the COVID-19 public health emergency does not mean the virus has been eradicated. It's still here, but we know better now how to manage it in our communities and in our lives. People can take simple actions like staying home when you're sick, washing your hands, covering your mouth when you cough or sneeze, and wearing a high-quality mask when levels in your community are high, and staying up-to-date on COVID-19 vaccines—these are all the ways we can continue to protect ourselves. At this point, we expect that COVID-19 will likely follow patterns like other seasonal illnesses, and we can expect to once again ramp up our efforts, including vaccination efforts and prevention campaigns, during respiratory disease season which typically runs from October through May.

2. Should child care/camps continue with increased cleaning and disinfection protocols at this time?

DPH continues to recommend that schools engage in good universal cleaning practices, as would normally be expected to maintain a clean, safe, and healthy childcare environment. Currently, enhanced cleaning and disinfection practices for the purposes of preventing COVID-19 transmission are not necessary. More information regarding good cleaning practices for childcare facilities can be found on the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/hygiene/cleaning/facility.html>.

3. Should child care/camps continue with enhanced ventilation practices at this time?

DPH continues to recommend that school ventilation practices follow guidance from the *American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers* (ASHRAE) pertaining to school buildings. These guidelines include recommendations for fresh air supplied to indoor

spaces, filtration of recirculated air, as well as maintenance and monitoring considerations. More information regarding guidance for school building ventilation can be found at <https://www.ashrae.org/>.

4. Do child care/camps need to continue with quarantine and isolation of students who are exposed to a positive case or test positive themselves? Do we need to require masking for students returning after isolation?

Childcare programs are encouraged to follow CDC guidance as they develop their own policies regarding quarantine, isolation, and masking at this time. DPH recommends that, as with any illness, students and staff should be encouraged to stay home if they are exhibiting symptoms of an illness. Updated quarantine, isolation, and masking guidance from CDC can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-childcare-guidance.html>. DPH recommends that childcare programs consider this guidance in the context of the learning and other needs of their communities when developing their individual policies.

5. Do childcare programs need to continue reporting cases among students and staff via the Positive COVID-19 Case Reporting Form?

Yes. Childcare programs should continue to report all cases (no matter which type of test returns the positive result) among students and staff they are aware of via the Positive COVID-19 Case Reporting Form. Individual case reporting via the school submission will conclude June 30, 2023. [Positive COVID-19 Case Reporting Form](#)

Any suspected or confirmed outbreak in a childcare or camp setting is also immediately reportable by telephone to both DPH and the local health department where the program is located. Camp and childcare programs should continue to work closely with local public health to identify and investigate suspected outbreaks and implement mitigation strategies to limit disease transmission. https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DPH/EEIP/Reportable-Disease-Forms/PD23_2023-12_27_2022-Final-Fillable-Form.pdf