

**REGIONAL NIAGARA
LICENSED HOME CHILD CARE PROGRAM**

PROTOCOLS FOR COVID-19 GUIDANCE

REVISED: January, 2021

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1: REGISTRATION	PAGE 5
SECTION 2: HOME CHILD CARE PROVIDER AND CLIENT INTERVIEWS ...	PAGE 5
SUBSECTION 2.1: <u>Extenuating Circumstances</u>	PAGE 5
SECTION 3: HEALTH SCREENINGS.....	PAGE 6
SUBSECTION 3.1: <u>For Kindergarten and School-Aged Children</u>	PAGE 6
SUBSECTION 3.2: <u>Storage of completed Health Screening Checklists</u>	PAGE 7
SUBSECTION 3.3: <u>Surveillance Testing</u>	PAGE 7
SECTION 4: DAILY LOG.....	PAGE 7
SECTION 5: PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE).....	PAGE 8
SUBSECTION 5.1: <u>PPE for Home Child Care Providers</u>	PAGE 8
SUBSECTION 5.2: <u>PPE for all enrolled children and parent/guardians</u>	PAGE 9
SUBSECTION 5.3: <u>Provider and Residents of the Home</u>	PAGE 9
SUBSECTION 5.4: <u>PPE for Essential Visitors</u>	PAGE 10
SUBSECTION 5.5: <u>Cleaning of PPE</u>	PAGE 10
SECTION 6: HOME CHILD CARE ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE.....	PAGE 11
SUBSECTION 6.1: <u>Drop off and Pick up</u>	PAGE 11
SUBSECTION 6.2: <u>Completion of Health Screening Checklist</u>	PAGE 11
SUBSECTION 6.3: <u>Personal Belongings</u>	PAGE 11
SECTION 7 THERMOMETERS.....	PAGE 12
SECTION 8: VISITORS TO THE HOME CHILD CARE PREMISE.....	PAGE 12
SUBSECTION 8.1: <u>Non-Essential Visitors</u>	PAGE 12
SUBSECTION 8.2: <u>Essential Visitors</u>	PAGE 12
SECTION 9: MINISTRY PROGRAM INSPECTIONS.....	PAGE 13
SECTION 10: HOME CHILD CARE PROGRAM STAFF.....	PAGE 13
SUBSECTION 10.1: <u>Onsite Home Safety Inspections</u>	PAGE 13
SUBSECTION 10.2: <u>Quality Visits</u>	PAGE 14
SECTION 11: STUDENTS AND VOLUNTEERS.....	PAGE 14
SECTION 12: ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANING AND DISINFECTING.....	PAGE 14
SUBSECTION 12.1: <u>Cleaning and Disinfecting Products</u>	PAGE 14
SUBSECTION 12.2: <u>Environmental Adaptations and Cleaning Practices</u>	

.....	PAGE 14
SECTION 13: WASTE DISPOSAL.....	PAGE 15
SECTION 14: PLAY ACTIVITIES.....	PAGE 15
SECTION 15: OUTDOOR PLAY.....	PAGE 16
SUBSECTION 15.1: <u>Structures</u>	PAGE 16
SUBSECTION 15.2: <u>Sandboxes</u>	PAGE 16
SUBSECTION 15.3: <u>Sunscreen</u>	PAGE 17
SECTION 16: MEAL/SNACK TIME.....	PAGE 17
SECTION 17: REST TIME.....	PAGE 17
SECTION 18: INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN.....	PAGE 17
SECTION 19: MANAGEMENT OF CHILDREN WITH POSSIBLE COVID-19	
.....	PAGE 18
SUBSECTION 19.1: <u>Sick Child(ren)</u>	PAGE 18
SUBSECTION 19.2: <u>Communication Plan</u>	PAGE 18
SUBSECTION 19.3: <u>The Home Child Care Provider will</u>	PAGE 18
SUBSECTION 19.4: <u>The Home Child Care Advisor will</u>	PAGE 19
SUBSECTION 19.5: <u>The Parent/Guardian will</u>	PAGE 19
SUBSECTION 19.6: <u>The Supervisor or Manager will</u>	PAGE 19
SUBSECTION 19.7 <u>Symptoms of ill health present- Options for families</u>	
.....	PAGE 20
SUBSECTION 19.8: <u>Symptomatic children</u>	PAGE 20
SUBSECTION 19.9: <u>Siblings and Other Household Members of a</u>	
<u>Symptomatic Individual</u>	PAGE 20
SECTION 20: MANAGEMENT OF HOME CHILD CARE PROVIDER/RESIDENT OF	
THE HOME WITH POSSIBLE COVID-19.....	PAGE 21
SUBSECTION 20.1: <u>The Home Child Care Provider</u>	PAGE 21
SUBSECTION 20.2: <u>Residents of the home</u>	PAGE 21
SECTION 21: COVID-19 TESTING.....	PAGE 22
SECTION 22: WHEN TO CONTACT PUBLIC HEALTH.....	PAGE 22
SUBSECTION 22.1: <u>Exposure</u>	PAGE 22
SUBSECTION 22.2: <u>Suspected Outbreak</u>	PAGE 22

SECTION 23: HOW TO REDUCE RISK.....PAGE 23
**SECTION 24: CERTIFICATION IN STANDARD FIRST AID TRAINING, INCLUDING
INFANT AND CHILD CPR-C.....PAGE 24**
SECTION 25: SEEKING RELIABLE ADVICE ABOUT COVID-19.....PAGE 24
SECTION 26: LINKS TO RESOURCES.....PAGE 25
SECTION 27: PUBLIC HEALTH ONTARIO: TRAINING VIDEOS.....PAGE 26

REGIONAL NIAGARA LICENSED HOME CHILD CARE PROGRAM

PROTOCOLS FOR COVID-19 GUIDANCE

These protocols are reviewed by the following individuals:

- Home Child Care Provider's prior to the enrolment of children in the home.
- Home Child Care Program Staff
- Parent/Guardian

Please note: updated versions are shared any time changes are made.

REGISTRATION:

- Enrolment packages are being provided electronically to the parent/guardian by the Home Child Care Advisor (HCCA).
- The Home Child Care Advisor is completing intake meetings virtually with the parent/guardian (i.e. telephone).
- The Home Child Care Provider and parent/guardian are interviewing virtually prior to the child's enrolment.
- The Home Child Care Advisor will provide the Home Child Care Provider with enrolment forms and approval letter prior to child's start date.
- The Home Child Care Advisor is providing the parent/guardian with a copy of the following Regional Niagara Licensed Home Child Care documentation:
 - Protocols for COVID-19 Guidance.
 - Health Screening Checklist for Participating Children.
 - COVID-19 Policy.
 - Parent Handbook.
 - Program Statement.
 - Joint Statement on Safe Sleep Policy.
 - Parent Issues and Concerns Policy.
 - Additional resources from Niagara Region Public Health related to COVID-19.

HOME CHILD CARE PROVIDER AND CLIENT INTERVIEWS:

Interviews between clients and Home Child Care Providers are currently being conducted virtually. The intent is to reduce the number of individuals entering the premise.

Extenuating Circumstances:

The client may enter premises to view child care space if the following apply:

- The client is adamant on seeing the space and the Home Child Care Provider is in agreeance.
- The client wears a disposable medical face mask
- The Home Child Care Provider wears a disposable medical mask and eye protection.
- Health Screening Checklists are completed.
- Visit occurs outside of child care hours.

- Home Child Care Provider will notify the Home Child Care Advisor and a case note will be completed for Home Child Care Provider file.

HEALTH SCREENING:

Health Screening Checklists were developed in partnership with Niagara Region Public Health Department. These screens consist of questions specific to the screening for COVID-19 and are to be completed daily for the following individuals:

- Home Child Care Provider, *prior to starting child care for the day.*
- Adult residents of the home, *prior to starting child care for the day*
- Children in care:
 - child residents of the home (18 years old and younger), *prior to entering the premise, and*
 - enrolled children, *prior to entering the premise*
 - Please reference below, '**For Kindergarten and School-Aged Children**', as differences apply for after school children.
- Essential visitors, *prior to entering the premise*
 - Please see page 12 for a list of essential visitors

Individuals have the option to complete the 'Daily COVID-19 Health Screening Checklist' in one of two ways:

1. Paper version, or
2. Electronically (for those who have internet access or smart devices: phones tablets, etc.)

Please note: Questions are the same on both paper and electronic versions.

These Health Screening Checklists determine whether the home is temporarily closed for child care, or if individuals can enter the premises.

Signage is provided to the Home Child Care Provider that lists the COVID-19 symptoms as a reminder for health screenings. This is made visible to the public.

For Kindergarten and School-Aged Children:

Before School Child Care:

- Daily Health Screening is completed prior to entry; same requirement as outlined above.

After School Child Care:

- Are not required to complete the daily health screening upon arrival, unless accompanied by their parent/guardian. **Why?**
 - Parents/guardians will have completed a parental screen on children each morning as per the Parental Agreement for Daily Screening as determined by the School Board.
 - Children may not be able to respond appropriately to the screening questions.
- As an alternative, Home Child Care Provider's:
 - Can ask general questions of "how are you feeling today?"

- Will have heightened awareness of observing a child that may be experiencing symptoms of illness.
- As per standard practice, Home Child Care Providers will document any symptoms of ill health on the Daily Log, see below:

Health concerns on arrival/during child care hours/sleep (If yes, describe)
Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>

Storage of completed Health Screening Checklists:

Paper copies: These records are to be kept at the home child care premises. The Home Child Care Advisors will collect these screens on a regular basis for confidential retention and shredding.

Electronic screening: Children’s Services, Direct Operations, will follow Niagara Region’s current Corporate Retention By-Laws regarding record keeping.

Surveillance Testing:

- If a Parent/Guardian is tested for COVID-19 as part of surveillance testing, initiated by the employer, and is asymptomatic (no symptoms), they may continue to bring their child to the home child care premise, while waiting for the outcome of the test.
- If the Home Child Care Provider and/or any resident of the home is tested for COVID-19 as part of surveillance testing, initiated by the employer, and is asymptomatic, home child care may continue in the home child care premise, pending outcome of the test.

In these cases, the following information would need to be documented and communicated to the Home Child Care Advisor:

1. When the testing was completed.
2. The outcome of the results.

Please see ‘**COVID-19 TESTING**’ on page 22 for where results can be accessed.

DAILY LOG:

- As per standard practice your:
 - Daily logs must be up-to-date at all times and available to Public Health, within 24 hours, to help with contact tracing in the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case or outbreak.
 - Any essential visitors who enter your home must be recorded on your daily log (located at the top right of your log book) this must include

approximate arrival and departure time. This information will also be used for contact tracing.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE):

For the safety of themselves and those around them, Home Child Care Providers should use a medical mask and eye protection as much as possible and when putting on or taking off a mask and/or eye protection should follow appropriate health and safety practices like washing hands.

The following PPE is provided on an ongoing basis by the Ministry of Education:

- Disposable medical masks
- Eye protection (face shields): should be assigned to a single person
- A back up supply of non-medical or cloth masks on a monthly basis for school age children in child care in case they cannot bring one from home.

Please note alternate options for eye protection are:

- Goggles (should indicate they are personal protective equipment for droplets) or
- Safety Glasses: specifically approved by Niagara Region, Public Health and Health and Safety Advisor.

Please note: eye glasses are not considered eye protection.

Other PPE available at the home child care premise include:

- A thermal thermometer (provided by Agency)
- Hand sanitizer:
 - Containing at least 60 % - 90 % alcohol content. 70% alcohol content is best practice.
 - Located at all entrances of the home child care premise and not accessible to children.
 - Signage will be provided demonstrating appropriate use and should be made visible to the public.
- Disposable gloves (optional)

PPE for Home Child Care Providers:

A disposable medical mask and eye protection are required be worn during the following situations:

- **Whenever a 2 metre distance cannot be maintained from both parent/guardian and children (i.e. health screening, indoors and outdoors).**
- When cleaning and disinfecting bloody or bodily fluid spills if there is a risk of splashing.
- When caring for a sick child or a child showing symptoms of illness.

Exceptions include:

- During indoor and outdoor play, if 2 metre distance can be maintained,
- Medical or other conditions identified (i.e. asthma, sensory sensitivity, anxiety, etc.)

- Please note: It is not required to have verification from a health care practitioner or consultation with public health, however the exception will need to be documented in discussion with the Home Child Care Advisor, using the 'Exception to the daily use of Personal Protective Equipment' form.
- Nap time
- Serving/eating lunch and snack with children

PPE for all enrolled children and parent/guardians:

All children in grades 1 and above are **required** to wear a non-medical or cloth mask while inside the home, including hallways.

All younger children (ages 2 to SK) are encouraged but not required to wear a non-medical mask or cloth mask while inside the home, including in hallways.

Masks are **not recommended** for children under the age of two.

All children in grades 1 and above are required to wear a non-medical mask or cloth mask outdoors when a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained.

For further information about the use of masks please see page 25 & 26.

Parents/guardians are responsible for providing their child(ren) with a non-medical mask(s) or face covering each day and should be reminded that if children are wearing masks, they will require a way to store their masks when not in use.

- Please note: Parents/guardians will need to provide a:
 - A container that is cleaned and disinfected after use with the child's name on it (refer to Public Health Ontario training resources on page 25 & 26); or a
 - Single use bag with the child's name on it. (i.e. paper bag needs to be discarded after each use), or a paper towel on a table (i.e. during snack).

Exceptions include:

- If not tolerated by child,
- Medical condition or other conditions identified (i.e. child who is exempt from having to wear a mask during the school day due to a medical condition is not required to wear a mask at the home child care program, etc.).

Please note: This will need to be documented in discussion with the Home Child Care Advisor, using the 'Exception to the daily use of Personal Protective Equipment' form.

Provider and Residents of the Home:

Are required to wear a disposable medical face mask and eye protection if physical distancing of at least 2 metres cannot be maintained.

Exception:

- Medical or other conditions identified (i.e. asthma, sensory sensitivity, anxiety, etc.)

- Please note: Will not require verification from a health care practitioner but will need to document, however, will need to be documented in discussion with the Home Child Care Advisor, using the *'Exception to the daily use of Personal Protective Equipment'* form.

PPE for Essential Visitors:

The following individuals must wear both a disposable medical face mask and eye protection if physical distancing of at least 2 metres cannot be maintained.

- Home Child Care Advisors
- Ministry of Education, Program Advisor
- Public Health Inspector

The following individuals must wear a face mask and eye protection if 2 metres is unable to be maintained in the home child care premise past the drop off/pick up entrance:

- Parent/Guardian
- Service Maintenance Employee (Plumber, Electrician, etc.)

Please see page 12 for a list of essential visitors.

Cleaning of PPE:

- Face Shields and goggles/safety glasses:
 - Eye protection is not to be shared
 - Must be cleaned and disinfected daily, and at any time they are contaminated.
 - The manufacturer's directions should be followed for cleaning and disinfection. If no cleaning instructions are provided they should be cleaned with detergent, rinsed and then disinfected based on contact time of chemical.
 - Should be cleaned from the inside (least contaminated) to the outside (most contaminated).
 - Avoid getting the foam forehead piece and strap wet as they may become damaged from chemicals.
 - Dispose of if visibly soiled or damaged.
 - Please refer to Public Health Ontario resources on page 25 for more information about caring for and cleaning PPE.
- Face Masks:
 - Masks should be replaced when they become damp or visibly soiled.

Please note the following:

- The use of medical masks and eye protection is for the safety of Home Child Care Providers and the children in care. This is very important when working with young children who may not be wearing face coverings (i.e. under the age of two).

- Keep in mind that it may be difficult to put on a mask and eye protection properly (without contamination) after having removed them, given the frequent and spontaneous needs for close interactions with young children in a child care setting. Please see page 25 & 26 for resources on how to safely remove your PPE.
- Home Child Care Providers should secure and sustain an amount of PPE and cleaning supplies that can support their current ongoing operations.
 - Please let your Home Child Care Advisor know when you are in need of medical masks, safety glasses/face shields.

Refer to Public Health Ontario resources for how to properly wear and take off masks and eye protection on page 25 & 26.

HOME CHILD CARE ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE:

All children, residents of the home, and essential visitors are to sanitize their hands at the entrance of the home child care premise.

Drop off and Pick up:

- Only one family member is permitted at the entrance of the home.
- Should happen outside the entrance, or the Home Child Care Provider may choose to have a drop off/pick up area inside the entrance when inclement weather is present.
 - In this scenario, the '*Health Screening Checklist for Essential Visitors*' is to be completed.
 - If parent/guardian enters the premise they must sanitize their hands, wear a face mask and only one parent/guardian can enter the home at a time.
- Physical distance of 2 metres from other families needs to be maintained.
 - If 2 metres is unable to be maintained the Home Child Care Provider will wear a disposable medical face mask and eye protection.
 - Please note: It is requested that families wait in their vehicle until the entrance is clear.

Completion of Health Screening Checklist:

- Both Parent/Guardian and child will be screened using the '*Health Screening Checklist for all children*'. This can be completed two separate ways:
 1. Upon drop off, prior to entry, or
 2. Prior to arriving at the home child care premises
- Extenuating circumstances: If a parent/guardian enters the home past the drop off/pick up area (i.e. their child is ill) a disposable medical face mask and eye protection will be worn by the Home Child Care Providers. A mask or face covering will be worn by the parent/guardian and hands are sanitized.

Personal Belongings:

Personal belongings should be minimized (i.e. **toys from home**, backpack, clothing, etc.) if possible. If brought, belongings should be labelled, kept in a designated area and not touch other children's belongings.

Parent should discuss with the Home Child Care Provider where the stroller will be stored during the day: (i.e. designating a space outside of the home as parents are not able to enter the home).

THERMOMETERS:

- The Home Child Care Provider will be provided with an ear/forehead thermometer should the child exhibit a fever during child care hours.
- The thermometer must be disinfected between each use and the contact time outlined on the product must be followed. Please refer to manufacturer's instructions for appropriate cleaning and disinfecting, as some chemical products may be damaging to the thermometer.

VISITORS TO THE HOME CHILD CARE PREMISE:

Non-Essential Visitors:

Non-essential visitors are not permitted into the home child care premises during child care hours.

Essential Visitors:

An essential visitor is an individual who has to enter the premises for a specific reason. Some examples include:

- Parent/Guardian
- Ministry of Education, Program Advisor,
- Home Child Care Program Staff (i.e. Home Child Care Advisor),
- Resource Consultant/Behavioural Consultant,
- Niagara Region Public Health
- Contractors(i.e. Plumber, Electrician, etc.).

If an essential visitor is required to enter the premise the individual must complete the '*Health Screening Checklist for Essential Visitors*'. This checklist encompasses the same questions outlined for children and Home Child Care Providers/Residents of the home, however, requires the following additional information:

- name of essential visitor
- time of arrival and departure
- contact information
- reason for the visit

Please note: this information is required to facilitate contact tracing in the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case or outbreak.

The essential visitor can complete the Health Screening Checklist themselves prior to entering the premise. In addition, sanitize their hands at the entrance of the home child care premise.

Home Child Care Providers are still required to record any essential visitors on their **Daily Log**, as per standard practice.

MINISTRY PROGRAM INSPECTIONS:

Ministry of Education staff will conduct in-person monitoring and licensing inspections of home child care agencies and home child care premises, where necessary.

Ministry staff must:

- Complete the '*Health Screening Checklist for Essential Visitors*' prior to entering the premises. In addition, sanitize their hands at the entrance of the home child care premise,
- Wear a medical face mask and eye protection; and
- Follow any other protocols requested by the licensed Home Child Care program or Home Child Care Provider.

Ministry staff will use technology (i.e. telephone, video conferencing) to complete virtual monitoring and licensing inspections where appropriate.

HOME CHILD CARE PROGRAM STAFF:

All Home Child Care Agency staff are participating in health screening prior to entering the agency office, and prior to entering any home child care premise. In addition, sanitize their hands at the entrance of the home child care premise.

Home Child Care Advisor's are also working remotely to support physical distancing in the workplace.

If at any time, an employee exhibits COVID-19 symptoms of illness, they will be immediately excluded from the workplace until cleared to return to work by an appropriate medical professional or as prescribed by what is permissible under Niagara Region Public Health protocols.

Onsite Home Safety Inspections:

- Home Safety Inspections may need to fluctuate from onsite to virtual.
- Onsite visits are unannounced and will be completed quarterly.
- HCCA's are on the premise to visually verify any aspects of the home safety inspection only at this time. The remainder of home visit will take place outside or virtually.
- Prior to entering the home child care premise, the HCCA will:
 - Complete the '*Health Screening Checklist for Essential Visitors*'
 - The checklist can be filled out in advance, however, must be completed on the same day that the visit is taking place.
 - Confirm that the Home Child Care Provider and all residents of the home have completed the Health Screening Checklist.

A medical mask and eye protection will be worn by HCCA while in the home.

Hand sanitizer will be used before, during (if high touch surfaces are touched) and after visits, as needed. Home Child Care Providers will be asked to open any cupboards, doors, etc.

Quality Visits:

HCCA's will complete all Quality Visits virtually until further notice. The intent is to reduce the number of individuals entering the premises.

STUDENTS AND VOLUNTEERS:

There are currently no students or volunteers in the home child care agency or contracted homes at this time.

ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANING AND DISINFECTING:

Cleaning and Disinfecting Products:

Check expiry dates of cleaning and disinfecting products used and always follow manufacturer's instructions (i.e. concentration, appropriate contact time and whether a rinse is required).

- **Cleaners:**
 - Break down grease and remove organic material from the surface
 - Use separately before using disinfectants.
 - Can be purchased with cleaner and disinfectant combined in a single product.
- **Disinfectants:**
 - Use a product that states it is a disinfectant and follow manufacturer's instructions.
 - Have chemicals that kill most germs.
 - Applied after surfaces have been cleaned.
 - Have a drug identification number (DIN).
 - Bleach: ratio of 5 ml (1 teaspoon) to 250 ml (1 cup). Leave on surface for one minute before rinsing. If using on items that may go in the mouth or being in contact with food (i.e. plates, mouthed toys), they should be rinsed.
- **Disinfectant wipes:**
 - Have combined cleaners and disinfectants in one solution.
 - Have a drug identification number (DIN).
 - May become dry due to fast drying properties. Should be discarded if they become dry.
 - Not recommended for heavily soiled surfaces.

More information is available from Public Health Ontario regarding best practice for cleaning and disinfecting.

Environmental Adaptations and Cleaning Practices:

Each day the Home Child Care Provider records the times that cleaning and disinfecting takes place on the '*Cleaning and Sanitizing Checklist*'.

- Ensure all toys used are made of material that can be cleaned and disinfected (put away plush toys and absorbent toys/equipment).

- Toys and equipment will be cleaned and disinfected a minimum of twice a day (i.e. during nap time and end of day).
- Mouthed toys are to be removed until they are cleaned and disinfected.
- Home Child Care Providers may consider having designated toys and equipment for each room.
- Carpet, area rugs and upholstered furniture:
 - Should be vacuumed daily and steam cleaned every 6 months
 - Area rugs can be removed if it makes cleaning practises easier, however it is not required.
- Hard floors should be swept and mopped daily.
- Designated toys and equipment (i.e. balls, loose equipment, etc.) for each room is encouraged.
- Clean and disinfect high touch surfaces at least twice daily, and more often if visibly soiled.
 - High touch surfaces that are most likely to become contaminated include: counters, doorknobs, light switches, toilet handles, sink tap handles, hand rails, electronics (cell phones, tablets, iPads, head sets, gaming devices, remotes), tabletops, and bedside tables.
- Perform and promote frequent, proper hand hygiene (including supervising or assisting with hand hygiene). Hand washing using soap and water is recommended over alcohol-based hand rub when hands are visibly soiled for children.
- If possible, have a bathroom dedicated to home child care only.
- Put the lid of the toilet down before flushing.

Please refer to Public Health Ontario's Environmental fact sheet for more information.

WASTE DISPOSAL:

- Place contaminated items that cannot be cleaned in a lined container; secure the contents and dispose of them with other household waste.
- All garbage containers must be kept covered and away from food storage and food preparation and play areas.
- All garbage containers should be cleaned and sanitized as needed, and at least weekly.

PLAY ACTIVITIES:

Physical distancing is difficult with small children and infants. See below for suggestions:

- Incorporate more individual activities that encourage space between children.
- Consider using visual cues to promote physical distancing.
- Consider planning activities that do not involve shared objects or toys.
- Encourage children to greet each other using non-physical gestures (i.e. wave, nod or verbal "hello") and avoid close greetings (i.e. hugs).
- Remind children to keep "your hands to yourself".

- If sensory materials (i.e. playdough, water, sand, etc.) are offered, they should be provided for single use (i.e. available to the child for the day) and labelled with the child's name, if applicable.
- All materials/toys that are mouthed by a child must be removed, cleaned, and disinfected before being used again.
 - Suggestion: Containers in each room can be used.
- Do not use community playgrounds or participate in any social outings.
- Children can go on community walks with parental consent.
- When possible, moving activities outside to allow for more space.
- Maintaining a welcoming and caring environment for children is imperative while following the 'How Does Learning Happen?' framework in child care/home child care programs.

For support and ideas on how to provide an engaging environment while physically distancing please see the document *Building On How Does Learning Happen?* by following this link:

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/building-on-how-does-learning-happen-child-care.pdf>

OUTDOOR PLAY:

- Space the children out as much as possible when dressing for outdoor play.

Structures:

- Home Child Care outdoor play structures that are sound and maintained in good repair can be used by small groups of children. Space should be encouraged between children.
- Outdoor play structures do not need to be cleaned and disinfected unless they are visibly dirty.
- Proper hand hygiene before and after using shared play structures is maintained.
- Toys in the back yard will be cleaned and disinfected at least twice daily and more often as needed (i.e. if visibly dirty).
 - Suggestion: having a bin to put the toys in for cleaning and sanitizing.
- Home Child Care Providers are to avoid using community playground equipment until further notice as they are not being cleaned and disinfected. This is to minimize the risk, and the ability to keep children away from other playground users would be challenging.

Sandboxes:

- Install a secure cover on outdoor sandboxes when not in use.
- Check sandboxes and sand in play areas daily for animal droppings, broken glass, or other hazardous objects. A lawn rake can be used to sift through the sand if needed. If hazardous objects are detected, remove and replace with clean sand. There is no specific minimum age recommended for children to participate in sand play.
- Children should clean hands with a cleansing wipe, and then sanitize their hands after playing in the sand box before using any other toys/equipment.

Sunscreen:

- Children should bring their own sunscreen where possible and it should not be shared.
 - Home Child Care Providers can provide assistance to apply sunscreen to any child requiring it and should exercise proper hand hygiene when doing so (i.e. washing their hands before and after each application).

MEAL/SNACK TIME:

- Ensure that tables have been cleaned and disinfected before and after eating.
- Where possible, children should practice physical distancing while eating.
- Ensure proper hand hygiene is practiced when Home Child Care Providers are preparing food and for all individuals before and after eating (i.e. wash hands).
- Utensils must be used to serve food.
- Children will not be permitted to self serve.
- Ensure each child has their own individual meal or snack.
- Reinforce “no food sharing” practices.
- Children must not share food, feeding utensils, bottles, sippy cups, etc. Label these items with the child’s name to discourage accidental sharing.
- There should be no food provided by the family/outside of the regular meal provision of the program (except where required and special precautions for handling and serving the food must be put in place).
- Children are not to prepare food or provide food that will be shared with others.
- If the Home Child Care Provider is eating with the children, they can remove their mask if they can maintain a 2 metre distance from the children.

REST TIME:

- Increase the distance between cots to 2 metres. If space is limited, children can be placed head to toe, or toe to toe.
 - If possible, cots should be designated for each child.
 - All cots and cribs must be disinfected after each use.
 - If cots are stacked, linens will need to be removed prior to storage.
 - Best practice is to launder linens daily; alternately, they could be stored in a plastic bag labelled with the child’s name and then laundered weekly. Linens must be laundered between children.

INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN:

- Home Child Care Providers should continue to supervise and hold bottles for infants not yet able to hold their own bottle to reduce the risk of choking.
- Consider moving activities outside, when possible, to allow for more space.
- Avoid singing activities indoors to reduce the risk of transmission of germs.
 - Suggestion: have group singing activities outside where 2 metre spacing can be maintained among children. Have children face all in the same direction, rather than in a circle.

MANAGEMENT OF CHILDREN WITH POSSIBLE COVID-19:

Sick Child(ren):

- If a child begins to experience symptoms of COVID-19 during child care, the following should take place:
 - Symptomatic children are immediately separated from others in a supervised area until they can go home.
 - Where possible, maintain a distance of 2 metres.
 - Parents/Guardians must be contacted for pick up.
 - The Home Child Care Provider should wear a medical mask, eye protection, re-usable gown and disposable gloves.
 - If tolerated, and the child is over 2 years of age, they should also wear a medical mask.
 - Suggestion: the child can play quietly with toys on a surface that can easily be cleaned and disinfected. Providers should launder their re-usable gown after interacting with a sick child..
 - The Agency has provided a container for each Home Child Care Provider containing the following:
 - A reusable gown
 - Disposable gloves
 - Face shield
 - Adult sized medical masks
 - Child sized medical masks: for children over 2 years of age, if tolerated

The items in this container are to be used if attending to a sick child until the parent/guardian arrives to pick them up.
 - If a 2 metre distance cannot be maintained from the ill child, advice from the local public health unit will be necessary to prevent/limit virus transmission to those providing care.
 - Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette (i.e. cover your cough) should be practiced while the ill child is waiting to be picked up.
- Please refer to “**Symptomatic Children” and “Siblings and Other Household Members of a Symptomatic Individual”** on pages 20 & 21.

COMMUNICATION PLAN:

The Home Child Care Provider will:

Contact their Home Child Care Advisor to notify them of any individual (i.e. enrolled child, resident of the home, etc.) who has exhibited symptom(s) of COVID-19.

Follow the directions on the Health Screening Checklist to determine next steps.

Record the child’s symptoms of ill health in the **Daily Log**.

Clean and disinfect all items that were used by the sick child and all surfaces within 2 metres of ill child as soon as reasonably possible after ill child leaves.

Clean any areas the child has passed through (i.e. hallway or room).

Remove any items that cannot be cleaned (i.e. paper, books, cardboard puzzles) and stored in a sealed container for a minimum of 7 days.

Use disposable cleaning equipment, such as disposable wipes, where possible.

The Home Child Care Advisor will:

1. Gather all the pertinent information from the Home Child Care Provider such as:
 - Who exhibited the symptoms
 - When the symptoms were exhibited
 - What the symptoms were
 - For children in care: when the parents were notified to pick up their child
2. Contact the parent, if applicable, to provide the options as outlined on page 20 under '**Symptoms of ill health present- Options for families'**
3. Notify all parents/guardians of children enrolled at the home child care premises to advise that an individual within their child care community has a confirmed case of COVID-19.

Parent/Guardian will:

1. Inform the Home Child Care Advisor which option they will pursue
2. Inform the Home Child Care Advisor of the outcome (i.e. negative test results, clearance from health care practitioner, etc.).

The Supervisor or Manager will:

1. File a Serious Occurrence if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 (i.e. a positive COVID-19 test result) for the following individuals: a child, staff, student, home child care provider, home child care visitor or a person who is ordinarily a resident/regularly present at a home child care premises.
2. Report confirmed case of COVID-19 to Niagara Region Public Health unit , 905-688-8248 extn 7330.(Reference title below titled: **When to contact Public Health**)

Please note:

- Should additional individuals at the home child care premise develop a confirmed case, the Supervisor/Manager must either:
 - Revise the open serious occurrence to include the additional case; or
 - Submit a new serious occurrence report if the first has been closed already.

Symptoms of ill health present- Options for families:

Families have the choice of the following options, when symptom(s) of ill health are present:

- Contact their Health Care Practitioner, walk-in clinic, online virtual clinic for guidance

- Contact a Niagara Health COVID-19 Assessment Centre to book an appointment for testing: <https://www.niagarahealth.on.ca/site/assessmentcentres>
- Contact the Niagara Region Public Health Info-Line. (for contact information, see page 25).

Please note: Exclusion from care (as per the daily screening) is also applicable for the child if they:

- Reside with anyone who exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 and is going for COVID-19 testing or their test results are pending.
- Has been exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19.
- Has travelled outside of Canada: must self isolate for 14 days upon their return.

Symptomatic children:

- If a decision is made for testing, all siblings and family members who reside with the symptomatic child are to remain home and self-isolate until laboratory results are received. When a negative result is received, siblings and family members can return to school/work/child care.
- If the child was assessed by the health care provider and COVID-19 ruled out **OR**, they have had a negative COVID-19 result:
 - The child should stay out of school/childcare until 24 hours after their symptoms have resolved, **OR**
 - **10 days** after the onset of their symptoms, whichever is shorter, as long as the child does not have a fever and symptoms are improving
 - A note of return to school/child care is not required; parent verbal verification is sufficient.
- If parents/guardians refuse to test the child when recommended or, assessment isn't sought from a primary care provider, all siblings and family members who reside with the child are to remain home and self-isolate for 10 days.

Siblings and Other Household Members of a Symptomatic Individual:

- If a test is recommended by a health care provider for the symptomatic person, or a decision is made to pursue testing at an assessment centre, all household members are to self-isolate at least until the test results are back. If the test is negative, household members can leave self-isolation.
- If the test is positive, household members must stay in self-isolation and will receive further direction from Public Health.
- Obtaining an assessment (even over the phone) from a health care provider may take some time. Household members with no symptoms do not need to self-isolate immediately after a child develops symptoms. They can wait up to 24 hours until a decision is made about whether testing is needed. However, if it takes longer than 24 hours to obtain an assessment, all household members must self-isolate until a decision is made.
 - If a health care provider then advises that a test for COVID-19 is not needed, household members can leave self-isolation.
- When there is a symptomatic child in a household, it is important that special attention is given to all adults in the household. If any adults have even one

symptom of COVID-19, or recently had one or more symptoms and were not tested, they should self-refer for testing as soon as possible or contact the Public Health Info-Line if there are remaining questions.

- These procedures around self-isolation of household members also apply to home child care providers and / or any residents of the home, and will result in temporary closure of the home child care. For example, if a spouse of a home child care provider has symptoms.

Please note: Individuals returning to the home child care premise with a negative COVID-19 result does not exempt them from completing the entire screening tool successfully on the day of return to the program and daily thereafter.

As guidance changes regularly, please go to [www. niagararegion.ca/health](http://www.niagararegion.ca/health) for the most up-to-date guidance from Niagara Region Public Health .

MANAGEMENT OF HOME CHILD CARE PROVIDER/RESIDENT OF THE HOME WITH POSSIBLE COVID-19:

Home Child Care Provider:

If the Home Child Care Provider exhibits one or more symptoms of COVID-19 during child care hours, the following must take place:

- A medical mask and eye protection should be worn by Home Child Care Provider.
- Home Child Care Provider should maintain 2 metres distance, if possible
- Parents/Guardians must be contacted for pick up.
- Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette (i.e. cover your cough) should be practiced.
- Notify Home Child Care Advisor.
- Once all children have been picked up the Home Child Care Provider will:
 - Notify their Health Care Practitioner for advice on next steps that should be followed and update their Home Child Care Advisor accordingly as this could result in a temporary closure of the home.
 - Clean and disinfect home child care premise, including but not limited to, all high touch surfaces.

Please note: If the Home Child Care Provider does not seek a medical assessment or testing, they must self isolate, along with all household members for 10 days. This would result in a temporary closure of the home child care premise.

Residents of the home:

If a person who resides in the home develops COVID-19 symptoms, they should be isolated away from the children and infection and control measures should be followed (i.e. cleaning, frequent cleaning/disinfecting of high touch, frequent hand washing).

If any residents of the home fail the screen and do not seek a medical assessment or testing, they must self isolate, along with all household members for 10 days. This would result in a temporary closure of the home child care premise.

COVID-19 Testing:

- For information about testing and lab results, individuals can visit the following website:
 - <https://www.niagararegion.ca/health/covid-19/testing.aspx>
- COVID-19 test results are located through MyChart (see link above).

Please note: Asymptomatic individuals who went for testing and have no exposure and are awaiting results, and have not been told by Niagara Region Public Health to isolate, do not need to be excluded from the child care.

- Any child who tests positive for COVID-19 may not return to the home child care premise until they are cleared by Niagara Region Public Health.

If the Home Child Care Provider or any residents of the home test positive for COVID-19, Niagara Region Public Health should be notified and their advice on next steps should be followed (including closing the program and notifying all the families if necessary).

WHEN TO CONTACT PUBLIC HEALTH:

- Report confirmed case of COVID-19 to Niagara Region Public Health unit and provide any materials (i.e. daily attendance records) to the public health officials to support case management and contact tracing and other activities in accordance with all applicable legislation, including the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.
- Public health officials will determine any additional steps required, including but not limited to how to monitor for other possible infected children, residents of the home, Home Child Care Provider.

Exposure:

Call suspected cases to Public Health proactively (before test results are back) if children, Home Child Care Providers, Residents of the home or staff are symptomatic AND they have exposure. An exposure is:

- Symptomatic and travel outside of Canada in the last 14 days.
- Symptoms and exposure to a known case in the last 14 days.

Do not report children, Home Child Care Providers, Residents of the home or staff who are symptomatic and going for testing without any known exposure.

Suspected Outbreak:

- An outbreak may be considered when within a 14 day period, there are two or more laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases in children or adults, who are connected in the same child care setting where at least one case could have reasonably acquired their infection in the home child care premise.
- Niagara Region Public Health will work with the licensee to determine whether the connection exists between cases and whether transmission may have occurred at the home child care premise.

Please contact your Home Child Care Advisor if this situation occurs.

HOW TO REDUCE RISK:

Please note: that best practices to protect yourself and others from spreading COVID-19 includes frequent cleaning of surfaces, hand washing, increasing ventilation and time spent outdoors and practicing physical distancing, in addition to the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

To prevent the transmission of COVID-19, the following measures should remain the priority:

- Washing hands frequently
 - Staying home as much as possible
 - Physical distancing by keeping 2 metres (6 feet) between you and others as much as possible
 - Covering cough with a tissue or your sleeve
 - Avoiding touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
 - Staying home when ill.
- Clean hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer:
 - Before preparing meals
 - Before eating
 - After using the washroom
 - After coughing or sneezing
 - After blowing nose
 - After playing with pets
 - After playing outdoors and anytime the hands may be soiled.

Please note: Handwashing using soap and water is recommended over alcohol-based rub for children

- When washing hands, use a sink with warm running water, paper towels and liquid soap in a dispenser.
 - Refer to poster provided by Niagara Region Public Health: *Clean Your Hands*.
- Cover cough or sneeze:
 - with a tissue or into your sleeve.
 - throw used tissues into a covered plastic lined garbage can and clean your hands.
 - teach and encourage children to learn these practices.
 - refer to poster provided by Niagara Region Public Health: *Cover Your Cough*.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth to prevent the spreading of germs.
- Practice physical distancing and keep a distance of six feet from others, where possible.
- Avoid sharing personal items.

- Use hand sanitizers containing at least 60 % - 90 % alcohol content: these are safe for children. Best practice is 70% alcohol content. Hand washing using soap and water is recommended over alcohol-based hand rub for children.
 - Please note: After using the hand sanitizer, the alcohol content evaporates.
 - Children should be supervised when using alcohol based hand sanitizer to avoid swallowing.
 - Keep alcohol based hand sanitizer inaccessible to children.

CERTIFICATION IN STANDARD FIRST AID TRAINING, INCLUDING INFANT AND CHILD CPR-C:

Home Child Care Providers are required to have valid certification in first aid training, including infant and child CPR. However, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) has indicated that all certifications that expired after March 1, 2020 are automatically temporarily extended. Regional Niagara Licensed Home Child Care Program will monitor the WSIB website for any updates. <https://www.wsib.ca/en/firstaid>

SEEKING RELIABLE ADVICE ABOUT COVID-19:

For accurate up-to-date COVID-19 information please visit Niagara Region Public Health's website <https://niagararegion.ca/health/covid-19/>. If you are unable to find what you are looking for, call our COVID-19 health line to receive confidential professional advice on unique individual situations. Families who are unsure of how to answer any questions on the Regional Niagara Licensed Home Child Care COVID-19 Health Screening Checklist are advised to speak to a Public Health Nurse to help them inform their answers. We ask that families err on the side of caution and consult Public Health whenever they are unsure, in order to protect the health of children in the child care program as best as we can.

LINKS TO RESOURCES:

- Niagara Region Public Health: to access information about symptoms, COVID-19 self assessment tool, info line, online chat and updates:
 - <https://www.niagararegion.ca/health/>
 - Online chat: Hours: Monday to Friday 9:15 am – 8:30 pm; Saturday and Sunday: 9:15 am – 4:15 pm
 - 1-888-505-6074; 905-688-8248, press 7, then press 2
- Government of Canada: for more information about COVID-19
 - www.canada.ca
- Ontario Ministry of Education (2020). *Operational Guidance during COVID-19 Outbreak: Child Care Re-opening*. <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/child-care-re-opening-operational-guidance.pdf>
- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90m56>
- Public Health Ontario's Environmental fact sheet: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet-covid-19-environmental-cleaning.pdf?la=en>
- The Provincial COVID-19 website to learn more about the use of masks <https://www.ontario.ca/page/face-coverings-and-face-masks>
- Public Health Ontario resources for how to properly wear and take off masks and eye protection at: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/face-coverings-and-face-masks>
- View a helpful video on how to properly put on and take off masks and eye protection: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-maskeyes-on>
- Public Health Ontario's 'How to Wash Your Hands fact sheet': <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/factsheet-covid-19-hand-hygiene.pdf?la=en>

PUBLIC HEALTH ONTARIO: TRAINING VIDEOS

1. Putting on One Piece Facial Protection : 54 seconds

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EC1U9OlbUKo&feature=emb_rel_end

2. Putting on Mask and Eye Protections: 1 minute 10 seconds

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1YiLjpLXvg4&list=TLPMzAwNDIwMjBPX7w-IAYvPA&index=2>

3. How To Wash Hands: 1 minute 42 seconds

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o9hjmges72I>

4. How to Rub Hands with Sanitizer: 52 seconds

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sDUJ4CAYhpA>

5. Putting Gloves On: 51 seconds

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UIBmi578NmE>

6. Taking off Gloves: Photo

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/E/2013/ect-gloves-doffing.pdf?la=en>

This protocol has been reviewed by Niagara Region Public Health who has made recommendations regarding this protocol and assisted in guiding Children's Services interpretation of the '*Operational Guidance During Covid-19 Outbreak, Child Care Re-Opening Version 4-November 2020*'.