

## **Plan to Reopen Child Care in Kentucky Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. Can programs use temporary walls to divide classrooms in order to make more groups of ten?**

Yes, here are the requirements for adding walls in the classroom:

- Must be at least six feet tall.
- Must not be furniture rearranged in the middle of the space (like shelves dividing the room in half).
- Must be stable (children should not be able to pull the wall down on themselves). Shower curtains and drapes are not acceptable.
- Must still have 35 square feet per child once the room is divided.
- Divided classrooms are still allowed to share a bathroom (with cleaning guidelines in place).
- The new traffic pattern, with the inclusion of the temporary wall, would still need to follow the guidelines for opening centers during a medical state of emergency.

### **2. What if my licensed program had been approved by the Division of Regulated Child Care to use temporary walls prior to closure? Do I have to extend these walls to meet the six foot requirement?**

If DRCC has previously approved your program to use five foot walls, you do not have to extend the wall height. Any previously approved room divider will be acceptable as is.

### **3. What if I have to add classrooms to my program to comply with the reopening requirements? Do I have to notify DRCC?**

Please follow normal procedures and notify DRCC immediately. Submit a new map of your building.

### **4. Can I use CARES Act funding to purchase temporary walls?**

Yes. Temporary walls are a direct response to COVID-19. Temporary walls are not considered as permanent structures, expansion, or improvement.

### **5. How do we keep the exact same teachers with the children at all times?**

Programs will need to make their best effort to provide consistent staffing; however, we understand that teachers need lunch breaks and there are days when a teacher is out sick or on vacation so accommodations must be made. In regards to floating teachers, please make an effort to have the same floating teachers break the same classrooms each day and have them exposed to the fewest number of classrooms as possible. Primary teachers should work with the same classroom each day, and assistant teachers should have a consistent schedule of the classrooms with which they work. One floating teacher should not provide breaks to every classroom. Avoid unnecessarily switching staff members around. Be especially aware of this in infant classrooms where teachers must hold children in order to feed them a bottle and rock them to sleep.

**6. How should I handle overtime if I am required to keep the same staff with the same children each day?**

This is a small business decision your program will have to make. The goal is to reduce the overall number of contacts children and staff have daily.

**7. Are mothers allowed to enter the building to breastfeed their infants?**

Yes, although parents are asked to limit their trips into the child care facility, a mother may enter the building to breastfeed her infant. She will need to follow the other health and safety protocol for adults when entering the child care facility.

**8. May child care programs use U-V light wands to sanitize classrooms?**

There is not sufficient research on U-V light as a method to sanitize. Cleaning will still require soap and water. Sanitizing will still require a bleach water solution mixed daily.

**9. How long will I have to close down if a child or adult tests positive for COVID-19?**

Each program will need to seek guidance from their local health department on if they need to close and how long the child/adult should remain absent from the program. There are many different factors involved in that decision, like the last time the child/adult was in attendance and the last time he/she showed contagious systems. The health department will look at each individual case to make the best decision.

**10. Is the Governor's plan to reopen child care just a recommendation or are we required to follow each step in the plan?**

Although a few points in the plan are recommendations, there will be emergency child care regulations filed using the requirements for the Governor's plan to reopen. The Division of Regulated Child Care will be inspecting facilities to make sure that they follow the new regulations, and programs will be cited if they are found noncompliant.

**11. Is there a specific form that we must use for the cleaning plan that must be posted?**

There is not a specific template that programs must use for the cleaning plan; however, the cleaning plan needs to address issues that you might not deal with on a normal weekly basis like daily cleaning of doorknobs, cleaning vents, and how classroom teachers will increase cleaning hard surfaces and toys in the classroom. Child care programs can reach out to their Child Care Aware coaches or their Child Care Health Consultants to get guidance on these cleaning plans. Once the plan is written, it must be posted in the program in a central location.

**12. Typically hand sanitizer is to be kept out of reach. Is that still the case?**

Hand sanitizer is still to be kept out of reach. Due to the alcohol content of hand sanitizer, it should only be used by adults and older children. The primary method of keeping children's hands clean is still to use soap and water. Programs still need to follow the typical health and safety regulations that state hands must be washed upon arrival, before and after eating, after toileting or diaper change, after handling animals,

after touching an item or an area of the body soiled by bodily fluids, and after returning from outdoor playtime. Hands must also be washed before leaving the program each day.

**13. How will staff training hours be calculated this year?**

All staff members will begin a new year of training hours on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, and they must complete their training by June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021. This will be a permanent change due to a new regulatory changes to *922 KAR 2:090 Child Care Center Licensure* and to *922 KAR 2:100 Certification of Child Care Homes* that will go into effect in June 2020. Instead of tracking staff training hours by hired date, all staff members will have the same beginning and end dates for annual training hours.

**14. What Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is needed in a child care program?**

Child care programs need face masks for adults, latex/non-latex gloves for diaper changes and first aid kits, and food handling gloves for meal times. Face masks can be made of cloth. They do not need to be hospital-quality. Child care providers may also want to purchase no-touch thermometers for their facility since they will be doing daily temperature checks on each child and adult in the program. If a normal thermometer is used, it will need to be cleaned and sanitized between each use.

**15. Is there a preference between staff wearing a face shield versus a mask?**

The requirement is for all child staff to wear a cloth mask. Face shields are not necessary.

**16. Are infant room staff expected to wear a mask?**

Yes, staff working in an infant classroom are expected to wear masks. Your program may consider ordering face masks with clear “windows” in them.

**17. Are gloves required for diapering?**

Gloves have always been recommended for diapering. At this time, gloves are REQUIRED for diapering.

**18. Are gloves required for bottle feeding?**

Yes. Staff must wear gloves during bottle feeding.

**19. Is there going to be leniency for the typical child care regulations?**

All child care programs are expected to follow all child care regulations in order to remain open. The Governor’s plan to reopen child care will increase the requirements for health and safety during this pandemic to make sure that all children and adults attending a child care program can remain healthy and safe. The one exception to that rule is the fingerprint portion of the background check process will be temporarily suspended until all of the fingerprint locations are back to full operation. Name-based background checks will still be conducted during this time period to protect the safety of Kentucky’s young children.

**20. What if a family refuses to participate in the temperature checks or the centralized drop-off or pick-up process?**

Child care programs have always had a regulation in place that required children with a fever to be isolated from the program. This new requirement only lowers the contagious temperature to 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit. If a parent or guardian does not want to follow the procedures put in place by the child care program, then they do not get to utilize the child care program. The center will be in violation of child care regulations and can be cited. Centers will want to update their parent handbooks at this time to incorporate the policy changes that the pandemic is bringing and explain to each family what will happen if policies are not followed.

**21. Can a parent escort their child to the classroom?**

Parents are encouraged to follow the procedures put into place for drop-off and pick-up. However, a parent may escort a child to the classroom if there are exigent circumstances.

**22. Do we have to document daily temperature checks for each staff member and child?**

Yes. To ensure everyone is being properly screened, programs are advised to document any and all temperature checks.

**23. How does a child care program limit the use of the restroom to observe social distancing procedures?**

Child care programs should not limit a child's use of the restroom during the school day; however, teachers do need to make sure that restrooms are frequently cleaned during the day. Centers should limit the use of the restroom to center visitors (utility workers, etc.) if at all possible.

**24. Are providers expected to screen the kids in a separate area (such as the foyer) or can they be screened in the classroom they will stay in?**

Providers should screen children and check their temperatures at the centralized drop-off location so that parents do not leave a child with contagious symptoms at the child care facility. Once the child is screened, then he or she is free to be taken to the classroom.

**25. I lead an afterschool program in a public school for up to 300 children, and we start off meeting in the cafeteria each day for snack. If the children are divided into their groups of ten, can we still use the cafeteria for a centralized location?**

At this point in time, the children should remain in their separate classrooms for snack and all other classroom activities in order to prevent the spread of the virus in large gatherings. This may change over time once the diagnosed cases of the virus begin to show a significant decline.

**26. I run a half-day preschool with an AM class and a PM class in each classroom daily. Will I still be allowed to have two classrooms?**

Your program's cleaning plan should indicate how you plan to clean in between the two sessions so that children from one classroom should not spread germs to the following class. Significant cleaning will need to be in place in any programs with an AM and PM model.

**27. The new guidelines said that I can only do virtual tours for perspective programs, but I typically do all of my tours afterhours. Will that still be allowed?**

After hours tours will not be allowed because you will still be bringing visitors in the program when we are trying to avoid any additional contact with visitors. Virtual tours will still be the requirement, during the day or after hours.

**28. What forms will be required for name-based background checks?**

The background check process will look like it did prior to the National Background Check Program. New employees will need to complete a DCC-374 – Child Care Central Registry Check and a Kentucky State Police Background Check. If the employee has lived outside of the Commonwealth of Kentucky in the past five years, then he or she will also need to complete the background check for that state. The employee can start provisionally once those background checks are completed; however, the employee will not be allowed to be left alone with children until he or she has passed those checks. Once the fingerprint background check system has reopened, the new employee will need to complete that as soon as possible.

**29. What does it mean when it says that contagious children should be isolated in a safe, secluded area? Should they be left alone?**

Children under the age of kindergarten must always be within range of sight and sound of voice of a supervising adult, and school-age children must always be within range of sight or sound of voice. A safe, secluded area means that the child must be immediately removed from the classroom with peers and should not be in a high traffic area of the center while waiting for a guardian. The child must be picked up by a parent or guardian within one hour of the program contacting the family. The child care program will need to let families know about this new policy when the program reopens.

**30. What should I do if a parent demands that a child under the age of five wears a face mask during the day?**

Wearing a mask is for the benefit of those around you so that you do not potentially spread the virus while asymptomatic. It will not keep a young child from receiving the germs of others. While a young child is in a group setting with other children, the mask is a significant risk to suffocation and strangulation, even if the mask were simply to pull on a book shelf while the child walks past. Plus, young children will touch the mask so frequently and take it off so often that it will not benefit them. The plan for asking young children not to wear masks is to prevent injury to the child. If the parent demands that the child wear the mask, then he or she is probably not ready for the child to return to group child care at this time. Elementary school-aged children can potentially wear a

face mask while in the child care program; however, it will depend on the child's ability to refrain from touching the mask repeatedly and frequently taking it off. Elementary school children should refrain from wearing a mask on the playground when participating in moderate to vigorous activity because it could limit oxygen intake at that time.

**31. How long will the enhanced requirements last?**

There is not a set date when the enhanced health and safety requirements will be lifted. It will depend on the decrease in spread of the Coronavirus 19 and when the Governor and his leadership team see a decreased risk to young children and families. The Division of Child Care will update all child care programs when they are no longer required to follow the enhanced regulations.

**32. Can I group siblings together for late pick-up?**

No. You should continue to keep children in their groups of 10. Combining groups would lead to more potential exposures.

**33. How are we supposed to complete monthly fire drills under these new health and safety requirements? Quarterly tornado and earthquake drills?**

Yes. Continue to practice emergency drills. Diligently plan evacuation locations outdoors/on the playground to be spaced from other classrooms. You may also consider having each room conduct drills individually. We do not want to abandon preparation for one emergency because of the current one.

**34. How do I enforce social distancing with small children?**

Please follow the CDC Guidelines about keeping the same children and staff consistent.

**35. When will DRCC start surveying visits?**

DRCC will begin survey visits for any changes submitted prior to the shutdown on June 8, 2020. In-home surveys will resume on June 15, 2020. Center surveys will begin June 22, 2020.

**36. Can we use outdoor classrooms?**

Outdoor classrooms may be utilized as long as all health and safety standards are followed including staggering groups.

**37. Can we still have water play days?**

Yes. Water days are still allowable as long as all health and safety standards are followed including staggering groups.