



Guidance for Reopening: Childcare

Child care facilities can remain operational but should follow State and local guidelines regarding operational levels and occupancy.

State Guidelines:

- The operational requirements in the April 1, 2020 directive on childcare remain in effect.
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Questions

- What is your level of comfort around reopening? (It is ok to delay reopening or reopen partially!)
 - What are your biggest areas of concern for your establishment?
 - Do you need signage?
 - Do you have a plan for:
 - Limiting Group Sizes?
 - Using Cloth Face Masks?
 - Cleaning and Disinfecting?
 - Encouraging Hand Washing?
 - Screening Children and Staff for Symptoms?
 - Caring for Infants and Toddlers?
 - Do you have a written plan that you can share with parents?
 - Do you have any questions for us? Call the Health Department at 466-2562 if anything comes up.
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Some Strategies You Could Use

Social Distancing Ideas

- Limit the number of children and staff at gatherings to 10 people.
- It is recommended that families who have been traveling outside of Montana not bring their child into the child care setting for 14 days after the family last traveled.
- Alter schedules to limit mixing of children (e.g. stagger playground times and keep groups separate for special activities such as art, music, and exercising.)
- Rearrange seating to comply with social distancing (e.g. only allow groups of 5 or less to sit together).
- At nap time, ensure that children's naptime mats are spaced 6 feet apart, or as much as possible.
 - Children should be placed head to toe in order to reduce potential for viral spread.
- Child care classes should include the same group each day with the same child care provider to reduce mixing of staff and children.
- If possible, parents should sign children in and out outside of the facility.
- Consider staggering arrival and drop-off times to limit direct contact with the parent.
 - Have child care provider greet children outside as they arrive.
 - Designate one parent/caregiver to drop off and pick up the child every day.



Cloth Face Masks

- Implement the use of cloth face masks by employees and older children, if possible.
- Cloth face coverings should NOT be put on babies or children under age two.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Clean all “high touch” areas such as counters, doorknobs, tables, benches, chairs, toys, etc. frequently.
- Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized should not be used.
- Machine washable cloth toys should be used by one individual at a time OR should not be used at all.
 - These toys should be laundered before being used by another child.
- Toys should not be shared between groups of children unless they are washed and sanitized before being moved from one group to the other.
- Clean more often if surfaces become visibly soiled.
- Clean any surfaces that may have blood, body fluids, and or secretions on them.
- Wear disposable gloves when cleaning surfaces.
- Dishes and eating utensils should not be shared, and should be cleaned with dish soap and hot water after each use.
 - Use of a dishwasher also provides sufficient cleaning.
- Use bedding (sheets, pillows, blankets, sleeping bags) that can be washed. Keep each child’s bedding separate, and consider storing in individually labeled bins, cubbies, or bags. Cots and mats should be labeled for each child. Bedding that touches a child’s skin should be cleaned weekly or before use by another child.

Provide Hand Washing for Children, Staff, and Parents

- Hand sanitizer or hand washing station at entry of facility.
- Hands should be washed before and after:
 - Arrival to facility
 - Preparing or handling food and drinks
 - Administering medication or medical ointment
 - Diapering
 - Using the restroom or helping a child use the restroom
 - Playing outdoors or in sand
 - Handling garbage
- Signs directing children to hand washing areas
- Post proper handwashing practices near handwashing areas, as appropriate for learning level.



Screen children upon arrival, if possible.

- Persons who have a fever of 100.4 (38.0C) or above or other signs of illness should not be admitted to the facility.
- Encourage parents to be on the alert for signs of illness in their children and to keep them home when they are sick.
- Ask parents/guardians to check the child's temperature before coming to the facility or upon arrival to the facility.
- Ask parent/guardian to confirm that their child is not experiencing any symptoms such as fever, coughing, or shortness of breath.
- Consider using physical barriers to eliminate or minimize exposures due to close contact to a child who has symptoms during the screening process. Consider the following options:
 - Conduct screening from behind a glass or plastic window.
 - If performing a temperature check on multiple individuals, ensure that you use a clean pair of gloves for each child and that the thermometer has been thoroughly cleaned in between each check.
 - Visually inspect the child for signs such as flushed cheeks, rapid breathing, or excessive fussiness.

Caring for Infants and Toddlers

- It is important to comfort crying, sad, and/or anxious infants and toddlers, and they often need to be held.
- To the extent possible, when washing, feeding, or holding very young children:
 - Child care providers can protect themselves by wearing an over-large button-down, long sleeved shirt and by wearing long hair up off the collar in a ponytail or other updo.
 - Child care providers should wash their hands, neck, and anywhere touched by a child's secretions.
 - Contaminated clothes should be placed in a plastic bag or washed in a washing machine.