



CAAM ECE COVID-19 Mitigation Policy

As long as there are cases of COVID-19 in the community, there will be no way to prevent all risks of COVID-19 in schools. **The goal is to keep the risk as low as possible and keep schools as safe as possible.**

This guidance has been developed from recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Michigan Childcare Licensing (LARA), Office of Head Start (OHS), the Caring for Our Children (CFOC) health and safety standards, and other reputable sources. This policy will be implemented in all CAAM ECE centers and home-based programs. All previous licensing rules and guidance shall still apply and we must comply with more rigorous requirements if ordered by federal, state or local health departments. The Health Services Advisory Committee will review and provide consultation at regularly scheduled meetings and as community conditions warrant. This plan is a working document, and will be revised as new information warrants.

I. COVID-19 Hospitalization Levels and Associated Prevention Strategies

CAAM ECE will monitor and follow the CDCs COVID-19 Hospitalization Levels to make decisions on which prevention strategies to use based on whether the hospitalizations are classified as Low, Medium or High. Recommendations outlined for the COVID-19 Hospitalization Levels are the same for ECE programs as for the community. Centers and programs will follow the recommendations based on the COVID-19 Hospitalization Level of the County in which the center or program is located.

When the COVID-19 Hospitalization Level indicates an increase, particularly if the level is high or an outbreak is identified in collaboration with the local health department, additional layered prevention strategies as outlined below will be implemented. This could be done at a classroom or center level.

II. Mitigation Strategies

CAAM ECE staff will follow the cleaning schedule from our ECE Policy and Procedure Manual, which is based on the standards in Caring for Our Children.

1) Ventilation

- a) Increase ventilation in classrooms by opening windows when possible.
- b) Classrooms will use portable air cleaners.
- c) Staff will ensure restroom exhaust fans are on and operating while the classroom is occupied and until the building is closed for the day.
- d) Bus drivers, weather permitting and temperature above 60 degrees, will keep windows open on the bus both in route and when stopped.

2) Hygiene

- a) Hand washing shall occur regularly and as specified in the Hygiene and Sanitation Policy of the ECE Procedure Manual.
- b) Teaching staff will teach students the following on the first day of school and reinforce daily or more often as needed (proper hand washing, how to cough and sneeze into their elbows, or to cover with a tissue and dispose of it in the trash).

3) Masking

- a) Universal masking is not required for staff or participants.
- b) When Hospitalization Level is High, masking while indoors is recommended for all staff, volunteers, and children over the age of two years old.
- c) Anyone who chooses to wear a mask at any Hospitalization Level will be supported. Disposable masks for adults and children will be available for anyone who wants one. Per parent request, staff will assist children in wearing masks appropriately.

4) Vaccination

- a) Vaccination for COVID-19 is not required for staff or children attending the program.
- b) If information on the COVID-19 vaccine for adults and/or children is needed the best place to get information is from the pharmacist, County Health Department or primary care provider.

5) Volunteer Procedures

- a) Volunteers must schedule with the classroom in advance.
- b) **Hospitalization level is low:** Visitors and volunteers to the classroom are not limited
- c) **Hospitalization level is medium:** Visitors and volunteers may be limited to one per classroom per day.
- d) **Hospitalization level is high:** Visitors and volunteers are not permitted in the classrooms

6) Toothbrushing

- a. **Hospitalization level is low/medium:** Toothbrushing will be done as a group at the table, as outlined in the ECE Procedure manual.
- b. **Hospitalization Level is high:** Toothbrushing will not be done during class time. Toothbrushes and toothpaste will be provided to families to support brushing at home.

III. Illness and Exclusion Policy

Exclusion policies (children and staff)

- 1) Children who display signs of illness will follow the policy in the handbook. They must stay home until symptoms have improved AND are fever free without fever-reducing medication for 24 hours, at a minimum. They must be well enough to fully participate in school to return.
- 2) Any staff member experiencing illness should stay home per employee illness policy
- 3) If a child has a **known exposure to COVID-19**, the parent shall monitor the child for signs of illness for 10 days, and follow the illness policy if symptoms appear.
 - a. **At all hospitalization levels**
 - 1. Conduct symptom monitoring for 10 days
 - 2. It is recommended that parents request their child wears a mask while in program for 10 days

3. If no symptoms appear, it is recommended that child is tested five full days after exposure with an at-home (antigen) test
4. If symptoms appear, child may not return to school until
 - a. they have two negative at-home (antigen) tests, 48 hours apart OR one negative PCR test **AND**
 - b. symptoms have improved **AND**
 - c. are fever free for 24 hours without medication
 - d. OR if family does not test, child must be out for 10 days as if tested positive (see #4)
- 4) If a child tests **positive for COVID-19** they will be excluded from class for 10 days (starting day after symptoms start or day after test is taken for those without symptoms)
- 5) Parents **MUST** call the bus driver and teacher to notify the program with the reason of a child's absence (COVID related or not).
- 6) Staff members exposed to COVID-19 or test positive for COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status or hospitalization level, must follow the CAAM agency policy on COVID-19.
- 7). Staff will adhere to confidentiality laws and statutes that protect student and staff health information.** Student communicable disease related information is protected health information. (Even if a family/student acknowledges and publicly discloses a positive test, school staff and officials must not participate in discussions or acknowledge a positive test).

IV. Home Visiting

The following guidance applies to any form of home visit. If a staff member has been exposed to COVID-19, they should inform the family before going in the home, and give the option to reschedule or do a virtual visit.

Parents will be asked to notify their home visitor if they have been exposed to COVID-19 prior to the home visit. The option to reschedule or do a virtual visit will be offered.

1) Hospitalization level is low/medium

- a) Home visitors will follow hygiene and sanitation procedures as normal. All materials should be cleaned and sanitized between visits.

2) Hospitalization level is high

- a) Visits should be conducted virtually or outdoors as feasible. In person home visits can be conducted with supervisor approval, and should not be done with a family who has a member considered high-risk.
- b) Masks should be worn by staff and recommended for all persons over age two years participating in the home visit.

V. Socializations and Parent Activities

1) Hospitalization level is low/medium

- a) Cleaning and disinfecting procedures from ECE Procedure Manual should be followed.
- b) When socializations are held in a public location, staff will encourage hand washing or provide hand sanitizer for families as needed

2) Hospitalization level is high

- a) Cleaning and disinfecting procedures from ECE Procedure Manual should be followed.
- b) Program may consider temporarily suspending Socializations depending on the activity risk level in order to control program-related outbreaks.
- c) If socializations are held and held in a public location, staff will encourage hand washing or provide hand sanitizer for families as needed
- d) If Socializations should be held outside when possible, or indoors where social distancing can be maintained
- e) Individually wrapped snacks will be provided
- f) Masking is highly recommended

VI. Communication Plan

The Health Services Manager will monitor the COVID-19 Hospitalization Level for each County on a weekly basis. If the Hospitalization Level increases or decreases from the previous week, the Health Services Manager will notify the ECE Director. The ECE Director will then implement the communication chain with updates.

The CAAM ECE COVID-19 Mitigation Policy will be posted on the agency website for access to staff, parents and public. A printed summary will be provided to each family at enrollment to refer to changes by Hospitalization Level.

COVID-19 Communication Chain

1. The current Hospitalization Level will be communicated to staff and families at the start of the school year or at the time of enrollment. All mitigation strategies applicable to that level will apply.
2. When the ECE Director is notified the Community Level has changed, they will notify staff and families of the change. People will be referred to the Policy and/or summary sheet for actions needed.
 - a. Staff members will be notified via work email.
 - b. Family members will be notified by message sent on the Learning Genie platform.