

COVID-19



Anchorage
Health
Department

CHILDCARE PROGRAMS FAQs

Questions call Anchorage Health Department 907-343-4758

Common COVID-19 Questions:

- **I have a confirmed positive in my facility. Who do I notify?**
 - Email the COVID-19 Positive Reporting form to ahdcovidccl@anchorageak.gov whenever you have a positive in the facility or you must close due to COVID.
 - The designated Licensing Specialists will review your form and may work with the AHD Public Health Nurses (PHNs) on recommendations for your facility.

- **Will someone from AHD/CCL be contacting my facility regarding the reports/inquiries sent?**
 - Yes, one of our two designated Licensing Specialists, Ashlee Jendrusina or Drielle Welch, will contact you to confirm receipt of your report or your inquiry and discuss what actions to take next.
 - Some possible things they may talk with you about are who was around the positive person in the facility so that they can determine who the close contacts are; assess staffing levels after close contacts have been asked to quarantine; review mitigation plan; answer questions; provide a memo for staff and parents if needed; etc.

- **Everything is always changing with CDC guidance and recommendations. What do I do with my mitigation plan?**
 - Your mitigation plan should be a fluid document and updated constantly. You may find that what you thought might work in your program doesn't. You can view updated CDC recommendations [online](#). You can also check online at the [State of Alaska website](#) and the [Municipality of Anchorage website](#).
 - The designated Licensing Specialists will be reviewing the plans and making recommendations based off current CDC guidance, health mandates, Municipality of Anchorage Emergency Orders and Child Care Licensing regulations.

- **One of my parents called and they tested positive. What do I do?**
 - You will want to follow your mitigation plan. Some questions to ask:
 - Is the child currently in care?
 - If yes, they should go home and quarantine for 14 days as they are considered a close contact to someone with COVID-19.

- If no, they need to remain out of care for 14 days as they are now considered a close contact to someone with COVID-19 and could become contagious at any time during those 14 days.
 - Should the child get tested?
 - Yes, it is recommended that they get tested. Even if they test negative, they need to quarantine for 14 days as they could develop symptoms at any time during the 14 days. A negative test just means they were negative at that one point in time when the test was taken.
- **One of the children just tested positive. What do I do?**
 - **All children and staff who are close contacts to the child must quarantine for 14 days. This action ultimately means the classroom or home would not have children to care for, therefore would be closed for the 14 days.**
 - When calculating who is a close contact, look at the date the positive test was taken and then go back 48 hours to determine who would be a close contact for those three days: the positive date plus the 48 hours prior. All children and caregivers that were in contact with the positive case for 15 minutes or longer during any of the 48 hours prior or on the testing date would need to quarantine for a full 14 days. Testing is encouraged for people in quarantine, who do not have symptoms, 7-14 days after their last exposure but is not required and a negative result does not allow individuals to test out of quarantine earlier than the 14 days.
 - If the positive result only affects one classroom and there is not the possibility of spread to other classrooms this could be isolated and the other classrooms unaffected. This can be determined by how well you keep your groups static, practice social distancing, proper masking, and hand washing.
 - If the child was not in care on the date their test was taken or the 48 hours prior to the test, there would be no close contacts associated with the facility.
- **One of the caregivers just tested positive. What do I do?**
 - **All children and staff who are close contacts to the caregiver must quarantine for 14 days. This action ultimately means the classroom(s) the caregiver provided care in or the home would not have children to care for, therefore would be closed for the 14 days.**
 - When calculating who is a close contact, look at the date the positive test was taken and then go back 48 hours to determine who would be a close contact for those three days: the positive date plus the 48 hours prior. All children and caregivers that were in contact with the positive case for 15 minutes or longer during any of the 48 hours prior or on the testing date would need to quarantine for a full 14 days. Testing is encouraged for people in quarantine, who do not have symptoms, 7-14 days after their last exposure but is not required and a negative result does not allow individuals to test out of quarantine earlier than the 14 days.

- If the caregiver worked in only one classroom and there is not the possibility of spread to other classrooms, this could be isolated and the other classrooms unaffected.
 - If the caregiver is a 'floater' or 'breaker' or someone who interacts with multiple classrooms, each of those classrooms would contain close contacts and would need to quarantine for 14 days from exposure.
 - If the caregiver was not at the child care center on the date their test was taken or the 48 hours prior to the test, there would be no close contacts associated with the facility.
- **What is the difference between quarantine and isolation?**
 - Quarantine is when you have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 and you need to stay away from others.
 - You must stay home for 14 days after your last contact with the positive person.
 - This includes not going to the store, church, public places, etc.
 - Check your temperature and watch for symptoms.
 - You could develop symptoms at any time during the 14 days.
 - Testing is recommended for people who do not have symptoms 7-14 days after their last exposure.
 - Isolation is staying away from others after you have tested positive for COVID-19 or developed symptoms.
 - This includes staying away from family members within your own home.
 - Stay home until at least 10 days after symptoms appeared and for at least 24 hours without a fever and without the use of fever reducing medicines.
 - If you tested positive but do not have symptoms you need to stay home for 10 days since your positive COVID-19 test.
 - If you live with others, stay in a "sick" room or area away from others and pets.
 - Use a separate bathroom as well if possible.
- **My staff member called and stated that they were exposed to someone who tested positive. What do I do?**
 - Clarify that the caregiver is a close contact by CDC definition. If so, your staff member should go home and quarantine for 14 days from their last contact with the person who tested positive for COVID-19.
 - They can get a COVID-19 test however, that test is only an indicator if they have the virus at the time of the test and they can develop symptoms at any time during the 14 days.
 - Once the 14 days is up the staff member can return to work if they have not developed any symptoms.
 - If your mitigation plan requires the staff member to be tested, then they can get a test at the end of the quarantine period to ensure they are free of the virus from the exposure.

- **My staff member called and stated that a friend of theirs was exposed to COVID-19 what should they do, since they had contact with their friend after their friend was exposed?**
 - Your staff member would not be considered a close contact until their friend that they spent time with tests positive for COVID-19.
 - Your staff member can continue to work and should just monitor themselves and practice proper hygiene, handwashing, mask wearing and social distancing.

- **A parent called and stated that a coworker of theirs was exposed to someone with COVID-19, what should they do since they work with the person every day. Is their child at risk?**
 - The parent would not be considered a close contact until the coworker tests positive for COVID-19. They should monitor themselves, practice proper hygiene, handwashing, mask wearing, and social distancing.
 - If the coworker informs them that they become positive, the parent is now considered a close contact and would quarantine for 14 days based on their last exposer to that coworker.
 - The child should not be at risk and no action necessary.
 - If the coworker receives a positive result and the parent becomes a close contact, the child can still receive care, until the parent receives a positive result.

- **What if my thermometer breaks at the facility, what should I do?**
 - Purchase another one immediately.
 - Until you have the new thermometer you need to have the parents take their child's temperature at home before coming to care.
 - This is a very risky situation and goes against the [Emergency Order for the Municipality of Anchorage](#).
 - We highly recommend you have more than one readily available.

- **What is considered a close contact to someone that is COVID-19 positive?**
 - A close contact is someone who has spent more than 15 minutes within 6 feet of someone with or without a mask.

- **What does contact tracing mean?**
 - Contact tracing is when the Public Health Department or their designees begins the process of tracing who the COVID-19 person has come in contact with and where they have been so that they can notify any close contacts of the exposure so that they can begin quarantine if necessary.

- **Where can I get testing for my staff or children?**

- You can get testing at many locations throughout Anchorage. You can visit the [testing site locator](#) to view the locations that have COVID-19 testing. Many of these locations offer free testing.
 - You can also visit your pediatrician or doctor's office if they offer testing.
- **Should I use a rapid test so that I can get results back quicker?**
 - The rapid test may offer faster results, however there are still some inconsistencies in the tests, and may give you a false result. The rapid tests can also be less sensitive. Most rapid tests should be followed up with a PCR (polymerase chain reaction) test for a confirmatory result.
 - For more information on the rapid test please see the [CDC website](#) to make an informed decision.
- **What are the symptoms now for COVID-19?**
 - Fever, 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 or vomiting, diarrhea.
 - This [list](#) is not all inclusive and if you think you are sick you should consult with your doctor.
- **What do I do if a child has allergies, but the symptoms are similar to COVID-19?**
 - You should follow your mitigation plan.
 - Most places will send a child home and have them get tested for COVID-19. They can return to care if they have a negative test, a doctor's note stating that they have allergies and what they are and that they are allowed to return to care, or they have completed the 14-day quarantine.
- **If a child is positive in one of my classrooms, how should I clean the room?**
 - You should follow your mitigation plan.
 - [The CDC also has recommended cleaning.](#)
- **Where can I get cloth masks for my staff and children if they would like them?**
 - Masks are readily available at stores or online for purchase.
 - Childcare Licensing also has a limited stock of cloth masks that were donated and have been distributed to facilities. If you are in need of additional masks, please contact your specialist.
- **My staff say that their child was at the location just named as an exposure location and that they need to quarantine. What do I do?**

- Follow your mitigation plan and personnel policies.
 - The child should quarantine as instructed by the Public Health officials and monitor their symptoms for 14 days.
 - Your staff member should not need to quarantine with the child unless they were there as well or if the child tests positive for COVID-19.
 - If childcare is an issue for the child that must stay home follow your mitigation plan or personnel policies for the type of leave needed for the staff member if necessary.
- **My staff member's family just flew in for a visit and they are staying in the same house while in town. Can they still work?**
 - You will want to follow your mitigation plan. Some employers do not want to assume this risk and will want their employees to work remotely if possible.
 - Even if they arrived with a negative test the family member could have contracted the virus while traveling so they should still follow the [State of Alaska travel guidance](#).
 - If your employee must be in the facility during this time they need to practice proper hand washing, social distancing, mask wearing, and hygiene.
- **If a child's family member is positive, can the children come back to care if they get a negative test even though it's been less than 14 days?**
 - No, the child needs to remain home for the full 14 days as they could develop symptoms at any time during their quarantine period.
 - A negative test just means that the child was negative at the time of the test.
- **I operate a home child care and my child tested positive, so I closed my facility for their 10 day isolation period. Can I open now?**
 - No, if you cared for your child during their infectious period, your quarantine time would start when they are cleared from isolation. This would be around day 10 for them. You would then need to quarantine for 14 days from this date. Your total time of closure in this instance would be closer to 24 days as long as you do not develop symptoms or test positive during your quarantine time.
- **Does the Health Department have a letter that I can give families notifying them that their child is a close contact and must quarantine?**
 - Yes, we have worked with the AHD PHNs and Dr. Chandler and a sample letter has been drafted and is ready for use. The designated Licensing Specialists will work with you to fill in the dates of exposure and quarantine dates.

- **When we told our parents that we had to close a classroom due to an exposure, one of the parents stated they were going to seek care somewhere else. What do I do, I was just following the guidance on closing the classroom for the children and staff to quarantine?**
 - You did the right thing by asking the children and staff identified as close contacts to quarantine. The children and staff that were affected should be in quarantine at home for 14 days and not moving to another facility and potentially spreading the virus.
 - Please notify CCL at ahdcovidccl@anchorageak.gov or 907-343-4758 of the situation.

- **We just received a new child from another facility, how do we ensure that they are not a close contact and supposed to be in quarantine?**
 - Programs are encouraged to ask COVID related and quarantine questions of new enrollees to discourage movement from one program to the next while the child should be in quarantine.
 - As part of your registration process or at the start of each day you could include a question in the screening about if the child has been exposed to anyone that has tested positive in the last 14 days, or if the child themselves has been tested and awaiting results.

- **How long do we have to keep our daily screening and classroom cleaning records?**
 - The MOA Emergency Order did not state a specific timeframe for keeping records so you will want to follow CCL regulations which requires records to be kept for 3 years.
 - Yes, this is a long time and potentially a lot of papers. One solution is to scan the documents and keep them digitally so that you are maintaining the records, saving space, and you can print a certain set of information if it is requested/needed.

- **Do we have to wear masks at our facility – homes and centers?**
 - Emergency Order 13, version 3 (EO 13 vs3) which went into effect Monday, November 9, 2020, outlines this requirement. To read the entire mandate, please ([click here](#)).
 - Any individual over the age of 6 years including all staff, caregivers, and parents in child care settings are required to wear masks.
 - Children 6 years of age and older are required to wear masks.
 - Children 2 years through 5 years of age are strongly encourage, yet not required.
 - Children under age 2, are not required or recommended to wear masks.