



COVID-19 Health and Wellness Policy

Reviewed: March 10, 2023.

In light of the COVID-19 health emergency, we feel it is important to clarify that Dr. Bonnie Henry has confirmed that childcare facilities are essential services. They should not be closed for public health reasons unless directed to do so by a Medical Health Officer. Facilities experiencing illness among staff may need to close for operational reasons if they are unable to maintain staff-to-child ratios as required under the Child Care Licensing Regulation.

The Covid-19 health emergency is ever-changing, and our ability to remain open may change without notice; we may be ordered to close by BC's provincial health officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry, and/or our licensing officer, and we thank you for your understanding during this time.

Given the important requirements, it is imperative that we are firm in our health policy, and that all parents understand and agree to the following additional requirements. If you feel you are unable to comply with these requirements, we are happy to provide you with recommendations for other programs that may better suit your childcare needs. If you choose to find other care, all fees and deposits are non-refundable.

While there is a relaxation of provincial protocols, Centennial Day Care takes the responsibility for the health and safety of the young children in our program very seriously. Therefore, during a state of a pandemic, if a child or one (or more) members of a child's household has symptoms of COVID-19 or has tested positive for COVID-19, **the child attending daycare should remain home until the symptomatic family member(s) has finished isolating according to the guidelines below** – regardless of whether the child is displaying symptoms themselves.

If your child exhibits symptoms of illness

Please reference the table below for how to address specific symptoms with regards to resuming attendance:

Symptom(s):	May return when:
Temperature greater than or equal to 100°F (37.8°C) orally or 99°F (37.2°C) under the arm.	May return to childcare when he/she is left 48 hours at normal temperature without the help of medication and is symptom-free.
Runny nose, sinus congestion	May return to childcare after being

	symptom-free for a <u>minimum</u> of 24 hours.
Cough	May return to childcare after being assessed, deemed not contagious, and after being symptom-free for a <u>minimum</u> of 24 hours.
Sore throat	May return to childcare after being assessed, deemed not contagious, and after being symptom-free for a <u>minimum</u> of 24 hours.
Difficulty breathing or wheezing	May return to childcare after being assessed, deemed not contagious, and after being symptom-free for a <u>minimum</u> of 24 hours.
Unexplained fatigue, aches or cold/flu-like symptoms	If these symptoms are accompanied by a cough, sore throat, or difficulty breathing; you must be assessed, deemed not contagious and symptom-free for a <u>minimum</u> of 24 hours before returning to childcare.
Eye infection, discharge, red/pink eyes	May return to childcare after being treated or examined and is deemed not contagious.
Children who have, or children with others living in the same home who has just returned from international travel	May return to childcare after self-isolating for a <u>minimum of 14 days</u> in accordance with provincial and public health guidelines and are symptom-free.

As soon as there is any doubt, isolation is put in place for the child or employee with symptoms of COVID-19 (persistent cough, persistent sneezing, fever, runny nose, sore throat and/or shortness of breath) The child will have adequate supervision until he/she can return home.

The parent/guardian is informed immediately that their child begins to exhibit symptoms of COVID-19. The parent/guardian will also be informed that he/she has 30 minutes to pick up his/her child and that he/she should follow the advice given by public health officials by calling 8-1-1.

Children with any symptoms related to an infectious disease will be presumed as being cases of COVID-19; any potentially related symptoms (vomiting, diarrhea) will be treated in the same way and will force the child and/or affected staff member to leave immediately and only to return in accordance with current public health guidelines (811 or other health professionals), as well as existing policies on diseases already in place in the parent's manual. The same goes for any disease unrelated to COVID-19. There will be zero tolerance for any sign of immune weakness.

Public Health Guidance for Child Care Settings

If there is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 in your household

If a child or someone in their household has tested positive and is managing their illness at home, attendance can resume when all three of these conditions are met:

- At least 5 days have passed since the symptoms started, or from the test date if there were no symptoms,
- The fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medication, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen,
- and symptoms have improved.

If a child or someone in their household was not recommended for testing but has symptoms of COVID-19, there is no set amount of time for self-isolation. Instead, the child's attendance may resume once symptoms improve, and the household member no longer has a fever and feels well enough to return to normal activities, according to our center-specific policy.

To reiterate, while there is a relaxation of provincial protocols, Centennial Day Care takes the responsibility for the health and safety of the young children in our program very seriously. Therefore, during a state of a pandemic, if a child or one (or more) members of a child's household has symptoms of COVID-19 or has tested positive for COVID-19, **the child attending daycare should remain home until the symptomatic family member(s) has finished isolating according to the guidelines above** – regardless of whether the child is displaying symptoms themselves.

It is imperative that these policies be understood and respected. We realize that in any other situation or time, we wouldn't expect a child to stay home if their sibling were sick, however, in a state of a pandemic, we would and do expect a child to stay home if their sibling or parents are sick. It's about being responsible in terms of stopping the spread of this virus and being respectful of others and their lives.

Please inform the center if your child or someone in your household is feeling ill – honest communication in regard to this virus is essential for the well-being of other families and staff. We want to allow other families to make an informed decision about sending their children to daycare when another child or household is home sick due to COVID or any other highly communicable infection.

We do not recommend that children with any underlying health concerns attend childcare programs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Health Procedure

Children and staff may NOT attend childcare programs while they have any of the following symptoms:

- Unusual, unexplained loss of appetite, fatigue, irritability, or headache.
- Eye infection.
- Unexplained rashes or any rash that is not confirmed by the doctor to be non-contagious
- Known or suspected communicable diseases (measles, chicken pox, pink eye, hand foot and mouth, etc.).
- Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea in the last 24 hours must stay home for at least 24 hours, and until symptom-free.

There is no exemption to this policy.

- Staff and children will follow strict health protocols
- If a staff member is unwell with any of the above symptoms, they will be required to stay home and self-isolate according to provincial guidelines, and until symptoms resolve – this may, in turn, result in operational closures, however, we will do our very best to avoid this all-together.
- We will ensure and supervise that hand washing is being done when; entering the building, before and after eating times, during washroom use, after coughing or sneezing etc.

Children are NOT required to socially distance themselves from each other. We will encourage them to not congregate in a big group; however, children are naturally social and this will allow them to be social with each other. We are working hard to ensure this is a safe, calm and caring place for the children.

Drop-off / Pick-up

- Parents are not currently allowed to access our facility, drop off will occur at the front door.
- Parents will knock on the door and wait for an Educator to answer the door and check their child's temperature. Parents will check their children into our program using Sandbox and carefully answer the Covid-19 Questionnaire cued.
- Children will come in and hang up their belongings.
- Children will immediately go to the washroom to wash their hands with soap and water for 20+ seconds, with the supervision of an educator.
- At the end of the day, the parent will knock on the door and staff will gather your child's things and bring them outside the door for pick up.

Please continue to observe social distancing expectations as you wait for an educator to bring your child and their belongings to you.

Provision of Care

In the event that some employees are unable to come into work or are in quarantine, ratios may be lowered to meet expectations from the health authority, or because there is not enough staff available to maintain regular ratios.

All soft items have been removed from the room – no dress-up, stuffies etc. Easily cleaned toys will be provided - **no toys from home.**

Cleaning Procedures

- License-approved disinfectant and cleaner products will be used to clean the room.
- Toys will be cleaned throughout the day. Limiting what is available will reduce what needs to be cleaned.
All high-touch surfaces (door handles, light switches, washrooms, sinks etc.) will be cleaned 3-4 times per day
- The washroom is disinfected after every child uses it.

Fees during a Pandemic / Communicable Disease Outbreak

In the event of a short-term closure due to a pandemic or communicable disease outbreak (less than 30 days), fees are due and payable as per usual operations. Fees payable during closures exceeding 30 days will be based on information received from the Ministry of Children and Family Development. Any closure of 30 days or more would also have an impact on whether spaces are held at no charge while a family is isolated for the term of the pandemic, or whether a nominal fee would be implemented. As each outbreak or pandemic is different, the guidelines around these situations would be different as well. Each situation will be decided based on information provided to the Board of Directors from all the Ministries involved.

The ACCB, (Affordable Child Care Benefit), formerly known as subsidy, is provided through MCFD and may or may not be provided during a pandemic or communicable disease outbreak closure. Parents/Guardians may directly contact the MCFD office at 1-888-338-6622 to discuss MCFD's policy regarding ACCB payments. This decision is outside of Centennial Childcare Centre's authority. If MCFD will not cover the fees, then parents will be responsible for the full monthly fee for their childcare if a closure under 30 days occurs.

Thank you kindly,
The Staff at Centennial Day Care Society