

Sun, Moon, and Stars Learning Center

COVID 19 Procedures 2021

(UPDATE: November 2021)

Hours of operation: 7:45am-5:30pm

Please refer to the new guidelines as per the City of Austin (Dated May 25, 2021)



City of Austin
Public Health Department



7201 Levander Loop, Bldg. E Austin, TX 78702 | 512-972-6115 | [AustinTexas.gov/Health](https://austintexas.gov/Health)

Updated Guidance for Open Child Care Programs

Given recent updated recommendations from the CDC and Dr. Mark Escott, Interim Austin-Travis County Health Authority, Austin Public Health (APH) has revised the guidance document for local childcare programs. The updated guidance, “State Law Requirements and City of Austin/Travis County Recommendations for Open Child Care Programs,” is posted on the City’s COVID-19 web page for childcare providers. Because childcare programs serve children who are not yet eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine, the updated guidance contains detailed recommendations for programs regarding the use of face masks indoors and outdoors.

Upon learning of any case(s) of COVID-19 among children or adults in a program, programs are still required to report the case(s) to APH and childcare regulation and notify staff and parents while maintaining the confidentiality of affected persons. Programs needing to contact the APH nurse line to report COVID-19 cases or to ask COVID-related questions should email ChildCareInfo@austintexas.gov for the fastest services, due to wait times when calling in to the nurse line. Nurse line staff monitor the email and will call you back if requested.

Masking Recommended in Austin-Travis County

The Health Authority Rules released on May 18, following updated CDC guidance, have been turned to recommendations (see Health Authority Rules Withdrawal Notice) rather than requirements following GA 36, which prohibits governmental entities and public health authorities from requiring face coverings.

The Austin-Travis County Health Authority recommends that those who are partially vaccinated or unvaccinated are recommended to continue masking in most situations. An individual is considered fully vaccinated two weeks after completing the full course of their COVID-19 vaccination regimen. Pfizer and Moderna require two doses and Johnson & Johnson require one dose.

According to Dr. Mark Escott, Interim Austin-Travis County Health Authority, “Masks still play an important role in further reducing the spread of COVID-19 and will remain a recommended practice for those who are not fully vaccinated, at least until we reach herd immunity.”

To reach herd immunity, Austin Public Health is aiming for 70% of the population to be fully vaccinated. Based on state data, Travis County is currently at 62.14% of those 12+ partially vaccinated and 49.42% fully vaccinated.

“While the pandemic is not over, the Austin-Travis County area is at a lower level of risk than the rest of the state because so many of you chose higher measures of protection to keep you, your family, and those around you safe from COVID,” Interim APH Director Adrienne Sturup said. “We want our community to be COVID wise – getting vaccinated, wearing a mask, and maintaining social distancing provides the highest level of protection from COVID-19.”

Get Vaccinated!

The Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines are currently authorized for those aged 18 and up. The Pfizer vaccine is currently authorized for those aged 12 and up. Individuals can receive the Moderna vaccine through APH or find additional vaccine providers in your area at [Vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov).

For COVID-19 information and updates, visit www.austintexas.gov/COVID19.

Recommendations for fully vaccinated individuals are as follows:

Resume normal activities without wearing a mask, except when required by a business.

Resume domestic travel without testing and quarantine before or after travel

Resume international travel without testing, unless required by the destination, and refrain from quarantine after arriving back in the United States.

Refrain from testing and quarantine following a known exposure, unless you develop symptoms

Policy change on Face Coverings

Outdoors: Face masks are optional for all SMS staff when outdoors. Parents and visitors are required to wear a mask or face covering when on SMS premises, outdoors and indoors. Effective June 1st, 2021.

Indoors: Starting June 21st Face masks are optional for staff when indoors who are fully vaccinated. SMS has about 92 percent staff who are vaccinated as of May 29th, 2021 and as per the State mandate and CDC recommendations on the use of cloth face coverings we feel confident on this decision. SMS has the right to reverse the mask mandate with a short notice if there is an increase in covid-19 cases in Austin area.

SMS does not require face coverings for kids. Cloth face coverings should NOT be put on babies and children under the age of two because of the risk of suffocation. SMS will not require a face mask for children under three. Teachers will try their best to support children (three and above) whose parents want them to wear one as long as the child is happy and willing to keep it on.

PARENTS AND VISITIOS ARE REQUIRED TO WEAR A FACE MASK DURING DROP OFF, PICKUP BOTH INDOOR AND OUTDOORS.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND COOPERATION IN HELPING US MAINTAIN A HEALTHY AND SAFE PLACE FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF!!

Tuition:

The monthly tuition is due on the first of each month. There is a late fee of \$5/day after the 5th. We are not offering a prorate if you are starting late in the month. SMS is not offering a discount if a child/ family is required to follow a 14 day or less of quarantine due to a possible exposure (here or away), vacation, and travel (local or international). We are following the best practices/procedures in the given situation and SMS cannot be held responsible if a child/staff contracts Covid-19 due to a possible exposure here at SMS from a student or staff member.

Late pick up fee: SMS closes at 5:30pm. We understand that with reduced hours it's difficult for some parents to make it on time so please schedule a phone meeting with Shalini to discuss this. There will be a charge of \$2/minute after 5:30pm.

New Enrollments: A registration fee of \$300 and the full first month's tuition is required upfront to confirm an enrollment. This fee is a nonrefundable fee. Disenrollment for any period of time will require the new student enrollment procedure including registration fee. Upfront payment of \$300 registration fee along with your first month's fee before an enrollment is guaranteed.

Termination of Services: SMS requires a 4 week termination of childcare services notice. We completely understand the sensitivity of Covid19 and would like to receive a full 4 week notice in advance for any termination or pause on services.

Your child must be current on immunizations and a physician's statement of health is required before the start date. The admission is not guaranteed without these two documents.

NOTE: Our communication today is to present and explain the Community Commitment we are asking you all to adhere to so we all can safely navigate around the pandemic. Please read this document carefully and make sure that you understand and agree with the requirements and policies. We feel more than ever that we have a responsibility to each other to make safe choices so that we may come out of this historic time safe and healthy. SMS has the right to terminate care/enrollment immediately for not complying with our policies and procedures during the Covid19. We reserve the right to terminated services without a four weeks' notice if the safety and health of our students and staff members is involved.

General Guidance if anyone gets sick at SMS

SMS will exclude children, staff, parents and guardians from child care sites if they are showing symptoms affiliated with COVID-19 (i.e. cough, fever, shortness of breath, or are at high risk due to underlying health conditions. Limit outside visitors. The person testing positive will be asked to stay out for 3 days from the day the person is fever free. A doctor's note is also required for return to care. SMS will immediately close the room where a child/teacher tested positive for Covid19 and inform all parents in the group and email instructions for exclusion. The room and care will be suspended based on potential exposure. The room will be sanitized completely.

People at Increased Risk for Serious Complications of COVID-19

SMS will exclude Persons who are older, pregnant, or who have underlying health conditions, including those with compromised immune systems or respiratory conditions like severe asthma, are at higher risk to develop complications from this virus. These individuals should not provide child care or visit child care facilities.

SMS cannot be held responsible for a family member contracting Covid-19 who is older, pregnant, or who have underlying health conditions, including those with compromised immune systems or respiratory conditions like severe asthma, are at higher risk to develop complications from this virus. You are using care for your child at SMS at your risk and you are fully aware of the complications and risks from the virus

General Preparedness and Planning

We want to encourage everyone to take general [everyday preventive actions](#) to prevent the spread of this, or any respiratory illness.

[Wash hands](#) often with soap and water. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

Remember to supervise young children when they use hand sanitizer to prevent swallowing alcohol.

- [Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html) HYPERLINK "https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html" HYPERLINK "https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html" HYPERLINK "https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html" HYPERLINK "https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html" HYPERLINK "https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html" HYPERLINK "https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html" ntly touched surfaces.
- [Cover cough and sneezes.](#)
- Cover your mouth and nose with a [cloth face covering](#) when you have to go out in public. It is required for all staff members at all times.
- Cloth face coverings are optional starting June 1st, 2021 for staff who are fully vaccinated

SMS current hours of Operation:

Open from 7:45am to 5:30 pm

Drop-off and pick-up guidelines

NOTE: There are no changes to Sunshine classroom drop off/pick up. We continue to operate as regular.

Per HHS COVID-19 Guidance to Childcare Providers, pick up and drop off of children must occur outside the buildings, unless you determine that there is a legitimate need for the parent to enter. **Drop off hours are 7:45am-9am only. After 9am the gates will be closed and there can be a minimum wait of 15 minutes based on front office staff availability.** Our teachers get busy at 9 am with important routines like restroom time and circle time and we apologize for the wait in the parking for drop off after 9am.

Drop off after the cut off time 9 am: If the front desk staff is not available and busy with the other school chores, we will lock the front door. For access, please call 512-6507687.

Parent Drop-Off at SMS

Beginning October 1st, 2020 there is a check-in and check-out station set up by the big gate for Moondrops, Twinkle Stars, Galaxies and Moon Explorers and an assigned staff will be assisting you with checking you in/out.

We ask that you stay at least 6 feet away from other parents and staff members while checking in during drop off and pickup. We would like for you to wait in the line, and we will check in on first come first serve basis. There will markings/floor stickers to always maintain 6 ft. distance at the check-in station and outside. At drop off the staff member will be:

- Making a visual inspection of the child for signs of illness which could include flushed cheeks, rapid breathing or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity), fatigue, or extreme fussiness.
- Checking the child's temperature

Anyone who have **a fever of 99.6⁰ or above**, or other signs of illness will not be admitted to the facility. This is the threshold set by the City of Austin Health Authority. To help keep our community safe, be on the alert for signs of illness in your children and to keep them home when they are sick.

Parents are required to wear a mask and to maintain at least 6 ft. of distance from employees during drop off and pickup.

1. Does the child have any Covid-19 symptoms? (Fever, cough, shortness of breath, vomiting, diarrhea)

2. Has anyone in the house tested positive for Covid-19 or has been in contact with someone that tested positive for Covid-19?

3. Has anyone in the household traveled internationally or locally or planning a trip? (Visiting family, grandparents, went camping, business or leisure trip)

Parent Pick-Up. Pick up time is between 4:00-5:30pm

- Parents can enter from front office for pick their child up before 4:00 pm.
- The gates will stay open from 4:00-5:30pm with a staff monitor to guide you for pickup
- Parents will be allowed to collect their child at the main entry door of the classroom/building.
- For the safety of our staff and other students, you are highly encouraged to wear a face mask when you come to pick up, especially if you are going to be within 6 feet a staff member.
- **If you are late to pick-up there is a \$2 per minute per child late fee.**

IMPORTANT: All parents and visitors are required to wear a mask at all times while on premises. We request parents not to gather anywhere on the school property to socialize. We request a quick drop off/pickup to avoid parking related issues. If you need to speak with your child's teacher, call or email Shalini/Neelu to request a phone/zoom meeting.

Parent teacher communication:

Parents are encouraged to send in hand written communication notes to the teacher directly each morning in their lunch bag. You will be receiving a weekly update email from your class teacher every Friday on the activities offered. This includes pictures from the week.

Daily Communication with your teacher: Parents are requested to communicate directly with your child's teacher. If your child's teacher arrives after you regular drop off please send hand written notes each morning during drops off in their lunch bag. You will be receiving a daily log on your child's day for Sunshine, Moondrops and Twinkle stars classes. You can request a phone meeting with your child's teacher if you have may have any questions or concerns.

Transition to the next class:

Due to the Covid-19 we are not allowing visits to the next class for a transition. We can set up a virtual meet the teacher to assist with this important change.

Health Screening at Entry

Per HHS guidance, deny entry to any person who meets any of the following criteria:

- A temperature over 99.6°F (Note, while HHS guidelines specify 100.4°F or above, operators should follow the 99.6°F temperature threshold set by the City of Austin Health Authority). Ask if medications were used to lower an individual's temperature and if there are any household members with COVID-19.
- Signs or symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as a cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, and low-grade fever;
- In the previous 14 days has had contact with someone with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19; is under investigation for COVID-19; or is ill with a respiratory illness; or
- In the previous 14 days has travelled internationally to countries or locally with widespread, sustained Community transmission. For updated information on affected countries, visit: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/travelers/index.html.

Social Distancing

- Limit the number of children at each learning center or station in the classroom to one or two at a time, if possible.
- Incorporate more individual work into the classroom.
- Increase the distance between children in circle time, meals and snacks, or during table work
- Plan activities that do not require close physical contact between individual children
- Increase spacing between nap mats to six feet if possible. If that is not possible, space nap mats as far apart as possible and place children in a toe-to-toe or head-to-toe arrangement
- Adjust the HVAC system and open windows to allow for more fresh air to enter classrooms.
- Eliminate large group activities.
- Limit the number of children in each program space.
- Limit item sharing, and if items are shared, remove, and clean and disinfect the items before returning them for use with the children. Remind children to not touch their faces and wash their hands after using these items.
- In infant rooms, use a separate blanket to hold each baby and use individual blankets on the floor. Avoid getting close to babies' and toddlers' faces when holding them.
- Limit use of water or sensory tables and wash hands immediately after any use of these tools.
- Minimize time standing in lines for children, such as during bathroom breaks or lunch lines.
- Avoid gathering in larger groups for any reason. Outside time and lunch should be taken with a stable, consistent small group (no large gathering or combining groups).
- Restrict field trips.
- Restrict trainings, staff meetings and gatherings.

Update from October 1ST, 2021:

We will continue to implement policies and procedures that are in the best interest of our families and staff.

Here are some policies and procedures:

*Taking temperature at drop off time

*Sanitizing the classrooms throughout the day with the deep cleaning at the end of the day.

***Three days exclusion along with Doctor's note or covid negative test required to return to the center for any sickness includes high fever.**

*Any students or staff with cold, flu like or covid19 symptoms must stay out of school till tested negative results for covid-19 or quarantined for 14 days.

*Strict exclusion for covid-19 symptoms.

*Travel quarantine policy remain same. Exclusion policy remain same. Exposure away from SMS to follow 5 days of exclusion followed by a covid-19 test on the 5th day to be allowed to attend care.

Parents can do work-related travel by car to work. For Air travel you must provide us with a covid-19 negative test on return back on traveling child. Please contact the office, so we can guide you what we are comfortable with your return.

*Note: There will be no tuition discount for any temporary suspension in services/ closure related to COVID19. We would like our families to understand that we are in the middle of a pandemic and we all are at the risk of contracting the virus when we step out of our homes and come in contact with other people. We will continue to follow the best possible measures and cannot guarantee that there will be no case since the virus is difficult to trace can enter the center through attending families and staff members. I do expect full transparency on symptoms if any from families, staff here and to immediately report to Shalini/Neelu to avoid further spread.

Class groups:

We are doing our best to maintain our original set of class groups by age. We will do everything we can to keep teams together and children in their currently assigned classrooms. Classes will not be combined. This can change in case there is a staff absence/shortage. We will try our best not to do so and if there is a need all the contacts will be documented.

What is allowed in Classrooms?

August 1st 2021 onwards updates: We now allow nap blankets, a small size soft Lovie and cloth lunch bags at school. Our priority is always on the health and safety of our students. Therefore, until further notice, some items like Nap sheets, and pillows are not allowed at the center.

- We will adjust classroom temperatures to provide a comfortable environment for our students during nap time.
- Each student will be designated a crib/mat from that classroom to use daily.
- Each is sprayed and disinfected every day to ensure cleanliness.
- Students on mats are placed 6 feet apart and sleep in an alternating pattern of head to feet in order to further reduce the potential for viral spread.

Playing inside the Classroom

When the weather does not allow us to be outside in the fresh air we will play inside our classrooms.

- Play areas will be spread out through the classroom to maintain distance.
- Only toys that can be cleaned and disinfected everyday will be permitted for the students to play with.
- Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will not be used.
- Toys that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretions or excretions should be set aside until they are cleaned by hand by a person wearing gloves. Be mindful of items more likely to be placed in a child's mouth, like play food, dishes, and utensils.
- Toys will not be shared with other groups of students.
- Toys that need to be cleaned will be place in a separate container marked for "soiled toys." Keep dish pan and water out of reach from children to prevent risk of drowning. Washing with soapy warm water is the ideal method for cleaning.

Outside the Classroom:

Children will be allowed to a single designated play area throughout the day. These play areas will be disinfected twice daily; during naptimes and after all students have gone home.

- We will stay outside as much as the weather permits to take full advantage of the fresh air. We will limit outdoor time if the temperature is over 95⁰ or under 45⁰.
- Outside activities include scavenger hunts, storytelling, hide and seek, yoga, dancing, and art!
- Offer outdoor play in staggered shifts. If multiple groups are outside at the same time, they should have a minimum of six feet of open space between outdoor play areas or visit these areas in shifts, so they are not congregating. Always wash hands immediately after outdoor playtime.
- Incorporate additional outside time.

Encourage physical activity that allows for adequate social distancing and doesn't rely on materials that will need disinfecting

Caring for Infants and Toddlers

Parents are encouraged to send in hand written communication notes to the teacher directly each morning in their lunch bag.

Diapering

When changing a child, [staff will wash their hands](#) and wash the child's hands before they begin, and wear gloves. Following safe diaper changing procedures. Procedures are posted in all diaper changing areas. Steps include:

- Prepare (includes putting on gloves)
- Clean the child
- Remove trash (soiled diaper and wipes)
- Replace diaper
- Wash child's hands
- Clean up diapering station
- Wash hands

After diapering, staff will wash their hands (even if they were wearing gloves) and disinfect the diapering area. If the surface is dirty, it will be cleaned with detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

Washing, Feeding, or Holding a Child

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: Staff protect themselves by wearing personal protective equipment (PPE), a long-sleeved shirt, and by wearing long hair up off the collar in a ponytail or other updo.

- Any soiled clothes will be placed in a plastic bag or washed in a washing machine.
- Infants, toddlers, and their providers must have multiple changes of clothes on hand in the child care center.

Healthy Hand Hygiene Behavior

- All children, and staff will engage in hand hygiene at the following times:
 - Arrival to the facility and after breaks
 - Before and after preparing food or drinks
 - Before and after eating or handling food, or feeding children
 - Before and after administering medication or medical ointment
 - Before and after diapering
 - After using the toilet or helping a child use the bathroom
 - After coming in contact with bodily fluid
 - After handling animals or cleaning up animal waste
 - After playing outdoors or in sand
 - After handling garbage
- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If hands are not visibly dirty, alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol can be used if soap and water are not readily available.
- We will assist children with handwashing, including infants who cannot wash hands alone.
 - After assisting children with handwashing, staff will also wash their hands.

Lunches

- Child care providers will wash their hands before and after handling infant bottles prepared at home or prepared in the facility. Bottles, bottle caps, nipples, and other equipment used for bottle-feeding will be thoroughly cleaned after each use by washing in a dishwasher or by washing with a bottlebrush, soap, and warm water.
- Food preparation will not be done by the same staff who diaper children.
- Sinks used for food preparation will not be used for any other purposes.
- Caregivers will ensure children wash hands prior to and immediately after eating.
- Caregivers will, as always, wash their hands before preparing food and after helping children to eat.
- If on the pavilion for lunch we will only allow four students to sit at the tables together at a time.

Parent Pick-Up. Pick up time is between 4:00-5:30pm

- Parents can enter from front office for pick their child up before 4:00 pm.
- The gates will stay open from 4:00-5:30pm with a staff monitor to guide you for pickup
- Parents will be allowed to collect their child at the main entry door of the classroom/building.
- For the safety of our staff and other students, you are highly encouraged to wear a face mask when you come to pick up, especially if you are going to be within 6 feet a staff member.
- **If you are late to pick-up there is a \$2 per minute per child late fee.**

****Note** that we have noticed that the majority of parents want to pick their children up from 4:30 pm-5:30 pm! This has led to long lines and even waiting times in the SMS parking lot. However, parents are encouraged to temporarily park at the Seton Clinic or the Austin Regional Clinic (ARC) and walk to the SMS parking lot to pick-up your student. **If you have concerns about walking with your child or waiting in the SMS parking lot, we highly encourage you to pick up before 4:30pm!**

Actions to Consider if a Child, Staff or Child's Household Member Develops COVID-19 or Similar Symptoms:

- Call 9-1-1 for medical emergencies including chest pain, seizure, difficulty breathing, etc.
- Staff or children with fever (higher than 99.6°F per the City of Austin Health Authority's threshold), cough, or shortness of breath should be excluded from entry to child care facilities and stay away from others. If in the facility, please separate the individual from all others until the ill individual can leave the facility. The ill individual (if a child, the child's parent or guardian) should contact their health care provider for immediate assistance. Children with household member(s) with confirmed COVID-19 should also be excluded from the child care facility.
- If a child or staff member develops symptoms of COVID-19, immediately separate the individual from others and send the ill person home. Other employees and children should be monitored to see if they develop any symptoms. Exhibit A of the Stay Home-Work Safe Order provides specific requirements for those individuals suspected to have COVID-19. Follow CDC guidance for schools and child care.
 - If a teacher develops symptoms of COVID-19 while caring for children, another teacher or substitute should provide care so the ill teacher can immediately leave the facility.
- Facilities experiencing a confirmed case of COVID-19 among their population should consider closing temporarily (as advised by local health officials). The duration may be dependent on staffing levels, outbreak levels in the community or severity of illness in the infected individual. Symptom-free children and staff should not attend or work at another facility, which could potentially expose others. Facilities should undergo a thorough cleaning and disinfecting and continue to monitor for ill individuals. The CDC has guidance on cleaning and disinfecting facilities with suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19.
- If the infected individual with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 spent minimal time (i.e. 10 minutes or less) in close contact with those in the child care facility, the facility may consider closing for 2-5 days to do a thorough cleaning and disinfecting and to continue to monitor for ill individuals.
- For any of these circumstances, the child care program should notify parents of other children in the group of the situation, describe how the program is responding and continue to communicate updates to families.

If someone is or becomes sick in the center.

- We will have an isolation area (such as front office or a secluded area within the classroom) that can be used to isolate a sick child.
- We will follow CDC guidance on how to [disinfect your building or facility](#) if someone is sick.
- The sick person will not be allowed to return to SMS for 72 hours (3 days) **and** must have a clearance from a doctor or a negative covid-19 result.

- If a fever of 99.6 or higher persists over 72 hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers) we will require said staff/student to get a COVID-19 test.
- If COVID-19 is confirmed in a child or staff member:
 - The building that the sick person was in will be immediately closed. All students and staff from that building will be sent home for an isolation (2-5 days) and can return back with a doctor's note. 14 days in case the person testing positive for COVID-19 was asymptomatic.
 - **All parents and staff in the room must be notified that day.**
 - Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the areas.
 - Wait up to 24 hours or as long as possible before you clean or disinfect to allow respiratory droplets to settle before cleaning and disinfecting.
 - Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who is sick, such as offices, bathrooms, and common areas.

Returning to a child care facility after suspected COVID-19 symptoms

If a staff member or child has symptoms of COVID-19 or is a close contact of someone with COVID-19, they can return to the child care facility if the following conditions are met:

- If individuals have fever, cough or shortness of breath and have not been around anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, they should stay home away from others until 72 hours (3 days) after the fever is gone and symptoms resolve. If the person's symptoms worsen, they should contact their healthcare provider to determine if they should be tested for COVID-19.
 - If an individual is diagnosed with COVID-19, they must remain out of the facility for a minimum of 7 days after the onset of first symptoms. They may return under the following conditions:
 - If they had a fever, 3 days after the fever ends AND they see an improvement in their initial symptoms (e.g. cough, shortness of breath);
 - If they do not have a fever, 3 days after they see an improvement in their initial symptoms (e.g. cough, shortness of breath);
- OR
- 7 days after symptom onset

Staff procedures

People at Increased Risk for Serious Complications of COVID-19

SMS will exclude staff who are older, pregnant, or who have underlying health conditions, including those with compromised immune systems or respiratory conditions like severe asthma, are at higher risk to develop complications from this virus. A staff member with the mentioned conditions must immediately notify the Director and stay home.

SMS cannot be held responsible for a staff member contracting Covid-19 who is older, pregnant, or who have underlying health conditions, including those with compromised immune systems or respiratory conditions like severe asthma, are at higher risk to develop complications from this virus. You are working at SMS at your risk and you are fully aware of the complications and risks from the virus. Please talk to the Director if you are not comfortable working during this pandemic. You must stay home and safe until you feel safe enough to return to work.

All policies and procedures that apply to enrolled SMS families apply to the staff members, full time and part time.

General Preparedness and Planning:

Take [everyday preventive actions](#) to prevent the spread of respiratory illness.

- [Wash hands](#) often with soap and water. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- Remember to supervise young children when they use hand sanitizer to prevent swallowing alcohol.
- [Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.](#)
- [Cover cough and sneezes.](#)
- Cover your mouth and nose with a [cloth face covering](#) when you have to go out in public.
- At your door, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Check your temperature. If your temperature is 99.6 or above, or other signs of illness will not be admitted to the facility. This is the threshold set by the City of Austin Health Authority.
- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Spray/ disinfect all personal belongings.
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Parent Drop-Off:

Drop-Off will occur from 7:45 am-9 am Monday through Friday. **You will only greet and collect students from your daily group, and only from your designated point of entry.** Asking the parent/guardian to confirm that the child's health check with the pickup teacher. Asking the parent/guardian to confirm that the child does not have fever, shortness of breath or cough.

- Making a visual inspection of the child for signs of illness which could include flushed cheeks, rapid breathing or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity), fatigue, or extreme fussiness.
- Take the child's temperature.
 - 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.
 - If you use non-contact thermometers, clean them with an alcohol wipe (or isopropyl alcohol on a cotton swab) between each client. You can reuse the same wipe as long as it remains wet.
- Anyone who have a fever of 99.6⁰ or above, or other signs of illness will not be admitted to the facility. This is the threshold set by the City of Austin Health Authority.
- Immediately wipe the thermometer down with an alcohol wipe (or isopropyl alcohol on a cotton swab) that contains at least 60% alcohol between each child.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol or wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If hands are visibly soiled, soap and water should be used before using alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Toys that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretions or excretions should be set aside until they are cleaned by hand by a person wearing gloves. Clean with water and detergent, rinse, sanitize with an EPA-registered disinfectant, and air-dry or clean in a mechanical dishwasher. Be mindful of items more likely to be placed in a child's mouth, like play food, dishes, and utensils.
- Machine washable cloth toys should not be used at all.
- Do not share toys with other groups.
- Set aside toys that need to be cleaned. Washing with warm soapy water is the ideal method for cleaning. Try to have enough toys so that the toys can be rotated through cleanings.

Caring for Infants and Toddlers

Diapering

When changing a child, [wash your hands](#) and wash the child's hands before you begin, and wear gloves. Follow safe diaper changing procedures. Procedures should be posted in all diaper changing areas. Steps include:

- Prepare (includes putting on gloves)
- Clean the child
- Remove trash (soiled diaper and wipes)
- Replace diaper
- Wash child's hands
- Clean up diapering station
- Wash hands

After diapering, wash your hands (even if you were wearing gloves) and disinfect the diapering area. If the surface is dirty, it should be cleaned with detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

Washing, Feeding, or Holding a Child

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 personal protective equipment (PPE), a 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.
- Child care providers should change the child's clothes if secretions are on the child's clothes. They should change the button-down shirt, if there are secretions on it, and wash their hands again.
- Contaminated clothes should be placed in a plastic bag or washed in a washing machine.
- Infants, toddlers, and their providers should have multiple changes of clothes on hand in the child care center or home-based child care.

Healthy Hand Hygiene Behavior

- All children, and staff should engage in hand hygiene at the following times:
 - Arrival to the facility and after breaks
 - Before and after preparing food or drinks

- Before and after eating or handling food, or feeding children
- Before and after administering medication or medical ointment
- Before and after diapering
- After using the toilet or helping a child use the bathroom
- After coming in contact with bodily fluid
- After handling animals or cleaning up animal waste
- After playing outdoors or in sand
- After handling garbage
- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If hands are not visibly dirty, alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol can be used if soap and water are not readily available.
- Assist children with handwashing, including infants who cannot wash hands alone.
 - After assisting children with handwashing, staff should also wash their hands.

Lunches

- Child care providers should wash their hands before and after handling infant bottles prepared at home or prepared in the facility. Bottles, bottle caps, nipples, and other equipment used for bottle-feeding should be thoroughly cleaned after each use by washing in a dishwasher or by washing with a bottlebrush, soap, and warm water.
- Food preparation should not be done by the same staff who diaper children.
- Sinks used for food preparation should not be used for any other purposes.
- Caregivers should ensure children wash hands prior to and immediately after eating.
- Caregivers should wash their hands before preparing food and after helping children to eat.
- If on the pavilion only allow three students to sit in a triangle at the tables together at a time.

Naps

- Students are not allowed any blankets, sheets or pillows. Staff can adjust the classroom temperature based on your student's needs.
- Each student will be designated a crib/mat from that classroom to use daily.
- Students on mats should be placed 6 feet apart and sleep in an alternating pattern of head to feet in order to further reduce the potential for viral spread.
- Any bedding that touches a child's skin should be sprayed and disinfected with a bleach water solution that is made every morning to ensure cleanliness. After, mats are to sit out for 10 minutes to allow the bleach water solution time to fully disinfect the child's mat.

Intensify cleaning and disinfection efforts:

- [Routinely clean, sanitize, and disinfect](#) surfaces and objects that are frequently touched, especially toys and games.
- Throughout the day staff are responsible for spraying and cleaning objects/surfaces in their rooms with high frequency use such as doorknobs, light switches, classroom sink handles, countertops, desks, tables, chairs, and soiled toys **every two hours**.
- All cleaning materials should be kept secure and out of reach of children.
- Cleaning products should not be used near children, and staff should ensure that there is adequate ventilation when using these products to prevent children from inhaling any harmful fumes.

If someone is or becomes sick.

- Plan to have an isolation area (such as a mat in a corner of the classroom) that can be used to isolate a sick child.
- Be ready to follow CDC guidance on how to [disinfect your building or facility](#) if someone is sick.
- If a sick child has been isolated in your facility, clean and disinfect surfaces in your isolation area after the sick child has gone home.
- The sick person will not be allowed to return to SMS for 72 hours **and** with clearance from a doctor.
- If COVID-19 is confirmed in a child or staff member:
 - The building that the sick person was in will be immediately closed. All students and staff from that building will be sent home for a 2–14-day home isolation based on instructions by the city's health department.
 - **All parents and staff must be notified that day.**
 - Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the areas.
 - Wait up to 24 hours or as long as possible before you clean or disinfect to allow respiratory droplets to settle before cleaning and disinfecting.
 - Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who is sick, such as offices, bathrooms, and common areas.