

The below template is provided as a resource for early childhood education programs to use to notify families regarding policy changes to assess for sick children at the time of drop off. This is meant only as a resource as ECE programs should consider how best to communicate with their school families and teaching staff.

Dear

I am sending you information regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 is a virus which can infect the respiratory tract and spreads similarly to cold viruses. Information to date suggests that COVID-19 causes mild-to-moderate illness and symptoms like the flu, including fever, cough and difficulty breathing.

The health and safety of our children and staff are top priority. In an attempt to mitigate the spread of this virus in our child care community, we would like to communicate some important changes with you.

The Indiana State Department of Health is working closely with our county health department and the Family and Social Services Administration to monitor the situation closely and is preparing guidance documents for health care professionals and child care providers to be able to effectively respond to any cases that may be identified in the state.

As instructed by the Family and Social Services Administration and recommended by the Centers for Disease Control, the following policy will be effective immediately:

- Child care providers can protect themselves by wearing an over-large, button-down long-sleeved shirt and by wearing long hair up off the collar in a ponytail or other updo.
- Child care providers should wash their hands, neck and anywhere touched by a child's secretions such as nasal drainage or spit up.
- Child care providers should change children's clothes if secretions are on the child's clothes. They should change the button-down shirt, if there are secretions on it, and wash their hands again.
- Contaminated clothes should be placed in a plastic bag or washed in a washing machine.
- Infants, toddlers, and their providers should have multiple changes of clothes on hand in the child care center or home-based child care.

Because of this updated guidance, we are asking families to please provide a minimum of three changes of clothes for each day your child is in attendance. If your child comes home with a bag of dirty clothes, please plan on sending new sets of clean clothes the following day your child attends.

Everyone can do their part to help us respond to this emerging public health threat. Parents should take everyday preventive measures to help protect their family from the spread of COVID-19:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Encourage respiratory etiquette (e.g., covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue or sleeve).
- Encourage frequent, proper handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or with hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

- Keep your child at home if they are sick with any illness. If their symptoms worsen, contact your healthcare provider.
- Perform routine environmental cleaning. Routinely clean and disinfect all frequently-touched surfaces (e.g., doorknobs, countertops, work stations) with cleaning and disinfectant products. Follow all instructions on the product label.

As always, we appreciate our community's support and cooperation. You can assist us by remaining vigilant but sensible in your approach to dealing with this health concern. As you know, we are the greatest influence on our children's reactions to these types of events. As a result, let's remain calm, respectful, empathetic and inclusive while advocating for ourselves and others.

Please contact _____ if you have any questions or concerns regarding this new policy.

Sincerely,