



UNL Children's Center COVID-19 Parent and Staff Response Manual



CHILDREN'S CENTER

Updated - May 2021

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Introduction

COVID-19 has completely changed the world around us and how childcare can be provided as the world works to manage the impacts. Guidance for safely operating the UNL Children’s Center is provided by a number of local, university, state and national sources:

- The [Department of Health and Human Services](#) is in the process of monitoring COVID-19 for the state of Nebraska and provides guidance on testing with local and federal partners, and providing guidance and resources to prevent, detect and respond to the occurrence of COVID-19 cases in Nebraska.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has provided guidance for [Child Care Programs that Remain Open](#). In concert with state and local health officials, guidance by the CDC allows centers to operationalize planning to safely care for our children.
- Nebraska Early Childhood Professionals (NECP) is a collective group of Childcare Centers in the city of Lincoln and surrounding communities that collaborates to share best practices to ensure high quality care for all families.

Active planning and preparation utilizing these resources have led to the development of the operational plans and processes with two overarching goals: (1) safely caring for children to minimize risks associated with COVID-19 to our children, families and staff and (2) carefully adhering and following CDC, state, and local policies, guidelines and principles. In order for these priorities to be successful all individuals associated with the UNL Children’s Center must work together, maintain an open dialogue, and be flexible. This will help to ensure all members of our community are safe. Additionally, this document is intended to be fluid and will require adjustments and changes to policies/procedures, likely with limited notice, as the response to COVID-19 continues to evolve.

We realize this document is detailed, lengthy, and requires some focused consideration to read. Please do take the time to read carefully, ensure you understand it in its entirety, and reach out with any questions/concerns that may come up, now or as we move forward. We also realize that these new practices and habits will take some time to get used to. We are so grateful for your dedication to the health and safety of your family, the Children’s Center community, and the greater community of Lincoln.

Policies and Procedures

Health and Safety Requirements

The following processes and procedures have been put in place to minimize the risk for all children, staff, and members of the UNL Children’s Center Community while at the UNL Children’s Center. The UNL Children’s Center will follow illness and exclusion procedures as defined in the [parent manual](#) in addition to the following procedures related to COVID-19.

Families must agree that they will not bring children to the UNL Children’s Center if (1) the child is displaying any symptoms of COVID-19, (2) anyone in the child’s immediate family/household is displaying symptoms, or (3) the child has had known exposure to COVID-19 within the last 14 days. Prior to sending a child to the UNL



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Children’s Center parent/guardian(s) must review and agree to the health and safety requirements below and sign the UNL Children’s Center COVID-19 Pandemic Policy for New or Returning Families.

Requirements for Sick Children – Sick children, including non COVID-19 illnesses, are not permitted to attend the UNL Children’s Center. Children with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 but have not had a laboratory COVID-19 are not permitted to attend the UNL Children’s Center.

Symptoms include:

<p>One of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fever over 100.4 F <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Fever reducers will not be given to children within 24 hours on any day of attendance, regardless of reason for fever reducer. - Onset of shortness of breath or difficulty breathing - New onset of a dry cough - New onset of loss of taste or smell 	<p>And/or 2 or more of the following prolonged for >24 hours and unexplained:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chills lasting longer than two hours - Congestion and/or runny nose - Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea - Sore throat - Headache - Muscle pain
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Children that have the symptom(s) identified above are not permitted to attend the UNL Children’s Center. Children that become ill while at the UNL Children’s Center are required to be picked up within 60 minutes of notification.

- Children exhibiting the symptom(s) consistent with COVID-19 and have NOT been seen by a health care provider or NOT been COVID-19 tested must be excluded for at least 10 days from symptom onset AND fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication AND improvement in symptoms.
- Children exhibiting the symptom(s) consistent with COVID-19 and have been seen by a health care provider or have completed a COVID-19 test:
 - o COVID-19 Test Results – Individuals must stay home from the time the test is done until results received
 - Positive Test – Individual must isolate, meaning stay home at least 10 days AND fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication AND improvement of symptoms
 - Negative Test – Individual must stay home until fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication AND improvement of symptoms
 - o Alternative Diagnosis (no COVID-19 Test)



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- Alternative Diagnosis with a Positive Test Result (example: Flu, Strep, etc.) rules out COVID-19 – Individual must follow child care illness exclusion policy found in the [parent manual](#).
- Alternative Diagnosis without a test – Individual must follow child care illness exclusion policy found in the [parent manual](#). When the LLCHD risk dial is Orange or Red, the individual must be excluded for 10 days from symptom onset AND fever free without fever reducing medication AND improvement of symptoms.

Children with a confirmed case of COVID-19 or living in a household with a confirmed case of COVID-19 may not return to the UNL Children’s Center until the [CDC conditions to return from COVID-19 isolation](#) are met. Additional information on these requirements and the UNL Children’s Center incident response are found in a subsequent section of this document.

Daily Health Screening and Temperature Checks - Children – All parents will be required to self-monitor and report current health of their child and the health of individuals within their household should any individual have symptoms of COVID-19. All children will have their temperature taken as they enter the classroom or UNL Children’s Center and again before nap time.

Daily Health Screening and Temperature Checks – Staff – All staff will be required and report current health of their child and the health of individuals within their household should any individual have symptoms of COVID-19. All staff will have their temperatures taken upon arrival at the front desk and again at nap time in their classroom. Part-time staff will have their temperatures taken at the beginning and end of their shift at the front desk.

Requirements for Sick Staff – Staff, including non-COVID-19 illnesses, are not permitted to work at the UNL Children’s Center. Staff with [symptoms](#) consistent with COVID-19 are not permitted to attend the UNL Children’s Center.

Symptoms include:

<p>One of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fever over 100.4 F <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Fever reducers will not be given to children within 24 hours on any day of attendance, regardless of reason for fever reducer. - Onset of shortness of breath or difficulty breathing - New onset of a dry cough - New onset of loss of taste or smell 	<p>And/or 2 or more of the following prolonged for >24 hours and unexplained:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chills lasting longer than two hours - Congestion and/or runny nose - Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea - Sore throat - Headache - Muscle pain
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Staff that have the symptom(s) identified above are not permitted to come to work at the UNL Children's Center.

- Staff exhibiting the symptom(s) consistent with COVID-19 and have NOT been seen by a health care provider or NOT been COVID-19 tested must be excluded for at least 10 days from symptom onset AND fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication AND improvement in symptoms.
- Staff exhibiting the symptom(s) consistent with COVID-19 and have been seen by a health care provider or have completed a COVID-19 test:
 - COVID-19 Test Results – Individual must stay home from the time the test is done until results received
 - Positive Test – Individual must isolate, meaning stay home at least 10 days AND fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication AND improvement of symptoms
 - Negative Test – Individual must stay home until fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication AND improvement of symptoms
 - Alternative Diagnosis (no COVID-19 Test)
 - Alternative Diagnosis with a Positive Test Result (example: Flu, Strep, etc.) rules out COVID-19 – Individual must follow child care illness exclusion policy found in the [parent manual](#).
 - Alternative Diagnosis without a test – Individual must follow child care illness exclusion policy found in the [parent manual](#). When the LLCHD risk dial is Orange or Red, the individual must be excluded for 10 days from symptom onset AND fever free without fever reducing medication AND improvement of symptoms.

Staff with a confirmed case of COVID-19, living in a household with a confirmed case of COVID-19, or are identified by the LLLCHD as a close contact may not return to the UNL Children's Center until the [CDC conditions to return from COVID-19 isolation](#) are met or until the quarantine period for a close contact is met. Additional information on these requirements and the UNL Children's Center incident response are found in a subsequent section of this document.

If a staff member is believed to have been in contact with an individual confirmed with COVID (but was not identified as a close contact) and the staff member has chosen to get a COVID test they may not return to work until they have received a negative result. If test results are negative and the staff member is not exhibiting symptoms, they are able to immediately return to work. If results are positive we will follow protocol set in place for a confirmed case. Staff members that are required to receive COVID test due to other circumstances (member of UNL athletic team, required LPS testing, etc.) may continue to work while awaiting test results as long as they are asymptomatic and do not believe they have been exposed to an individual with a positive case of COVID.



COVID-19 Vaccination

[Per the CDC](#), Vaccines are an important tool to help stop the COVID-19 pandemic. Early care and education providers hold jobs critical to the continued functioning of society and are at potential occupational risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2. As frontline essential workers, child care providers have been prioritized nationally to receive vaccination. Even after child care providers and staff are vaccinated, there will be a need to continue prevention measures for the foreseeable future including wearing masks, physical distancing, and other important prevention strategies outlined in this guidance document.

Capacity and Types of Care

Due to social distancing requirements and directed public health measures by the City of Lincoln, Lancaster County, or the State of Nebraska the UNL Children’s Center capacity and ability to serve all members of our center may be limited. The UNL Children’s Center will strive to provide comprehensive care to all of our families but adjustments to type of care (full-time, part-time, virtual) will be required. When possible, the UNL Children’s Center will attempt to provide full-time (5 days a week) care to all families. However, based on demand, capacity requirements, and staffing levels adjustments to care options/capacities may be required. The UNL Children’s Center will attempt to provide a minimum of two weeks’ notice if center-wide care type adjustments become necessary.

Hours of Operation

Due to staffing restrictions, directed public health measures, or other causes hours of operation may need to be adjusted. The UNL Children’s Center will attempt to provide a minimum of two weeks’ notice if reduction of hours are necessary.

Quarantine, Closures, and Suspensions of Operations

Quarantine Requirements – Children and Staff that are required to quarantine due to being identified as a close contact, as a result of attending the Center or outside the center, by the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department will not be permitted to attend the UNL Children’s Center.

Close contact is currently defined by the LLCHD as an individual that had contact for more than 15-minutes closer than 6 feet with the confirmed positive individual where either one or both individuals were not wearing a mask. This includes when the positive individual is either symptomatic or asymptomatic and has had a positive test within the past 48 hours. These 15 minutes are cumulative within 24 hours, meaning people may have had repeated close contact with the positive individual, unmasked, throughout the day.

Quarantine Length of Time – Children – The UNL Children’s Center will follow the traditional quarantine [recommendation from the CDC of 14 days](#) for all children that have been identified as a close contact. This is due to the fact that many of our children are unable or are inconsistent with mask wearing and the CDC requirements for shortening quarantine from the traditional 14 days to either 10 or 7 days require those individuals to wear a mask through the traditional 14 days of quarantine.



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Quarantine Length of Time – Staff – The UNL Children’s Center will follow [university guidance](#) regarding the length of time for quarantine for all Children’s Center staff. The self-quarantine length of time is traditionally for a period of 14 days. However, the following quarantine options are acceptable alternatives for staff:

1. Quarantine may discontinue when at least 10 days have passed since close contact exposure AND no COVID-19 symptoms have developed.
- OR
2. Quarantine may discontinue after 7 days if the individual gets a COVID-19 test no earlier than five days since the last contact exposure AND has received a negative test result.

Individuals should self-monitor for symptoms and continue wearing a face covering through the full 14 days regardless of when the quarantine period ends. Read more on [quarantine](#) from the CDC.

If a COVID-19 test comes back positive, you’ll need to [follow isolation guidance](#).

Additional information on university and CDC quarantine length, suggested location of quarantine, and how to quarantine [can be found here](#).

Center-wide Closures/Suspension of Operations - If the entire UNL Children’s Center needs to close or suspend in-person care, it is our intent to provide virtual learning opportunities through zoom meetings, YouTube channels, videos, at-home activities, etc. Remote instruction may be available while the center is open and operational on a limited capacity. Families will continue paying normal tuition during a center-wide closure for a minimum of two weeks. If the closure is greater than two weeks in length the amount of tuition payments will be reviewed and may be adjusted.

Drop-Off and Pick-up Procedures

Modifications of drop-off and pick-up procedures are required for appropriate social distancing and to minimize the risk of the spread of exposure. The following procedures have been put in place and must be followed when dropping off or picking up children. Every effort will be made to make the drop-off and pick-up process as efficient as possible but it is very likely that this process will take additional time. Please plan accordingly. We appreciate your patience in an attempt to keep our community as safe as possible.

- All individuals dropping off or picking up are required to wear a face covering that covers their mouth and nose while they are in the UNL Children’s Center. You will not be allowed in the Children’s Center if you are not wearing a face covering, or if it is not covering your mouth and nose.
- You will find hand sanitizer at multiple locations throughout the building. Please use hand sanitizer upon entry and before exiting through the playground doors during drop-off and pick-up.
- Please do not allow playing in the hallways or common shared areas during pick-up and drop-off.
- Siblings are prohibited from entering classrooms other than their own.
- Please bring a minimal amount of items (e.g., a single change of clothes, small box of diapers, etc.) for your child. Please bring only a week supply at the beginning of the week for items that are needed.



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- Storing of car seats will be permitted for children under the age of 12 months within designated areas. Storage of strollers will not be permitted.
- Please leave nap time items (e.g., blankets, pacifiers) at school and your child’s teacher will wash them.
- We realize there are certain circumstances that may need exceptions. Please reach out with your concerns and accommodations will be made if necessary.

Facial Coverings Requirements

The Children’s Center will closely follow the [updated \(May 21, 2021\) university guidance](#) regarding facial coverings on campus. Individuals who are fully vaccinated from COVID-19 will not be required to wear a face mask, indoors or outdoors. Fully vaccinated individuals may wear a face mask. Individuals who are not fully vaccinated will be required to wear a face mask while at the UNL Children’s Center. Children over the age of 2 are strongly encourage to wear a facial covering.

Physical Distancing within the Center

Modification of Classroom Activities – We will encourage social and physical distancing as much as possible within the classroom. We will require additional handwashing when necessary. Materials that are harder to disinfect will be removed from the classroom or limited to different usage. Water play and sensory play such as rice, beans, sand or playdough activities can occur as long as children wash hands before and after and the sensory tables are emptied and washed daily.

Common Area Usage (Playground, Gross Motor, etc.) - Playground, outdoor spaces, and gross motor areas will have a schedule to ensure group size regulations are followed. Playground usage will be limited to one classroom group at a time per playground section. Children and staff will be asked to use hand sanitizer when entering and exiting these areas. Children and staff will wash hands when entering the classroom.

Napping – Increased spacing between children at nap time to spread children out as much as possible. Children will nap a minimum of 6 feet apart when possible and will be placed head to toe. Cots will be labeled for each child’s exclusive use throughout the week. Cots must be sanitized daily and disinfected weekly. Nap items will be limited to one blanket per child. Blankets will be washed once a week and stored in personal bags or cubby bins.

Staff Breakrooms and Use of Common Staff Areas - Staff members can continue to take breaks in the breakroom and resource rooms, outside, in their cars etc. Staff utilizing the space must clean and disinfect areas following use. Cleaning and disinfecting of these spaces will be done frequently by administrative staff as well.

Food Service

Service Style for Children – During meal time, children will be spaced apart appropriately and will maintain 6 feet of distancing when possible. Staff will always wear gloves when preparing and serving



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food. Teachers and children must wash their hands before and immediately after eating. Meals will be served family-style. Food will be served by one staff member who will place food on plates so multiple children and staff are not handling utensils.

Snacks - For the foreseeable future, the Children's Center will not be providing snack at the front desk. However, your child will have the option to have a second snack in their classroom.

Travel Restrictions/Quarantine

UNL Children's Center staff, parents/guardians, and children returning home from international travel must follow [current guidance from the Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services](#) prior to returning their child for care at the UNL Children's Center.

Facility Operational Plans

Engineering Facility Controls

Engineering Controls are controls that place a barrier between a person and the virus. Engineering controls can help remove and/or reduce the droplet/aerosol spread of viral particles. They are not dependent on a person's knowledge, practice, or compliance; therefore, they reduce the opportunity for error.

Working with UNL Facilities, HVAC controls in all buildings will be set to balance occupant comfort and adequate introduction of fresh air in accordance with ASHRAE standards. Filters were replaced prior to the UNL Children's Center reopening and systems will be closely monitored by UNL Facilities continuing with regular air handling maintenance (e.g., cleaning, inspection, subsequent filter changes, etc.).

Custodial and Sanitation

To aid in cleaning and sanitation standards, the UNL Children's Center will be removing items that are hard to clean and increasing cleaning frequency of shared items. The following additions/modifications to current cleaning schedules and processes will be made.

- Staff will routinely clean, sanitize and disinfect surfaces and objects that are frequently touched, especially toys and games at least every four hours. This will include cleaning objects/surfaces not ordinarily cleaned daily such as doorknobs, light switches, classroom sink handles, countertops, cots, etc.
- All cleaning materials will be kept secure and out of reach of children. Cleaning products will not be near children, and staff will ensure that there is adequate ventilation when using these products to prevent children from inhaling fumes.
- Toys that children place in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretions or excretions will be set aside until they are cleaned and disinfected by a staff member.



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- [According to the CDC](#), children’s books, like other paper-based materials such as mail or envelopes, are not considered high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfection procedures.

Incident Response Plans

Responding to Illness and Confirmed Case of COVID-19

Isolation Areas – If a child becomes symptomatic throughout the day, we will have an isolation space to ensure no contact with others. The child will be closely cared for by a staff member and parents will be contacted immediately. Parents are expected to pick up their child no later than one hour after notification.

Cleaning and Disinfecting of Spaces – The UNL Children’s Center will follow guidance from UNL Environmental Health and Safety regarding cleaning and disinfecting areas with known or suspected of having been continuously used or occupied by a person infected with COVID-19 for greater than 30 minutes and restrooms used by persons known or suspected of being infected with COVID-19.

If a child or staff member becomes ill and is sent home during the course of the day with COVID symptoms as defined above, that classroom space will be cleaned and disinfected immediately with the areas and objects that child and staff interacted with. When disinfecting is not feasible or possible in the moment, the classroom will be evacuated for the remainder of the day. The classroom will remain closed and will be disinfected. The classroom group will meet at an alternate location during the closure of their classroom space and return to upon cleaning and disinfecting. If an alternative space is not available, care will not be provided for that classroom until an alternative space is available or the original room is cleaned and disinfected.

Confirmed Case of COVID-19 Case – In the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19 by a member of the UNL Children’s Center that has continuously used or occupied spaces in the UNL Children’s Center, guidance by the [CDC for K-12 and Schools and Child Care Programs](#) will be closely followed.

- *Notification Process* – The Lincoln Lancaster County Health Department will be contacted immediately. Notification and contact tracing will follow the approved UNL Campus COVID-19 Campus Notification process. Communication to all staff, students, and parents will occur in a timely manner based on the approved UNL campus process.
- *Clean and Disinfect* - The UNL Children’s Center will be cleaned and disinfected during the time UNL Children Center is closed following [CDC guidelines](#). Following the closure and cleaning and disinfecting, the UNL Children’s Center will reopen for individuals that are not directly impacted by COVID-19 or were identified as a close contact, requiring quarantine per the Lancaster County Health Department.



Confirmed COVID-19 Case – Return to the UNL Children’s Center - Individuals that have confirmed COVID-19 will work with the Lincoln Lancaster County Health Department and will follow the [CDC recommendations](#) for discontinuing isolation prior to returning to the UNL Children’s Center.



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Appendix and Forms



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COVID-19 Pandemic Policy for New Families

The UNL Children’s Center has established new policies and procedures to minimize the risk and in order to reopen as safely as possible. However, the risk to have contact with individuals, who have been exposed to (but not limited to) COVID-19 does exist and it is impossible to eliminate the risks to individuals at the UNL Children’s Center. In order to reduce the risk to the highest extent possible, these policies are effective beginning June 15.

In addition to these official policies and procedures, an overall commitment to safety and wellbeing of our UNL Children’s Center community is strongly encouraged and greatly appreciated. All families are asked to carefully adhere to all state directed public health measures and campus directives, and to practice caution with potential personal exposure to COVID-19. As a close-knit group of families, efforts by all members of our community will help prevent any potential spread of the virus within the UNL Children’s Center.

Please read each item below, sign, and return to the UNL Children’s Center on your child’s first day.

I/We, _____, parent(s) of _____ wish to begin attending on _____. In order to reduce the risk of COVID-19 exposure for all families and staff at the UNL Children’s Center, my family and I agree to the following:

- If I bring my child, it is because everyone in our home is healthy and symptom free.
- I will self-screen my child’s and family’s health and confirmed exposure honestly and to the best of my ability to help keep my child, the staff, and the community safe.
- I will not bring my child if they have been identified as a close contact to an individual confirmed to have COVID-19.
- Fever reducers will not be given to my child on any day of attendance, regardless of reason for fever reducer.
- If my child shows signs of illness during care, I, or another authorized person, will retrieve my child immediately, and no longer than 60 minutes of receiving a call.
- If I am unvaccinated for COVID-19, I will wear a cloth face covering at all times while in the UNL Children’s Center, including during drop-off and pick-up.
- I understand this situation is fluid and subject to change per state, other local authority, and program needs.
- I have read, understand, and agree to all process and procedures in the UNL Children’s Center COVID-19 Response Manual.
- I understand failure to follow these new safety guidelines may result in termination of care.

Parent Signature

Parent Signature



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Daily Cleaning and Disinfecting Checklist

Nursery	https://unl.app.box.com/file/676665556794
PreK	https://unl.app.box.com/file/676171340328
Orange PreToddler	https://unl.app.box.com/file/55200856594
Orange Toddler	https://unl.app.box.com/file/388551285752
	https://unl.app.box.com/file/388580162303
Orange Preschool	https://unl.app.box.com/file/676212862467
Green PreToddler	https://unl.app.box.com/file/52187512785
Green Toddler	https://unl.app.box.com/file/676247548723
Green Preschool	https://unl.app.box.com/file/51981279017
Yellow Pretoddler	https://unl.app.box.com/file/51948518781
Yellow Toddler	https://unl.app.box.com/file/676247548723
Yellow Preschool	https://unl.app.box.com/file/676171340328
	https://unl.app.box.com/file/674971330782
Kitchen	https://unl.app.box.com/file/676258412144



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