

TIMELINE IN LIFTING OF HEALTH & SAFETY MEASURES IN CHILD CARE

March 14th, 2022

MARCH 14, 2022 – VACCINATION DISCLOSURE POLICY:

Effective March 14, 2022, the instructions issued by the OCMOH related to vaccination disclosure policies is that they will be revoked across all sectors. As of this date, licensees are no longer required to have a COVID-19 vaccine disclosure policy in place and provincial requirements below will be lifted:

- Collecting proof of COVID-19 vaccinations, medical exemptions, or completion of an education program.
- Asymptomatic screening requirements for individuals who do not provide proof of full vaccination.
- Reporting vaccination coverage to the Ministry of Education, therefore, will no longer be required effective March 14th. Unvaccinated individuals covered under licensee's vaccination policies will no longer be required to undertake rapid antigen screening three times per week.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Ministry of Health is removing reporting requirements for organizations including licensees that receive free rapid antigen tests from the government through the Provincial Antigen Screening Program for the purpose of vaccination disclosure policies. Licensees will no longer be required to report weekly rapid antigen test (RAT) usage to the Ministry of Health

MARCH 21, 2022 – MASKING AND STAFF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT:

In alignment with community masking requirements, masks will no longer be required for staff, providers or any other individual (including children) at the child care. Eye protection for staff will also no longer be required. Licensees will be able to continue to receive these items through the Ministry of Government and Consumer.

As some children, staff/providers may choose to continue to wear masks or eye protection, the government will continue to provide free masks and eye protection. In addition, we know that many children and staff may choose to continue to wear masks at times, or consistently. We at OCOF/Nena will be respectful, welcoming and inclusive to those individuals choosing to remain masked.

CURRENT FEDERAL TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS:

A reminder that under current federal travel requirements, upon return from international travel, individuals must wear a mask at all times when in public spaces (including schools and child care), maintain a list of all close contacts for your first 14 days in Canada, and monitor yourself for signs and symptoms of COVID-19.

LIFTING OF COHORTING AND DISTANCING FOR PROGRAMS:

Cohorting and distancing will no longer be required for indoor or outdoor activities. Licensees are required to ensure ratios, group sizes, reduced ratios and mixed age groupings meet the requirements under the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA), as well as any conditions set out on their Child Care License.

ON-SITE CONFIRMATION OF SCREENING:

Daily confirmation of screening for children and staff/provider will no longer be required by licensees. Individuals should continue to self-screen every day before attending child care using either the COVID-19 school and child care screening tool, or a screening tool designated by the local public health unit. The screening tool has been updated to align with the updated COVID-19 Integrated Testing & Case, Contact and Outbreak Management Interim Guidance: Omicron Surge 3. The ministry recognizes that these changes are significant. Moving toward normalcy is a welcome change for many.

Please note Effective March 21st, 2022 – OCOF/Nena will no longer be screening in person at the door each morning. All individuals are encouraged to self-screen every day before attending our programs using the COVID-19 school and child care screening tool. <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/>

FAMILY DROP OFF AND PICK AT OCOF/NENA:

From March 21st to April 4th, 2022 our screeners will continue to be in place and at the front door and will act as greeters to assist parents/guardians transition to the new rules introducing them to their site and making them feel welcomed.

April 4th, 2022 - As of this date we will no longer have greeters at our front door. Parents, Guardians will be required to bring their children into the child care center as before Covid-19 and pick them up inside the child care. We look forward to welcoming our families back into our child care centres.

We will continue to monitor the case counts in our programs while keeping the safety and well-being of the children a priority.

Hand, Hygiene, Respiratory Etiquette, cleaning and Disinfecting:

In accordance with local public health direction, appropriate hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, cleaning and disinfecting will continue.

The following measures will continue to be in place until the end of June

VENTILATION:

Licensees and home child care providers are encouraged to implement best practices and measures to optimize ventilation (see Public Health Ontario's guidance: Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Systems in Buildings and COVID-19). Adequate ventilation should be provided by opening windows, moving activities outdoors when possible and through mechanical ventilation including HVAC systems. Heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems (HVACs) and their filters are designed to reduce airborne pollutants, including virus particles, when they circulate through the system. • Ensure HVAC systems are in good working condition. • Keep areas near HVAC inlets and outlets clear. • Arrange furniture away from air vents and high airflow areas. • Avoid re-circulating air.

ABSENCE REPORTING:

Child care centres will continue to be expected to report absenteeism rates to public health units should they rise to a defined level (approximately 30% above their baseline). Under the CCEYA, licensees must ensure that a daily observation is made of each child receiving child care in each child care centre it operates before the child begins to associate with other children in order to detect possible symptoms of ill health. Licensees are also required to ensure that where a child receiving child care at a child care centre it operates appears to be ill, the child is separated from other children and the symptoms of the illness noted in the child's records. **As a reminder, anyone who is sick or has any new or worsening symptoms of illness should stay home until their symptoms are improving for 24 hours (or 48 hours for nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea) and should seek assessment from their health care provider if needed.**

Bi-weekly shipments of RATs will continue to support symptomatic testing for staff, providers and children. Licensees are expected to continue distributing RATs to staff/providers and children who return from an unplanned absence. <https://covid-19.ontario/rapid-test-locator>

VACCINATION:

Vaccination remains the best defence against COVID-19, including the Omicron variant. We ask that you continue this work and promote vaccination efforts for children, families and staff/providers. Please seek out further information on vaccination.

<https://www.phsd.ca/health-topics-programs/vaccines-immunizations/coronavirus-covid-19-vaccine/upcoming-vaccination-clinics-for-specific-priority-groups/>

UPDATED CASE AND CONTACT MANAGEMENT:

Further to the updates mentioned above, the Ministry of Health has revised the COVID-19 Integrated Testing & Case, Contact and Outbreak Management Interim Guidance: Omicron Surge, with updated guidance for close contacts in the community and in households:

- Asymptomatic individuals who are close contacts of a case or a symptomatic individual in the community are no longer required to isolate but must self-monitor for 10 days following last exposure. During the self-monitoring period, close contacts must wear a well-fitted mask in all public settings and avoid activities where they need to take off their mask. For children under 2 a well-fitted mask is not required. However, parents must monitor for symptoms for 10 days following last exposure.
- Asymptomatic household contacts of a case or a symptomatic individual are also not required to isolate if they are 17 or younger and fully vaccinated; 18 and older and have already received their COVID-19 booster; or tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days and have completed their isolation period. Asymptomatic household contacts who are not required to isolate are also required to self-monitor for 10 days following last exposure, as outlined above. Children under 5 who are asymptomatic household contacts are required to stay home for 5 days.

For more information, please reference:

https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/school_childcare_guidance_omicron.pdf