



COVID-19 Procedures and Precautions

MCCA continues to keep abreast of recommendations for child care during the coronavirus pandemic from multiple sources. Some of these sources include the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Maryland Department of Education (MSDE) Office of Child Care (OCC) and Montgomery County Health and Human Services (DHHS) departments.

MCCA is committed to providing a safe and healthy space for children and staff while preserving the interactive nature of play-based care. Children in group care are naturally inclined to socialize and this is an important part of their development.

On July 22, 2022 MSDE OCC issued new guidance related to COVID-19 and exclusion procedures. The guidance is summarized below and is effective immediately:

Staff or Student/Child with	Guidance for Management
COVID-19 symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff or student/child should not attend or work in a school or child care setting ● COVID-19 testing is recommended ● If test is negative, may return when symptoms have improved, no fever for 24 hours without medication, and applicable criteria in the Communicable Diseases Summary have been met
Positive test for COVID-19, regardless of symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff or student/child must stay home for 5 days from the start of symptoms or from the date of the positive test if no symptoms ● After day 5, may return if symptoms have improved and no fever for at least 24 hours without medication ● Upon return, must wear a mask for 5 additional days (except while eating, drinking, sleeping or outside) ● If unable to wear a mask, may return if they have a negative test at day 5 or later; otherwise, they should remain at home for days 6 -10
Close contact with someone with known or suspected COVID-19 but no symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff or student/child can continue to work in or attend school and child care regardless of vaccination status ● Those who can mask should do so for 10 days from the last day of exposure ● A test at 3-5 days after exposure is recommended, especially for those who cannot mask (ex. children under 2 years of age).

Family Responsibilities

Families are expected to keep their children home if they are sick. Children excluded from the center for symptoms, or exposure to COVID-19 will follow MSDE OCC guidance related to isolation, quarantine, masking and testing.

Families and children will follow the center's drop-off and pick up procedures and maintain physical distancing from staff and other families.

Families must promptly notify their director if they are traveling internationally. MCCA will require families to follow any applicable federal, state and local travel guidance in effect at the time of travel.

Children wearing masks while in child care need a daily supply of clean facemasks for children 2 and older. KN95 masks are suggested as providing the best protection for indoor use. Masks may not have valves, vents, or any attachments.

Families will provide a NUT FREE lunch packed using containers labeled with their child's name. Meals need to be ready to eat with a limit of one (1) item needing heating. It is preferred that lunches not need refrigeration but it is available if needed. Afternoon snack, water, milk and disposable utensils will be provided by MCCA.

Infant families will provide bottles and food that are ready for use, and labeled with the child's name and classroom. Baby food jars need to be unopened. Bottles and food will be heated as instructed.

Families will be required to keep their child's immunizations current and provide all forms and other documents required by the OCC for enrollment in child care.

As a reminder, below is a list of COVID-19 symptoms:

COVID-19 SYMPTOMS:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Difficulty Breathing
- New loss of taste or smell
- Fever (100.4 or higher)
- Chills or shaking chills
- Muscle aches
- Sore throat
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Fatigue
- Congestion or runny nose

Face Masks and Vaccinations

The wearing of face masks is strongly recommended while indoors for both children and MCCA staff while participating in child care activities. MCCA will follow any mask requirements that may be imposed by its facility landlords.

We strongly encourage all eligible children to be vaccinated for COVID-19. Please be advised that MCCA must report and follow MSDE OCC and DHHS protocols related to program closures and quarantines at all of its locations if an outbreak of COVID-19 occurs. An outbreak is defined as two or more unrelated cases of COVID-19 in a classroom.

Cleaning and Meals

Staff will continue to follow MCCA procedures and OCC regulations which require hand washing with soap and water frequently throughout the day. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer will be available as needed and stored out of reach of children.

Frequently touched areas in the classroom and bathrooms are disinfected periodically throughout the day and classrooms and the center are professionally cleaned every evening.

Meals times require set-up and cleaning procedures. Lunches will be served in original container and no shared utensils or food containers will be used. Children will be encouraged to be as independent as possible during meals to limit touching items.

Infant bottles, bottle caps, nipples and other equipment used for bottle-feeding will be thoroughly cleaned after each use with soap and water, stored separately and sent home.

Field Trips and Special Events

Field trips and the use of outside guests and specialists will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis according to programming needs.