



Interim Guidance for Child Care Programs and Summer Day Camps

Updated May 22, 2020

The following guidance was developed by the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFPDH) for local use, and will be posted at <http://www.sfdph.org/covid19/>. This interim guidance may change as knowledge and community transmission.

AUDIENCE: Administrators and directors of child care programs and summer day camps.

Summary of Changes to the Guidance as of May 22, 2020

Guidance has been updated to include:

- For summer day camps, information on Summer 2020 start dates, minimum session length, maximum group size, required staffing ratios, and certification requirements
- Clarification of priority groups for enrollment
- Links to CDC Decision Tree tools for child care and summer programs for deciding whether to open

PURPOSE: To help child care programs, summer day camps, and their partners understand new requirements and recommendations to prevent spread of COVID-19 and safely run their programs.

BACKGROUND: Per the San Francisco Health Orders to Stay Home, child care programs were allowed to remain open only for children of essential workers. A Health Order issued on May 22, 2020 allows child care programs and summer day camps to open to all children and youth in June.

Programs for children and youth face specific challenges in preventing the spread of COVID-19. Behaviors needed to prevent spread of COVID-19—stay 6 feet apart, wear face coverings, and practice good hygiene—are often impractical for young children. Many summer day camps have had week-long sessions in past years, with different groups of children and youth each week. Children and youth in these programs can interact with a large number of different children and staff in a few weeks. The sheer number of interactions between overlapping groups of children and staff in summer day camps creates a risk of citywide spread of COVID-19 infection. This guidance sets out recommendations to minimize those risks, and to protect children, youth and staff from COVID-19.

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When can child care programs and summer day camps open?

Child care programs have always been able to remain open for children of essential workers. San Francisco Health Order C19-07e now allows child care programs and summer day camps to enroll all children starting on these dates.

Child care programs may expand enrollment to all children on June 1, 2020.

Summer day camps for children and youth may open for all children on June 15, 2020.

The health order and related directives will be posted online at <https://www.sfdph.org/dph/alerts/coronavirus-healthorders.asp>

Prioritize enrollment of the following groups:

- Children of people who work in businesses and organizations that are allowed to remain open or re-open under San Francisco Health Orders
- At-risk children and youth, including:
 - Children and youth who are clients of Family and Children's Services (FCS) or are at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation
 - Children eligible through the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children
 - Children and youth experiencing homelessness
 - Children of domestic violence survivors
 - Children and youth with disabilities or special health care needs whose individualized education programs (IEP) and/or individual family support plans (IFSP) include ELC services
 - Children and youth from low-income families, including those who receive or are eligible for free or reduced school lunch, Medi-Cal, SNAP (food stamps), WIC, Head Start, CalWorks and other public assistance programs.

Child care programs and summer day camps that choose to open must meet the requirements below, as well as specific requirements listed in the health order and related directives. Programs should also review CDC decision tree tools to assess their readiness to open [child care](#) programs and [youth programs and camps](#).

Requirements for child care programs and summer day camps

This guidance covers general principles and strategies to decrease the risk of COVID-19. See the San Francisco Health Order and related directives for additional specific requirements.

Keep children and youth in the same small group. Do not allow groups to interact with each other.

This will decrease the chance of COVID-19 being introduced into a child's immediate circle at the program.

Limit group size. Maintain required staffing ratios to ensure safety.

- State-licensed childcare facilities for children ages 0-5 years should:
 - Limit group size to 10 children per room or space, per California Department of Social Service's Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD)



- Follow state-required adult-child ratios for staffing, on page 3 of CDSS'S *"Social and Physical Distancing Guidance and Healthy Practices for Child Care Facilities in Response to COVID-19"* at https://cdss.ca.gov/Portals/9/CCLD/PINs/2020/CCP/PIN_20-06-CCP.pdf
- Summer day camps should:
 - Limit group size to 12 children or youth per room or space, per San Francisco Health Order.
 - Have a minimum of 2 staff persons per group.
 - Minors ages 14-17 years of age who are employed as program staff, including interns, are not included in the maximum number of children per group.
- A group can have no more than 10-12 children or youth, even if not all children or youth attend the program at the same time. For example,
 - A child care program may not have a group of 5 children who attend full-time, 3 children on Mon/Wed/Fri, and 3 children on Tue/Thu (total of 11).
 - A summer day camp may not have a group of 8 children who attend for the entire day, 4 who attend mornings only, and 4 who attend afternoons only (total of 16).
- Staff who have symptoms of COVID-19, who are exposed to COVID-19, or who have a positive COVID-19 test result may not be able to return to work for anywhere from a day to over 14 days, depending on the situation. Plan ahead for staff absences. Recruit people experienced caring for children and youth, to ensure that you have a roster of substitute caregivers who can fill in. For more information, see SFDPH return-to-work guidelines at <https://www.sfdcp.org/rtw>.

Keep children, youth and staff in the same group. Limit interactions between groups.

- Keep children and youth with the same group each day.
 - Assign children and youth from the same family to the same group, if possible.
 - Children and youth attending a summer day camp should stay with their same group for the entire session.
 - Child care programs and summer day camps are allowed to move children or youth from one group or another when a change is needed for a child or youth's overall safety and wellness.
- Keep staff with the same group each day. Do not move staff from one group to another, if possible.
- If a program has more than one group of children or youth,
 - Groups shall not interact with each other.
 - Each group must be in a separate room or space.
- For large indoor spaces like gymnasiums or auditoriums, more than one group may use the space if
 - The space has at least 144 square feet (12' x 12') per child or youth, or about 1750 square feet for a group of 12.
 - The designated areas for each group are clearly marked, and separated by a 10-12 feet "no-go" buffer zone that neither group uses.



- The space can be adequately ventilated, for example, by opening windows or doors.
- Partitions are placed to keep air from flowing directly from one group to another. For example, a gym divider curtain could be used.
- Both groups are from the same camp or child care program.

When choosing activities that will take place in the shared space, consider the potential to create respiratory droplets or aerosols, and try to do higher-risk activities outdoors. For example, group singing or a vigorous game of basketball that involve shouting across the court is higher risk than a quiet, sedentary activity.

Summer day camps: 3-week minimum session length, attendance requirements, and self-certification.

- Summer day camps may choose how many sessions they offer, but each session must last at least three weeks. Session that are 3 weeks long should begin and end on the following dates:
 - June 15-July 2, 2020
 - July 6-July 24, 2020
 - July 26-August 14, 2020

Camps with longer sessions should try to coordinate their schedule with one of the start or end dates above, to prevent gaps or overlaps in summer care for children and youth attending different programs.

- Children and youth may only enroll in one camp at a time. If the child or youth leaves a camp early, they may not attend another camp until 3 weeks after the first camp started.
- Children and youth must attend the first week of the session. Those who do not attend the first week may not join the session later.
- Children and youth may choose not to attend for the entire duration of the program, but if they leave, their spot should not be filled by another child.
- The above restrictions were put in place to lower the chance of children and youth becoming infected with COVID-19 in one program, then going to another camp or returning to school before they develop symptoms, and spreading COVID-19 to another group.

Wear face masks and cloth face coverings (adults, older children and youth)

- All adults and youth 13 years and older should wear face masks or cloth face coverings at all times. This includes family members and caregivers waiting outside to drop-off or pick-up children.
- Encourage children 3 to 12 years old to wear face coverings with adult supervision.
- Do not use face masks or cloth face coverings for children ages 2 and younger, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is asleep, unconscious, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

San Francisco Department of Public Health

Face Coverings for Children in Public and in Programs for Youth

By order of the San Francisco Health Officer: 

Ages (in years)

0-2	should not wear a face covering due to risk of suffocation
3-12	face coverings recommended but not required. If worn, adults must supervise use of face coverings.
13+	must wear a face covering

<https://www.sfcddcp.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/COVID19-Flyer-Children-Face-Covering-FINAL-05.03.2020.pdf>



- Children should not wear face masks or cloth face coverings at naptime.

Screen children, youth and staff for symptoms of COVID-19 when they arrive

- Ask staff, parents/caregivers, and youth about possible symptoms of COVID-19 when they arrive.
- CDC also recommends that child care programs either take children's temperatures with a thermometer upon arrival, or ask families to do so before arriving at the childcare.
 - Per CDSS, only child care programs that use a "non-touch" (infrared) thermometer should take children's temperature upon arrival. If programs use a thermometer that touches the child (under the tongue or arm, forehead, etc.), staff should only check temperatures if they suspect a fever. SFDPH also recommends "non-touch" thermometers for screening.
- Staff with symptoms or a fever should leave work immediately, inform their supervisor, and call their primary care provider.
- Children with symptoms or a fever should be sent home.
- Encourage staff and families of children excluded from the child care or camp to seek COVID-19 testing, ideally from their primary care provider (PCP) or medical home. Other testing options are listed at: <https://sf.gov/find-out-how-get-tested-coronavirus>

For detailed instructions on screening, see SFDPH's *Asking COVID-19 Screening Questions and Measuring Temperatures when Screening for COVID-19* at sfcdp.org/covid19, under "Businesses and Employers."

Asking about symptoms

- Stand at least 6 feet away from the person being screened.
- Ask the staff, youth or child's parent/guardian to confirm that the child or youth does not have fever, shortness of breath or cough.
- Look at the child or youth. Look for signs of illness like flushed cheeks, rapid breathing or difficulty breathing, fatigue, or extreme fussiness.
- CDC does not recommend using personal protective equipment (PPE) if staff stay 6 feet away from the child and family during screening.

Checking the child's temperature

If a child has symptoms of COVID-19 and will be sent home, their temperature does not need to be checked.

- If the program instructs families to check the child's temperature before arrival, ask the family what the child's or youth's temperature. If they did not take it, child care programs may allow them to use the child care program's thermometer.
- If staff are checking the temperatures with a no-touch thermometer, follow the steps below.
 - Wash hands or use hand sanitizer, then put on clean disposable gloves
 - Stand behind a physical barrier, such as a glass or plastic window or partition that can serve to protect the staff member's face and mucous membranes from respiratory droplets that may be produced if the child being screened sneezes, coughs, or talks.



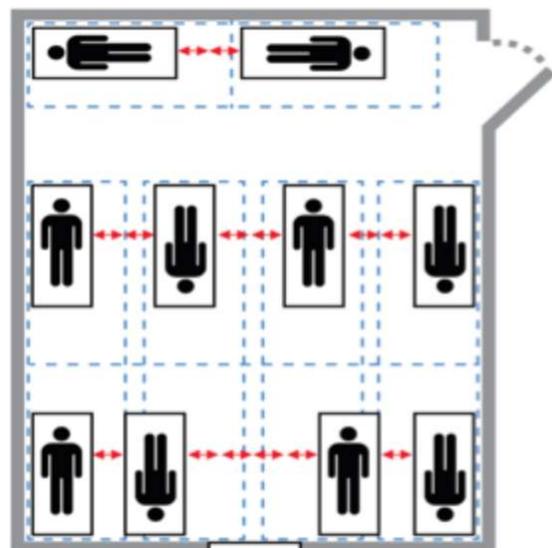
- *Staff who do not have a physical barrier will need personal protective equipment (PPE), including facemask, gloves, and gown, when taking temperatures. Staff must be trained on how to safely put on and remove PPE. Programs that wish to pursue this method should refer to CDC's "Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open", at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html#ScreenChildren>*
 - Check the child's temperature, reaching around the partition or through the window. Make sure your face stays behind the barrier at all times during the screening.
 - If you did not touch the child, you do not need to change gloves before the next check.
 - After removing gloves, wash your hands again.
- Children, youth and staff who pass the screening should wash their hands with soap and water or clean their hands with hand sanitizer before they enter the building or program.

Further measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19

Social distancing strategies

Limit the mixing of children and youth:

- Stagger playground time and other activities so no two groups are in the same place at the same time.
- Keep groups separate for special activities such as art, music, and exercising.
- Consider staggering meal/snack times. Considering having staff eat at separate times, so that they do not remove their face coverings at that same time as children, youth or other staff.
- Encourage individual activities like painting, crafts, and building with blocks, and other materials.
- Space children as far apart as possible, ideally at least 6 feet apart, for individual activities and especially during meals and snacks, when face coverings are removed.
- At naptime, place children's naptime mats or cribs as far apart as possible, ideally at least 6 feet apart. Try to have children lie on their mats so that they are head-to-toe. (see diagram)
- Involve children in developing social distancing plans, using chalk and materials like pool noodles and yarn to create personal space areas.
- Do as many activities outside as possible.
 - Consider eating snacks and meals outside, since this is a time when older children must remove their masks.
 - Create field games or outdoor activities that provide wider spacing opportunities.





- Sports with shared equipment or physical contact, like soccer, basketball, baseball, softball, and tennis may be played, but only within the same stable group of up to 10-12 children and youth. Clean equipment at least once a day.
- Cancel or postpone special events that involve parents and families, such as festivals, holiday events, and special performances.
- Do not hold gatherings like campfires, sing-alongs, and other activities that bring large groups of children together, even if held outdoors.

Limit staff contact with families at drop-off and pick-up

- Require that family members and caregivers wear face masks or cloth face coverings when dropping off or picking up children, and at all times inside the childcare facility.
- Staff should remain 6 feet apart from parents and caregivers.
- Stagger arrival and drop-off times to limit contact between families, if possible.
- Have staff greet children outside as they arrive.
If the child care program or camp requires children or youth to sign-in, place sign in stations outside, and provide sanitary wipes to clean pens between uses.
- Consider curbside drop-off and pick-up, where staff come outside the facility to pick up the children as they arrive, and bring children outside to be picked up.
- Ideally, the same family member or designated person should drop off and pick up the child every day. Discourage grandparents and other older relatives from picking up children, if they are over 60 years old, since they are more at risk for [serious illness](#).

Allow telework and alternate duties for staff at higher risk of severe COVID_19 infection.

- Arrange for administrative staff to telework from their homes, when possible.
- Staff > 60 years old and those at higher risk of severe COVID-19 infection due to serious medical conditions should be given modified duties that minimize direct and close interaction with children, if possible. See “People at Higher Risk for Severe Disease” for a list of medical conditions associated with severe COVID-19 infection. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html>

Promote handwashing and good hygiene

- Encourage children, youth, and staff to wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or with hand sanitizer, especially before eating, after going to the bathroom or diapering, or after wiping their nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- Set up hand hygiene stations near the entrance for children, youth and staff to use immediately after they arrive. Keep hand sanitizer out of the reach of young children, and supervise use.
- Educate children, youth and staff about basic measures to prevent the spread of infection, including covering one’s coughs and sneezes and washing hands frequently.
- Involve children and youth in making signs to remind people to wash their hands, cover coughs and sneezes, and stay 6 feet apart.



Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, toys, and other objects.

[Caring for Our Children \(CFOC\)](#) sets national policy for cleaning, sanitizing and disinfection of educational facilities for children.

Intensify cleaning and disinfection efforts:

- Establish a schedule for cleaning and disinfecting.
- [Routinely clean, sanitize, and disinfect](#) surfaces and objects that are frequently touched, especially toys and games. This may include doorknobs, light switches, classroom sink handles, countertops, nap pads, toilet training potties, desks, chairs, cubbies, and playground structures.
- If surfaces are visibly dirty, clean them using detergent or soap and water before disinfecting them.
- Use cleaning products according to the directions on the label. Most household disinfectants are effective. To see if a disinfectant is on the EPA's list of products that are effective against coronavirus, go to <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for concentration, application method, and contact time for all cleaning and disinfection products.
- Provide EPA-registered disposable wipes to staff members, if possible, to wipe down commonly used surfaces such as keyboards, desks, and remote controls before use. If wipes are not available, refer to CDC's guidance on [disinfection for community settings](#) at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>.
- Keep all cleaning materials secure and out of reach of children.
- Ensure that there is adequate ventilation when using these products to keep children and staff from inhaling toxic fumes.
- Refer to CDC's, "Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility" at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html> and SFDPH cleaning and disinfection guidelines at <https://www.sfdcp.org/covid19> under "Cleaning Recommendations."

Clean and Sanitize Toys

- Do not use toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized.
- Set aside toys that children have put in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretions or excretions. Clean them by hand while wearing gloves. Clean first with water and detergent, rinse, then sanitize with an EPA-registered disinfectant, and air-dry.
- Set aside toys that need to be cleaned. Place in a dish pan with soapy water or in a separate container marked for "soiled toys." Keep dish pan out of reach from children to prevent risk of drowning.
- Do not share toys between groups of children and youth. Wash and sanitize toys before moving them from one group to another.
- Machine-washable cloth toys should be used by one child at a time, or not be used at all.
- Books and other paper-based materials like mail or envelopes, do not need additional cleaning or disinfection.



Bedding

- Use bedding (sheets, pillows, blankets, sleeping bags) that can be washed.
- Keep each child's bedding separate. Consider storing bedding in individually labeled bins, cubbies, or bags.
- Bedding that touches a child's skin should be cleaned weekly or before use by another child.
- Label cots and mats for each child.

What to do if a child, youth, or staff is exposed to or has COVID-19

Will a child care or summer day camp need to close if the family member or household member of a child or staff member has COVID-19?

The child care or summer program is typically considered low-risk, and closures are not usually recommended. However, the program should not allow the child or staff to return for 14 days after their last close contact with the person in their household. For staff, see SFDPH guidance on returning to work at <https://sfcdcp.org/COVID-19/rtw>.

What should child care or summer day camp do if a child, youth or staff has COVID-19 infection confirmed by a positive COVID-19 test?

1. **Contact the SFDPH Schools and Childcare Hub** for consultation and guidance at **(415)-554-2830 Press 1 for COVID-19, then press 6 for Schools**
Schools-childcaresites@sfdph.org
2. **Close the facility for 2-5 days.** This short-term closure allows time to safely clean and disinfect the building, and for the local health officials to determine appropriate next steps.
3. **Communicate with staff, parents, and students.**
Maintain the confidentiality of the child, youth, or staff member with COVID-19 as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, and possibly HIPAA.
4. **Clean and disinfect thoroughly.**
Refer to the section titled "Cleaning and disinfecting your building or facility if someone is sick" at CDC's Cleaning and Disinfection webpage, at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>
5. **Work with SFDPH to determine when the childcare or camp can re-open.**
Determine when staff can return, and what additional steps are needed for children and youth to return.



Additional Resources

Stay informed. Information is changing rapidly. Useful information can be found at:

- **San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFPDH)**
 - What to do if Someone at the Workplace Tested Positive for COVID-19
<https://www.sfgdcp.org/covid19> under Businesses and Employers.
 - Leaving Isolation or Returning to Work for Those Who Have Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19
<https://www.sfgdcp.org/covid19/rtw>
- **California Department of Public Health (CDPH)**
 - <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/cid/dcdc/pages/immunization/ncov2019.aspx>
- **California Department of Social Services**
 - <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/child-care-licensing>
 - PIN #20-06-CCP: Social and Physical Distancing Guidance and Healthy Practices for Child Care Facilities in Response to the Global Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic, 4/7/2020
https://cdss.ca.gov/Portals/9/CCLD/PINs/2020/CCP/PIN_20-06-CCP.pdf
Spanish version: <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/Portals/9/CCLD/PINs/2020/CCP/PIN-20-06-CCP-SP.pdf>
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**
 - Guidance for Schools and Childcare:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html>
 - Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html>
 - Considerations for Youth and Other Camps
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html>
 - CDC Child Care Decision Tree to assist directors and administrators in making (re)opening decisions during the COVID-19 pandemic
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/Childcare-Decision-Tree.pdf>
 - CDC Youth Programs and Camps Decision Tree to assist directors and administrators in making (re)opening decisions during the COVID-19 pandemic
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/Camps-Decision-Tree.pdf>
 - Cleaning and Disinfection
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>