

School and Child Care COVID-19 Guidance Brief for Child Care Staff

On August 5, 2022, the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) released an updated version of the [Requirements and Guidance to Mitigate COVID-19 Transmission in K-12 Schools and Child Cares](#). This guidance is important for child care staff and administrators making decisions around COVID-19. The requirements and recommendations in the school & childcare guidance mitigate risk around the spread of COVID-19.

Key points and changes to the guidance document are summarized below:

- A section has been added to specify what child cares or child programs fall under the DOH guidance. See page 16.
- Children or staff who test positive for COVID-19 must stay home and isolate for 5 days. Repeating initial tests does not change this requirement. See the [What to do if a person is symptomatic flowchart](#) for more information. See page 2.
- Children or staff returning from 5 days of isolation should wear a well-fitted mask from days 6 to 10. Children and staff are also encouraged to test before returning to child care. Children who remain symptomatic or test positive after five days of isolation must isolate for the full 10 days. See page 6.
- Child cares are no longer required to directly notify high risk students and staff of exposure but must continue to have a process in place to inform staff and families when there are cases or outbreaks in a child care. See page 3.
- Children under 2 years are not approved for at-home COVID-19 test kits. A parent or guardian will need to obtain testing for their child at a test site or health care provider. See page 12.
- The definition of an outbreak for child cares has been changed from 2 to 3 cases within a specified core group. See page 4.
- Child cares must respond to outbreaks. All suspected outbreaks must be reported to your local health jurisdiction. See page 10, 13.
- Child cares may choose to use additional protective COVID-19 mitigation strategies in consultation with their Local Health Jurisdiction. See page 12.

Families are encouraged to vaccinate their children who are eligible in consultation with their health care provider. COVID-19 vaccination is now available to children 6 months and older. All employees and volunteers in educational settings continue to be required to be fully vaccinated or have obtained a medical or religious exemption per [Governor's proclamation 21-14.3](#).

You can access the updated [COVID-19 school and childcare guidance](#) on the DOH website located on the [Resources and Recommendations page](#) in the School and Childcare section.

If you have any questions, please contact the COVID-19 information hotline by dialing 1-800-525-0127, then press # or email your questions to DOH.Information@DOH.WA.GOV.