



# Health and Safety Requirements for New Mexico Child Care Facilities and Early Childhood Professionals



On March 11, 2020, Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham declared a public health emergency in order to maximize the resources available to fight the spread of COVID-19 and minimize public health risks for New Mexicans. The fight against COVID-19 is ongoing, fluid, and requires our collective diligence and attention. **The following is a list of required health and safety practices, effective January 12, 2022, for all New Mexico Child Care Centers, licensed and registered homes, and early childhood professionals.**



## Required Practices

- **Parents/guardians may resume entry exclusively for the purposes of pick-up or drop-off under the following conditions:**
  - Limit entry to one parent or guardian;
  - Time spent in facility should not extend beyond that which is necessary for picking-up or dropping-off child(ren);
  - Masks are required to be worn indoors by all parents/guardians;
  - All other parental interactions with staff must remain virtual or outdoors (e.g. – parent-teacher conferences, daily reports, payment processing, etc.); and
  - Ensure physical distancing is maintained
- All other access to the facility must be limited to essential visitors, which includes breast feeding mothers, parents/guardians seeking services, therapists, early interventionists and special education staff, FOCUS verifiers and FOCUS consultants, ECECD regulatory staff, and practicum students.
- Providers must conduct daily temperature checks and screenings for symptoms prior to entry for non-vaccinated staff and all other essential visitors entering the building.
- **Masks are no longer required** outdoors for staff, children, parents, and essential visitors but are recommended in public places such as parks, etc.
- **Indoor mask requirements remain in effect** for everyone age 2 and over.
- Licensed providers may operate at group sizes and ratios according to their licensed Star level
- Providers must conduct daily wellness checks on every child at the facility.
- **Masks are required indoors for all staff**, plus gloves and gowns as needed for wellness screenings of children or health screenings of staff and essential visitors.
- Masks are required for children age 2 years and older when indoors (except when drinking, eating, or napping)
- Training on COVID safe practices is required for all staff, including cooks and transportation staff.
- Good hygiene practices are required, including frequent handwashing/sanitizing
- Frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned often throughout the day and disinfected at the end of each day.
- Providers should not serve family-style meals; have employees (not children) handle utensils. Wear gloves when serving children. Plate each child's meal.
- Providers must serve meals in the classroom. If spaces such as cafeterias need to be used—as with licensed out of school time programs—stagger use and clean and sanitize between use.
- **Transportation safety requirements:**
  - Mandatory mask wearing for passengers two years of age and older.
  - Use the vehicle's vents and windows to bring in fresh air and avoid using the recirculated air option.
  - If possible, maintain one empty space between passengers.
  - Require handwashing/hand sanitizer before and after exiting the vehicle
  - Clean and sanitize regularly touched surfaces between groups/runs.
- **Requirements regarding testing for non-vaccinated staff and practicum students. conditions:**



- **Non-vaccinated** staff and practicum students, including those vaccinated but without a booster, must test for COVID-19 every week. Providers must maintain copies of test results for at least twelve (12) months for review by licensing.
- **Mandatory Weekly Child Care Covid Report**
  - All New Mexico licensed and regulated child care providers are required to complete a weekly Child Care Covid Report by 8 p.m. every Monday, beginning on Monday, December 20, 2021. The weekly Child Care Covid Report will help ensure accurate and up-to-date data in the fight against COVID-19 by gathering data on staffing levels, enrollment data, staff well-being, testing, and current vaccination rates. Failure to comply may result in penalties. Link to online form for weekly reporting can be found at [nmececd.org/mandatory-COVID-report](https://nmececd.org/mandatory-COVID-report).
  - Providers must exclude children or staff from the program who have two or more symptoms consistent with COVID-19 and/or test positive, including those who are fully vaccinated. Anyone who is symptomatic should isolate themselves and seek testing for COVID-19.

## 5-Day Quarantine and Isolation Guidance

### For anyone who tests positive for COVID regardless of vaccination status:

- Stay home and isolate for 5 days. Day 0 is the day of symptom onset, or the day the positive test was taken (for asymptomatic persons).
  - You DO NOT need to get an additional PCR test if you have had a positive at-home rapid test. Any positive test is considered positive.
  - If you have no symptoms after 5 DAYS, you can leave your house but must wear a mask for 5 more days (surgical grade or KN95 preferred).
- If you have a fever, or other persistent symptoms, continue to stay home in isolation until your fever is gone for 24 hours and other symptoms are resolving.
  - To prevent the spread of COVID, tell anyone you have recently had close contact with and encourage them to get tested, monitor for symptoms, and reduce exposure to other people.

### For anyone who has been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 (Quarantine):

*These guidelines differ depending on your vaccination status*

- **If you are up to date on all COVID-19 vaccines that you are eligible for:**
  - Wear a mask around others for 10 days. Day 0 is the day of exposure; day 1 is the day after the exposure.
  - Test on Day 5 if possible.
  - If you develop symptoms at any time, get tested if possible and stay at home until you get your results.
  - If you can't get a test, but still have symptoms, assume you are positive and follow guidelines for a COVID-positive test.
- **If you are unvaccinated, not fully vaccinated or without a booster (not up to date on all vaccinations you are eligible for):**
  - Stay at home and quarantine for 5 days.
  - Then wear a mask around others for **5 MORE DAYS**.
  - Test on Day 5, if possible.
  - If you develop symptoms at any time, get tested if possible and stay at home until you get your results.
  - If you can't get a test, but still have symptoms, assume you are positive and stay home and follow guidelines for a COVID-positive test.



- If a close contact is continuously exposed ( i.e., lives in the same household), the close contact must quarantine for the 5 days the positive person is infectious AND an additional 5 days in case the close contact converts to positive. This means that household members living with a COVID positive individual must quarantine for a minimum of 10 days.
- **For anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19 regardless of your vaccination status:**
  - Get either an at-home rapid test or PCR test if possible and stay at home until you know your test result.
  - If you test positive, follow the guidelines for a positive test result.
  - If you test negative but still have symptoms, continue to stay at home and get a PCR test OR a second at-home rapid test in 1-2 days.
  - If you test positive on the PCR or second at-home rapid test, follow guidelines for a COVID-positive test.
  - If you can't get a test, but still have symptoms, assume you are positive and follow guidelines for a COVID-positive test.



## Resources

- More detailed guidance concerning best practices related to COVID-19 is available from the New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH): [bit.ly/nmdoh-march2021](https://bit.ly/nmdoh-march2021) and from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): <https://binged.it/3fvSta5>
- Providers must report all positive cases to the **ECECD Rapid Response Portal** [eeced.vaccinenm.org](https://eeced.vaccinenm.org), or via phone (**1-833-866-3272**), and the Department of Health (**1-855-600-3453**), and all positive staff cases to the New Mexico
- For more information on what it means to be up to date on the COVID vaccine, please visit [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/stay-up-to-date](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/stay-up-to-date).
- If you have any questions on home tests and quarantine or isolation, please visit [cv.nmhealth.org/selftest](https://cv.nmhealth.org/selftest) or call the Coronavirus Hotline: **1-855-600-3453**.
- For more information on DOH guidance, please visit [cv.nmhealth.org/covid-vaccine/](https://cv.nmhealth.org/covid-vaccine/).
- Environmental Department Occupational Health and Safety Bureau: (505) 476-8700 or online at [nmgov.force.com/rapidresponse](https://nmgov.force.com/rapidresponse).



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