

 <p>8627, Marie-Gaboury Edmonton-AB-T6C 3N1 <b>780-468-6934</b></p>	<p><b>Reference :</b> Page 1 of 11</p> <p><b>Section :</b> Administration</p> <p><b>Subject :</b> Protocols for daycares and child care programs during/after the COVID-19 pandemic</p> <p><b>Approved :</b> May 19th 2020 <b>Date of revision :</b> November 3<sup>rd</sup> 2020</p>
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### 1. PREAMBLE

To ensure the safety and health of children, families, our centres' staff and persons in our communities, we have prepared a reopening plan that follows the directives of the Minister of Children's Services and Public Health of Alberta.

### 2. OBJECTIVES

1. Keep our centres open by putting in place measures that diminish the spread of the pandemic.
2. Prevent all COVID-19 infections in staff and children as much as possible by following protocols put in place by Alberta Health and Children's Services.

### 3. DESCRIPTION

Since reopening our centres in June, we have closely followed the policies and protocols put in place by Dr. Hinshaw of Alberta Health Services. When modifications to the protocols occur, daycares and child care programs are informed as rapidly as possible by the FPFA's compliance officer.

Modifications to the program plan have been updated in response to the new ministerial directives, and includes illness protocols, safety practices, hand washing, cleaning and sanitization, and capacity and presence limitations.

Current recommendations are to maintain a physical distance of 6 feet or 2 meters when possible. Though it is understood that caring for children does not allow for 2-meter separation, it is recommended to maintain this distance as much as possible (for example, staff must try to maintain a distance of 2 meters between each other).

The license holders will have to ensure that their files are kept up to date and available while respecting compliance standards.

- Attendance must be taken for children and staff every single day. This will contribute to guaranteeing that an eventual COVID-19 epidemic may be localized and corrected rapidly.
- All persons visiting the centre for more than 15 minutes must be documented on the attendance control sheet (children, educators, coordinator, contractors).
- All pertinent information on the health of a child provided by the parent must be documented.
- No volunteer or non-essential visitor has the right to enter into the daycare or child care program.
- All essential visitors must wear a mask at all times in the centre and maintain social distancing as much as possible.
- Parents must respond to the government questionnaire (COVID-19 ALBERTA HEALTH DAILY CHECKLIST (FOR CHILDREN UNDER 18)) before dropping off their children in one of our programs. A staff member must also take the temperature of each child to ensure they do not have a fever.

Reference :

<https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/covid-19-relaunch-guidance-daycare-out-of-school-care.pdf>

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## 4. PROCEDURES

### **4.1 General Operations**

Maximum capacity per class as of Phase 2 is 30 people per group (children and staff included).

Children will be assigned to a classroom and will not change groups.

#### Educators:

Educators who have returned to work since September 2020 have been trained on the necessary measures for preventing the spread of the pandemic.

Since September, each new employee occupying an educator or substitute position receives a copy of the protocols and must sign them to attest that they have read and understood the required procedures.

We have increased the number of educators in the centre to allow hygiene measures to be properly followed all while caring for the children. For example, disinfecting toys, play surfaces and frequently touched surfaces.

Educators in ratio must always be the same ones.

Educators may not interact with educators and children from other groups as much as possible to prevent the risk of contamination.

To minimise the mixing of cohorts, educators must use the staff room one cohort at a time. They must also wear a mask at all times, excepting meal times where they must maintain physical distancing.

When they leave the staff room, they must follow cleaning procedures.

If the room is already being used by the members of another cohort, the staff from the other cohorts may take their break and meal in their classroom or leave the centre.

When it is meal time in the classroom, staff must maintain as much physical distancing as possible between themselves and the children. Communal objects such as salt, pepper and the coffee machine are no longer permitted in the centre.

Educators that cover breaks may not do so for more than 3 classes and must maintain a physical distance with the children to avoid direct contact.

Cleaning products containing bleach must have a dilution of 1000 ppm.

#### **4.2 Masks**

The use of masks and gloves is not required according to AHS. However, to prevent the spread of infection, we require that masks be worn at all times by educators, substitutes, and essential visitors.

Parents are required to wear a mask during interactions with the educators such as upon the arrival and departure of the child, regardless of the duration of the interaction.

As soon as it is removed, the mask should immediately be thrown out in a garbage with a lid and a new mask will be provided, in keeping with the mask wearing procedures suggested by AHS.

Not wearing a mask, or any other failure to follow protocol by a staff member on-site and during work hours may constitute insubordination and be cause for dismissal. Should a staff member be witnessed not wearing their mask, a written reprimand will be placed in their employee file.

#### **4.3 Illness**

In compliance with Alberta Health directives, we must require the isolation of any child or staff member exhibiting cold symptoms or other symptoms linked with COVID-19 until they are tested. If the results are negative, they will be authorized to return to work once their symptoms have cleared.

On November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2020, AHS announced that runny nose and sore throat have been removed from the mandatory isolation checklist. This means that any child who only has one of these symptoms will not be required to isolate for a long period. However, they should stay home for 24 hours and monitor their condition. If they are feeling better after 24 hours, they may return to their activities. Otherwise, the child must isolate for 10 days or until they are no longer showing symptoms, whichever is longer. A screening test is not necessary.

This does not apply to adults and employees. If the latter show signs of runny nose or sore throat, they must still isolate for 10 days or present a negative COVID test before returning to the centre.

Know that strict measures are in place regarding the presence of staff who are not feeling well at work. **No employee is permitted to present themselves to work if they are not feeling well, no exceptions.**

**No sick child will be accepted into the centre.**

For a child suffering from allergies or asthma for which the symptoms resemble a cold, we must see that the negative result of a COVID-19 test before allowing their admittance.

- No child, parent, or educator may enter the centre if they are ill.
- If a child begins to show symptoms when they are in the centre, they will be isolated in a separate room, and the parent will be notified to retrieve them immediately. If there are no available rooms, a minimum distance of 2 meters from the other children must be ensured. If the child is young and requires direct contact and care, the educator must wear a mask as they care for the child while awaiting their parents' arrival. The educator must then wash their hands and avoid contact with the child's respiratory secretions.

\*\*Directions to follow for mask-wearing while supervising a sick child:

- 1) Putting on the mask: Wash hands before putting on the mask;
  - 2) Taking off the mask: Wash hands, remove the mask, and rewash hands.
  - 3) Putting on a fresh mask.
- Toys, mats, and all other items that the child used during the isolation period must be sanitized as soon as the child is gone. The educator must wash their hands before and after sanitization.
  - Concerning materials that cannot be cleaned and sanitized such as books and cardboard puzzles, they must be removed from the centre and placed in sealed quarantine for 72 hours.
  - Each parent must check the temperature of their child at home before returning to the centre. Out of respect for other families, please keep your children with cold symptoms even if they are minimal.
  - Educators must verify the temperature of each child when they arrive.
  - Normal temperatures are:
    - Mouth: 35.5-37.5° C ; (95.9-99.5°F)
    - Underarm: 36.5-37.5°C ; (97.7-99.5°)
    - Forehead: 36.6-38.0°C (97.9-100.4°F)
    - Ear: (not recommended for infants) : 35.8-38.0° C ; (96.4-100.4°F)

#### **4.4 COVID-19 Case in the Centre**

Any program linked to a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 must close for two weeks to allow for a follow-up from AHS. Following their visit, they must act according to the recommendations. In the case where 2 children or more are shown to have COVID-19 symptoms, the program must follow the outbreak protocol.

Furthermore, in the case where a staff member (educator or coordinator) should test positive for COVID-19, they must stay home for an isolation period of 14 days. All persons considered as proximity contacts by PFPA or AHS must isolate for 14 days.

Following recent COVID case management experiences with AHS, FPFA has determined that AHS's response time is too slow. We have observed that the ministry is overburdened and has difficulty effecting the necessary follow-ups in a reasonable timeframe. For this reason, upon detecting a positive COVID case in a centre or a cohort, FPFA will immediately shut down the service and conduct contact tracing. FPFA will immediately communicate with affected families to ask them to isolate for 14 days.

A proximity contact is:

Any person who has been in direct contact (touched) or less than 2 meters AND who has remained for more than 15 minutes in the presence of a positive COVID case within two days preceding the announcement of the positive case.

FPFA will take the following steps when a positive COVID case is declared in a centre or a cohort:

- 1) FPFA will contact AHS and compile a list of the proximity contacts of staff and children who have tested positive for COVID.
- 2) Contact the *Intake* line of Children's Services and provide the necessary information.
- 3) Contact the centre's families or the cohort by email.
- 4) Contact the team of educators, visitors/substitutes and centre or cohort staff.
- 5) If the service is in a CSCN school, inform the CSCN staff person responsible for managing COVID cases and the principal of the school where the service is located. If the service is in a FrancoSud school, inform the FrancoSud staff person responsible for managing COVID cases and the principal of the school where the service is located
- 6) Contact the license inspector and the AHS agent assigned to the centre.
- 7) The FPFA's compliance officer will be the contact person for managing the information communicated to parents as well as follow-ups with staff.
- 8) The centre will be reopened only after the isolation period of 14 days.

In the case where a parent should test positive for COVID-19, they must inform the centre immediately. Furthermore, they must stay at home for an isolation period of 14 days and keep their child with them if they are not the parent in charge of transporting the child.

No contact with the centre will be possible. The child's personal belongings will be sent home by the centre.

#### **4.5 Travel**

Families are encouraged to avoid any non-essential travel. If a family decides to travel within or outside of Canada, they must inform the centre and self-isolate for 14 days upon their return. If signs of illness manifest during the isolation period, they must provide proof of negative testing to be able to return to the centre.

#### **4.6 Capacity**

- Programs may operate without capacity limits. However, each room may not contain more than 10 people, including children and staff.

- A daycare and out-of-school program may operation so long as they are able to maintain the separation between programs (separate entrances and exits, shared spaces and bathrooms) and follow all health requirements, including the size of the group.
- Programs that use dividers, half-walls or temporary barriers to divide a larger room into smaller spaces, may not use this room for more than 10 people during Phase 1. During Phase 2, they may, but the groups must not mix.

#### **4.7 Presence in the Centre**

##### **Person responsible for greeting visitors:**

- Greeting will be done at the centre entrance. An educator will accompany your child to their classroom, and back to the exit when they leave.
- Only one family may be greeted at a time and must respect arrival times.
- The temperature of the child will be taken by the educator every morning at the entrance. If the child has a fever, they will be sent home.
- The educator will pose the questions indicated in AHS's screening questionnaire each morning.
- Upon the arrival and departure of each child, the educator will fill out attendance sheets by hand and enter the parent's code in the EZCare system.
- Before the child enters the classroom, the educator will accompany them to wash their hands.

##### **Parents' responsibilities :**

- Each parent must verify the temperature of their child at home before coming to the centre.
- Parents may drop off their children between 7 and 9 am and come pick them up from 4 to 6 pm.
- This is different for each centre. Child care services may accept children from 7 to 8 am and parents may pick up their children after 4pm.
- Families are asked to submit their arrival/departure schedule in advance and immediately inform the centre of any changes. This will allow us to stagger intake and departure hours in order to maintain social distancing.
- In order to maintain physical distancing, a single family is authorized to enter the centre entrance at a time. Families must wait outside as per security parameters.
- Families must wear a mask during interactions with educators.
- A single parent may drop off or pick up their child at the centre. It is strongly recommended for Phase 1 that the same parent be responsible for dropping off and picking up their child at all times. Further, they must not be accompanied by another family member (sibling, grandparent, etc.)
- Only children and assigned staff are authorized in classrooms.
- Children from the same family that are paired between two programs must use the same entrance. However, those who cannot be paired must arrive and respect the individual procedures required by the different programs. *(Ex: A 9 year old in the OOS care program will enter through the designated entrance for this group while their sibling will be taken independently by their parent to the designated entrance for their group.)*

- Persons listed as emergency contacts will not be permitted entry during Phases 1, 2, and 3 of the reopening plan.
- Volunteers and non-essential visitors will not be accepted into the centre.

**Coordinator's responsibilities:**

- The coordinator must ensure that time sheets are submitted weekly to the Ministry of Children's Services.
- Programs must keep the attendance sheet up to date for each person who enters and leaves the centre (staff, parents, children, any person who remains longer than 15 minutes in the centre) for pinpointing in case of outbreak.
- The coordinator must ensure that all protocols put in place are respected by their centre's staff and families.
- The coordinator must act as a model for others. Any and all failure to comply with protocols on their part or on the part of their staff will be sanctioned by the FPFA.

**4.8 Communication and contact**

- There will be no contact between a group's educator and a parent since a specific staff person will be responsible for each child's intake and departure.
- Communication binders will not be filled out in order to avoid their manipulation by multiple people. In several of our centres, the HiMama application has been installed to facilitate communication between educators and parents.
- In all cases where there is a concern or a problem, parents may email the coordinator or the FPFA's compliance officer.

**4.9 Personal Items**

**Shoes**

The children will need a pair of indoor shoes that remain at the centre in their bin.

Personal items from home will not be allowed in the centre. Apart from changes of clothing that will remain on-site, lunch boxes, shoes, and water bottles, no other items may be brought. This means: no electronic devices, toys, books, stuffies...

Necessary medical equipment such as walkers, wheelchairs, and others must be cleaned and sanitized prior to the arrival and following the departure of the child.

Necessary items such as naptime blankets will remain at the centre and will be directly washed once a week.

Sunscreen and mosquito repellent will be provided by the centre for this period. The brand and specs will be provided for your information. Absolutely NO personal recipient will be accepted.

**4.10 Handwashing Protocol**

**Washing the childrens' hands**

The children must wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds during the following periods:

- During arrival to the centre and prior to departure;
- After using the washroom;

- After a diaper change;
- Before eating;
- When hands are dirty;
- After wiping a nose or manipulating dirty tissues;
- After going outside and returning.

The use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer is not recommended. The educators will assist younger children with washing their hands and will supervise older children to ensure that handwashing is done correctly.

### **Staff handwashing**

Centre staff must wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds during the following periods:

- When they arrive at the centre and prior to leaving;
- After going to the bathroom;
- After changing diapers;
- Before preparing meals/snacks;
- Before serving food and before eating;
- When hands are dirty;
- After wiping a nose or manipulating dirty tissues;
- After cleaning/sterilizing.

**The use of hand sanitizer** is not to be prioritized by the educative staff within the centre. Handwashing using soap and water is more effective and must be used. However, hand sanitizer is recommended if soap and water are not accessible when entering or leaving a classroom, or exiting or entering the building.

It is recommended to keep a container of hand sanitizer in the emergency bag.

This product must be kept out of the reach of children.

#### **4.11 Meals/Snacks : Directives for Families**

- Lunch meals will be provided on the Gabrielle-Roy site as of November 9<sup>th</sup>. Should the cook be absent, parents will be required to provide a lunch to their child.
- Parents must provide utensils and dishes for their child's meals in the lunch box (the kitchen will not be accessible);
- Please ensure that everything is labeled (containers, etc.);
- If a child is without food for the day, the program will provide the child dry snacks.

#### **4.12 Meals/Snacks : Directives for Staff**

- Ensure that those responsible for preparing food respect meticulous hand hygiene and do not present themselves at work if they are showing symptoms.
- No communal item may be offered (salt, pepper, etc.)
- Meals will be served in individual portions to each child by a designated staff member. (No communal dish will be placed in the centre of the table in a manner where the children may serve themselves.)
- Kitchen utensils must be used to serve food (food cannot be served by hand).
- Leftovers that have been brought to class but have not been consumed may not be preserved for future use.

#### **4.13 Naptime**



- During naptime, the mats must be 2.5 square meters apart for children under 6 as much as possible.

#### **4.14 Cleaning/Sanitization**

- Inside and outside equipment must be sanitized between use by different groups of children;
- The program must complete a deep clean daily;
- The program must respect rules concerning cleaning and sanitization of objects and frequently-touched surfaces in compliance with AHS directives;  
*A registry of cleaning completed will be filled out daily;*
- All toys brought into contact with the mouth must immediately be withdrawn and sanitized.

#### **Disinfecting methods for toys:**

- A. Using a commercial dishwasher;  
OR
- B. Wash with water and detergent;  
Rinse with hot water;  
Scrub, pulverise, or submerge for 2 minutes in an approved disinfectant;  
Let air-dry.

#### **4.15 Materials and Toys with Restrictions**

- Sensory tables (water, sand, rice) and all other shared materials must not be used. However, individual sensory activities are accepted;
- Play-dough is to be removed;
- All materials that are difficult to wash/sanitize such as: wood pieces, natural materials, cardboard) must be removed from the classroom;
- Toys, stuffed animals, and cushions must be removed.

#### **4.16 Safety Practices for Planning Activities**

The educators must ensure that the proposed activities respect social distancing rules, and avoid sharing surfaces or objects frequently touched by hands. (Offer diversity, space, outside play...)

Activities offered must absolutely avoid the formation of groups.

Routines and transitions must be planned to avoid creating bottlenecks among the children.

#### **4.17 Outdoor Activities**

Any outing, excursion, or seasonal event will be postponed or cancelled.

Centres must use alternatives for outdoor games such as walks, supervised games in green parks (without game modules) or in secure outdoor spaces. Daycares and OOS care programs are not authorized to use the school's play structures.

One single group at a time may use the daycare's yard. All game module must be cleaned and sanitized after each use.

Several groups may go outside at once to play on the school grounds, but must be kept separate to avoid being in the entrance/exit at the same time.

#### **4.18 Signage for Instructions**

As a preventative measure, visual signage must be visible in the entrance of the centre as well as in each classroom. These must indicate reminders for staff and children of the appropriate methods for handwashing, sneezing, and coughing into the elbow.

As much as possible, social distancing practices must be used. We must avoid greetings that involve touch such as hugs or handshakes, and encourage creative greetings such as "air high fives".

The "COVID-19 ALBERTA HEALTH DAILY CHECKLIST (FOR CHILDREN UNDER 18)" and "COVID-19 ALBERTA HEALTH DAILY CHECKLIST (FOR ADULTS 18 YEARS AND OLDER)" questionnaires must be displayed at the designated entrances.

We favour the social distancing of 2 meters between people.

#### **4.19 Non-Compliance**

Any parent or staff member who breaks the rules will face consequences.

**Parents** who fail to respect the rules twice will be removed from the centre and their place will be given to another family.

**Staff** who fail to respect the rules twice will be replaced by other educators.