



CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Home Child Care Program/Pandemic Child Care Protocols

Version 7 - October 2021

INTENT:

1. To comply with the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, Ontario Regulation 137/15*.
2. To comply with the Ministry of Education *Operational Guidelines During COVID-19 Outbreak for Child Care Re-Opening – Addendum, January 2021*.
3. To comply with recommendations of the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit.
4. To provide a safe and healthy environment for Home Child Care children, families, Providers/Back-up Providers, residents in the home, HCCP staff and visitors in the home by maintaining the required and recommended health and sanitary practices during the COVID-19 pandemic recovery period.

POLICY:

1. All HCCP Providers will adhere to the following protocols as advised by the North Bay/Parry Sound District Health Unit (NB/PSDHU) to promote good health and daily sanitary practices.
2. All HCCP Providers will be committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for children and families, and will take every reasonable precaution to prevent the risk of communicable diseases within all locations.
3. All HCCP Providers will follow the HCCP policies and procedures.
4. The HCCP supervisor and Home Visitors will monitor HCCP Providers compliance with the protocols contained in this policy.

PART 1 – ADMISSION TO PROGRAM: HCCP PROVIDERS, CHILDREN AND ADULTS DROPPING OFF, VISTORS TO THE HOME

Infection Control for HCCP Providers

1. HCCP Providers will self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms each day ahead of welcoming children into care. The COVID-19 School and Child Care Screening Tool <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/> is an online resource available to meet this requirement.
2. With a successful self-screen, the HCCP Provider will sanitize personal items (phones, beverage containers) and wash their hands ahead of welcoming children into their home.
3. If a HCCP Provider doesn't pass the self-screen due to experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 not related to an underlying condition they must contact their local COVID-19 Assessment Centre (see * below for contact details) for direction on next steps and also contact the HCCP supervisor or Home Visitor ahead of starting their care of children for the day. The program will be temporarily closed, with reopening dependent on:

If the test result is positive: HCCP Provider must continue to self-isolate until they receive further direction from the NB/PSDHU.

If the test result is negative: they continue to self-isolate until symptom-free for 24 hours.

*COVID-19 Assessment Centre (Parry Sound): 705-746-4540 Ext 5030

*COVID-19 Assessment Centre (North Bay): 705-474-8600 Ext 4110

Infection Control for Residents of the Home

1. Persons residing in the HCCP Provider's home will also self-screen each morning. If any household member is experiencing any new COVID-19 symptoms the HCCP premise will temporarily close and the HCCP supervisor or Home Visitor notified. The HCCP Provider will call their local COVID-19 Assessment Centre for direction on next steps. If a positive test result for COVID-19 is received, the NB/PSDHU will be notified and their advice on control measures will be implemented. The Program supervisor or Home Visitor will also be notified to assist with implementing the NB/PSDHU recommendations.

Infection Control for Incoming Children/Parents

Note: Records of parents/guardians, children, and all visitors in the home on any given day are to be kept for a period of at least 30 days for contact tracing purposes.

1. The HCCP Provider will be available at the entry/exit to their home for the arrival and departure of parent/guardian, children and visitors. Within the screening process, the HCCP Provider will wear a medical face mask, along with eye protection or a face shield.
2. Upon arriving at the HCCP premises, the parent/guardian will proceed to the entrance and is required to wear a face covering while striving to remain 2 metres apart. It is recommended that screening of parent/guardian, children and visitors take place outside, however, at the HCCP Provider's discretion i.e. inclement weather, screening can take place within the entryway to the home with the parent or visitor wearing a non-medical mask. Dependent on HCCP Provider preference, parents/guardians of children in care are permitted in the home providing they have evidence of self-screening, wear a non-medical face mask and use hand sanitizer prior to entering indoors. They are to maintain a minimum 2 metre distance from all children.
 - a) Ahead of arrival at the HCCP premises, parent will have either self-screened all family members using the online "COVID-19 School and Child Care Screening Tool" or utilized the **Parent/Child Daily Screen Form (Appendix 1)**. Extra blank copies will be made available to parents/guardians to complete at the HCCP premises as long as a printed supply is available through the HCCP. Note: temperatures are required as part of the self-screening process.
 - b) The HCCP Provider will either seek verbal confirmation of the parent's successful result following an online prescreen or review the Parent/Child Daily Screen form and will track the result on their **COVID-19 HCCP Surveillance Record (Appendix 2)**. Parents/guardians will be reminded of this requirement at registration and through signage placed at the entrance to the HCCP.
 - c) If a parent enters the HCCP premises beyond the entryway, they are required to wear a non-medical mask, use the supplied hand sanitizer, and record their details on the **Visitor Contact Tracing Register (Appendix 4)**. See Part 3-Visitors in the Home, #3.
 - d) When assessing for symptoms, the parent/guardian and HCCP Provider will focus on evaluating if they are new, worsening or different from one's baseline health status or usual state. Symptoms associated with known chronic health conditions or related to other known causes/conditions should not be considered unless new, different or worsening.

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- e) The HCCP Provider will also take the child's temperature and record the result on the surveillance record. Assuming the child's temperature is below 37.8 C (or 100 F) the child will be welcomed into the program and offered alcohol-based hand sanitizer or assisted to wash their hands with soap and water. Please refer to the **Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) How to Wash Your Hands** guidelines (**Appendix 3**). Where families have indicated on the *Authorization for Over the Counter Products* that their child is not to be exposed to hand sanitizer, only soap and water is to be used.
 - f) The HCCP Provider will clean and sanitize any personal belongings of the child brought into the program (i.e. bottles).
3. The HCCP Provider will continue to observe the general health of each child in care throughout each day and may choose to log each child's temperature at various times throughout the day while in attendance.
 4. The HCCP Provider will retain the daily **COVID-19 HCC Surveillance Record** of all children/parents for a period of 30 days to facilitate the possible need for the NB/PSDHU to complete contact tracing.
 5. The HCCP Provider will practice sound sanitary practices on a daily basis, as they are the best insurance against serious outbreaks in the home child care. Please see the Children's Services/HCCP Sanitary Practices and Infectious Disease Policy included in this package for details.
 6. The HCCP Provider will ensure their daily log is completed, while following sanitary practices according to the written information provided.

Infection Control for Visitors in the Home

1. Providers are also responsible for maintaining daily records of visitors in the home, including HCCP program and Ministry staff, Resource staff, Fire Inspection personnel, repair persons, etc. For each, the **Visitor Contact Tracing Register** (**Appendix 4**) will be completed. This documentation will be retained on the premises for a two-week period to facilitate the possible need for the NB/PSDHU to complete contact tracing.

Infection Control for Departing Children

1. In an outdoor environment, approved adults picking up a child do not need to be screened. It is recommended that pick-up of a child takes place outside of the HCCP Provider's home whenever possible.
2. At the HCCP Provider's discretion i.e. inclement weather, pick-up can take place within the entryway to the home with the parent or alternate wearing a non-medical face mask. Any alternate pick-up designates not screened in the AM should be screened within the departure routine. A medical face mask and face shield should be worn by the HCCP Provider while the parent/guardian/alternate also wears a face covering.

PART 2 - EXCLUSION OF SICK CHILDREN PROCEDURES

1. All HCCP Providers/Back-up Providers, residents in the home, HCCP staff and visitors in the home must adhere to the established exclusion criteria.
2. Ahead of arrival at the HCCP premises, parent will have either self-screened all family members using the online "COVID-19 School and Child Care Screening Tool" or utilized the Parent/Child Daily Screen Form (Appendix 1).

3. Each parent/guardian, child, HCCP staff, and visitors in the home will be screened, and excluded when necessary, prior to or upon entry to a HCCP.
4. Each child, HCCP Provider/Back-up Provider, HCCP staff, and visitor in the home will be monitored for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 throughout the day.
5. The HCCP supervisor will work with the North Bay/Parry Sound District Health Unit (NB/PSDHU) to ensure that all recommendations and requirements are completed.
7. If a parent, child or anyone residing in the household doesn't pass the prescreen, members of the household are to remain home until they contact their local assessment centre for further direction – even those with only one symptom. If the child does not pass the screening process at the HCCP premise drop-off, the child will return home with the parent and the parent will contact their local COVID-19 Assessment Centre for further direction. The parent will keep the HCCP Provider updated on COVID-19 test appointments, test results, decisions regarding quarantining and any follow-up and results from an alternative diagnosis by a health care professional. The HCCP Provider will notify the HCC Home Visitor or program supervisor of the applicable details.

The ability for parents/guardian and their child to return to care after exclusion due to illness is dependent on:

If COVID-19 testing is recommended and is positive: the parent/guardian/child must continue to self-isolate until they receive further direction from the NB/PSDHU.

If COVID-19 testing is recommended and the test result is negative: the parent/guardian/child continues to self-isolate until fever free and no new or worsening symptoms are present over a period of 24 hours, without the use of medications. An ill parent/guardian/child who has an alternative diagnosis provided by a health care practitioner may return to care if:

- *they do not have a fever and their symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours without the use of medications.*
- *Additionally, the recovered person will not have been in close physical contact with someone who currently has COVID-19.*

After receiving a negative COVID-19 test for a mild symptom known to persist in young children (i.e. runny nose), the parent will seek the direction of their local assessment centre or physician ahead of the child's return to care. If this mild symptom changes in any manner, the parent will reconnect with their local assessment centre or physician for direction on next steps. The parent will also seek HCCP Provider pre-approval for the child to return and the child should feel well enough to participate in child care activities and routines without the need for ibuprofen or acetaminophen to be administered within 5 hours of drop-off.

8. A medical note or proof of a negative COVID-19 test result is not required for a child to return to care.
9. If a child, HCCP Provider/Back-Up Provider, student or volunteer has a chronic alternate diagnosis, documented proof from a health care provider is not required.
10. All household contacts of a symptomatic individual are required to isolate until the symptomatic individual:
 - a. Receives a negative COVID-19 test result, or;
 - b. Receives a diagnosis by a health care professional.

11. If the symptomatic individual tests positive or is not tested and does not receive an alternative diagnosis from a health care professional, the symptomatic individual must isolate for 10 days from symptom onset. All household contacts must isolate until 14 days from their last contact with the symptomatic individual.

HCCP Providers/Back-Up Providers will review the HCCP Pandemic Re-Opening Child Care Version 4 – **Monitoring and Responding to Reports of COVID-19 in a Home Child Care Program (Appendix 8)** for complete details on the above.

PART 3 – VISITORS IN THE HOME

1. All visitors to the HCCP Provider's premises must:
 - b) Be screened prior to entering the home (see PART 1: ADMISSION TO PROGRAM);
 - c) Wear personal protective equipment;
 - d) Complete the **Visitor Contact Tracing Register (Appendix 4)** kept at the HCCP premise.
 - e) Follow any other protocols requested by the HCCP or HCCP Provider, such as maintaining a distance of 2 meters apart between the HCCP Provider and children, where possible.
2. Visitors to the home may include HCCP Home Visitor, Program Supervisor; Ministry staff conducting in-person monitoring and licensing inspections of the HCCP and/or HCCP premises; Inclusion Support Services staff; Fire Inspectors; repair service technicians and potential new parents/children.
3. Dependent on HCCP Provider preference, parents/guardians of children in care are permitted in the home providing they have evidence of self-screening, wear a non-medical face mask and use hand sanitizer prior to entering indoors. They are to maintain a minimum 2 metre distance from all children.
4. When Inclusion Support Services are supporting a child attending the program, all families attending should be notified of this ongoing visit arrangement.
5. Dependent on HCCP Provider preference, students completing post-secondary placements are permitted in the home, as are volunteers. Volunteers will be able and willing to adhere to the details outlined in this protocol during their time in the program.
6. When considering accepting new families into the program, the HCCP Provider will want to recognize the potential new parent's need to view the child care environment ahead of agreeing to a placement. In addition to following the "Visitors in the Home" protocol, the HCCP Provider/parent may want to consider the feasibility of an initial virtual tour. If there is mutual agreement to proceed with a care arrangement, scheduling in-person parent tours and child visits (ahead of an ongoing placement) after-hours will reduce virus transmission concerns and potentially reduce contact tracing requirements.
7. Where appropriate, HCCP staff and ministry staff will use technology, such as video calls or phone calls, to complete virtual monitoring and licensing inspections. HCCP staff will also take advantage of outdoor play visit opportunities.

PART 4 – MAXIMUM CAPACITY OF HOME CHILD CARE PROGRAM

The maximum group size for HCCP is six children in care. The HCCP Provider's own children will no longer count in the program numbers on or after September 1 of the year they are eligible to start school.

Part 5-Guidance on the Use of Masks and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Use of Masks:

1. All adults in the HCCP (Providers/Back-up Providers, HCC program staff, Special Needs Resourcing personnel and Ministry staff) are required to wear medical masks and eye protection (i.e. face shield or goggles) while inside the child care premises.
2. Time with masks off should be limited and only occur when a distance of 2 metres or more can be maintained between themselves and the children.
3. All other adults (parents/guardians and visitors) are required to wear a face covering or non-medical mask while inside the premises. (*Operational Guidance During COVID-19 Outbreak: Child Care Re-Opening, Version 4-November 2020*).
4. All children in grades 1 and up are required to wear a non- medical or cloth mask while inside the child care premises, while younger children (aged 2 to SK) are encouraged but not required to wear a non-medical mask or face covering while inside the HCCP setting.
5. Masks and eye protection are not required outdoors, however, all adults in the HCCP (Providers/Back-up Providers, HCC program staff, Special Needs Resourcing personnel and Ministry staff) are strongly encouraged to maintain a social distance of 2 metres whenever possible.
6. Masks or any other type of face covering are not recommended for children under two years of age.

HCCP Providers will review the HCCP Pandemic Policy **Using Medical Masks, Eye Protection and Face Coverings and Exceptions (Appendix 5)** for complete details.

Use of PPE:

1. HCCP Providers should secure and sustain an amount of PPE (including but not limited to face shields, medical masks, gloves, etc.), and cleaning supplies that can support their current and ongoing operations. The HCCP staff are available to provide resource links to support this need.
Note: It is the intent of the Ministry of Education to ship a supply of HCCP Provider medical grade face masks and face shields to the HCCP on a monthly basis.
2. All HCCP Providers will follow the procedures for donning and removing PPE (**Appendix 6 and 7**)

PART 6 – IN PROGRAM CONSIDERATIONS

1. Parents will be asked to minimize their children's personal belongings from home (backpacks, clothing, etc.). The preference is that each child has one bag that remains with the HCCP Provider, with the contents replenished by the parent as needed.
2. HCCP Providers will support physical distancing at drop-off and pick-up by encouraging staggered times for each family. At drop-off, the parent and child should be screened outside the program entrance when possible and conversely, the HCCP Provider is encouraged to schedule outdoor play within anticipated pick-up times.
3. No non-essential visitors, volunteers or students should be present in a program at this time.

4. The Ministry of Education recognizes that physical distancing between children in a child care setting is difficult and encourages the HCCP program and HCCP Providers to maintain a welcoming and caring environment for children. Helpful suggestions are:
 - a. Plan activities that do not involve shared objects or toys;
 - b. Plan to spend as much of each day outdoors, as appropriate;
 - c. Implement a “less is more” approach to planning the play resources available to the children, choosing materials that can be cleaned and disinfected easily;
 - d. Mouthed toys should be placed in a specific container away from other children as soon as the child has lost interest in the item. The contents of the container can then be cleaned and disinfected at the Provider’s earliest opportunity.
 - e. Sensory materials including sand and water tables may be used and hand hygiene must be practiced before and after engaging in sensory play.
 - f. Where toys and equipment are shared, they should be cleaned and disinfected as often as necessary.
5. HCCP Providers are encouraged to increase the distance between resting mats or playpens at sleep time. If space is limited, children can lie “head-to-toe” or “toe-to-toe” as appropriate.
6. At this time, families will not be able to provide food to the program (i.e. a celebratory birthday cake). The exception is if a child is required to follow a unique diet and/or special precautions are in place for the handling and serving of the child’s food.
7. Children are not to prepare or provide food for sharing with others at this time.
8. HCCP Providers/Back-Up Providers will ensure proper hand hygiene is practiced by anyone entering the child care setting and incorporated into the daily schedule at regular intervals during the day, above and beyond what is usually recommended (i.e. when preparing food, after using the washroom).
9. If a child in attendance is suspected of having COVID-19, all items that cannot be cleaned (paper, books, etc.) should be temporarily removed and stored in a container for a minimum of 7 days.
10. When possible, the space between children should be increased when eating snacks and meals together and utensils are to be individualized to each child.
11. Mealtimes may be served “family” style with children self-serving. The HCCP Providers and children must practice hand hygiene before and after each meal. Children are not to share their individual utensils or food from their own dishes.
12. Each child should have their own individual sunscreen product for outdoor play, and it should not be shared with others. The HCCP Provider will follow proper hand hygiene (washing hands before and after) when assisting a child to apply sunscreen.
13. Singing is permitted indoors if children can be spaced apart. It is recommended that visual cues be used to assist the children in distancing from each other.
14. HCCP Providers and children are encouraged to participate in community walks. HCCP Providers may choose to utilize parks and playgrounds with parental permission and while maintaining a play distance of 2 metres from others. Hand sanitation for children over 2 years following community play is an expectation, followed by hand washing for everyone upon return to the HCCP premises.

Care of Infants/Toddlers

1. HCCP Providers should continue to supervise and hold bottles for infants not yet able to hold their own bottle to reduce the risk of choking.
2. When holding an infant or toddler, HCCP Providers can use light blankets or large cloths over their clothing (as they prefer) and change the blanket or cloth between children.
3. Activities can be planned to ensure there are no shared objects or toys. As with older children, mouthed toys should be placed in a specific container away from other children as soon as the child has lost interest in the item. The contents of the container can then be cleaned and disinfected at the Provider's earliest opportunity.
4. Children must not share food, utensils, soothers, bottles, sippy cups, etc. Labeling each child's belongings will assist in preventing accidental sharing.

Part 7-RESCHEDULING OR CANCELLATION OF PREPLANNED GROUP EVENTS AND IN-PERSON MEETINGS

1. HCCP Provider in-person small group events and training opportunities are permitted (i.e. First Aid/CPR training) provided everyone wears a face mask and maintains a distance of 2 metres. The space capacity as per the provincial re-opening guidelines must also be adhered to.
2. It is recommended that meetings are held outside when possible.
3. HCCP staff are required by the Ministry to complete Quarterly Visits, and Pop-In and monthly visits by the PSDSSAB. If an indoor visit takes place the HCCP program staff will follow the "Visitor in the Home" protocol.
4. HCCP Providers may prefer that meetings with potential new families take place by a method that does not require face to face contact (i.e. virtual meeting, telephone). In-person meetings are permitted with evidence of self-screening and the use of hand-sanitizer prior to entering the Provider's home. Visitors are to maintain a minimum 2 metre distance from all children present.

PART 8 - ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANING AND DISINFECTING PROCEDURES:

The HCCP supervisor and Home Visitors will promote good health and daily sanitary practices across all HCCP premises. HCCP Providers/Back-Up Providers will review the HCCP Policy **Sanitary Practices and Infectious Disease Control**.

HCCP Providers/Back-Up Providers will:

- a. Adhere to and be committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for children, families, and others.
- b. Take every reasonable precaution to prevent the risk of contamination and spread of infectious diseases within their designated HCCP space.
- c. With the support of the HCCP staff, ensure that appropriate and sufficient cleaning and disinfecting products/equipment/materials are available on the premises and used according to the procedures outlined in this policy.
- d. Ensure that any and all recommendations and requirements of the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit are followed.
- e. Ensure that disinfecting solutions and commercial products are being appropriately used according to manufacturer's instructions.

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- f. Increase the cleaning and disinfecting protocols within the premises during times of declared outbreaks and pandemics.
- g. The HCCP supervisor and Home Visitors will ensure that each HCCP Provider/Back-Up Provider, placement students and volunteers have completed and signed off on mandatory and recommended training requirements as regulated by the CCEYA and the local district health unit.

RESOURCES TO ACCOMPANY THIS PROTOCOL:

Appendices:

- 1. Parent Child Daily Screen
- 2. COVID-19 HCCP Surveillance Record
- 3. Handwashing and Sanitizing
- 4. Visitor Contact Tracing Register
- 5. HCCP Medical Masks, Eye Protection, Face Coverings Policy and Exemption
- 6. Donning PPE
- 7. Removing PPE
- 8. Pandemic Version 4: Monitoring and Responding to Reports of COVID-19 in a HCCP Child Care Program
- 9. [COVID-19 HCCP Immunization Disclosure Policy](#)

Forms:

- 1. Pandemic Version 5 Protocol Acknowledgement Form
- 2. HCCP Medical Mask and/or Face Shield Use Exception

By signing below, I acknowledge my responsibilities as stated in the Sanitary Policy and Procedures and that I am obligated to follow through on all requirements.

Signature of Provider: Name:		Date:
Signature of Back-Up Provider: Name:		Date:
Signature of Home Visitor: Name:		Date:
Signature of Supervisor: Name:		Date:

Revised: [October 2021](#)