



Hillcrest Elementary Out of School Care & Ready Set Grow Preschool

COVID-19 PANDEMIC POLICY

Introduction

Child care facilities in BC are an essential service, and are licensed and regulated through the Ministry of Health, child care licensing. As a result, HEOC may be directed by a child care licensing officer to close operations during a pandemic or other communicable disease outbreak. HEOC will follow all directives provided from the Ministry of Health. The legal authority to close a child care program for public health reasons falls under the purview of the local VIHA Medical Health Officer and the Provincial Health Officer. Their decision overrules any decision to stay open that an individual daycare or parent/guardian may wish to make.

HEOC child care ratios are required during operation, regardless of a pandemic or communicable disease outbreak. If employees are unable to come into work (or are in a quarantine) and ratio is not able to be met, HEOC may require reduced operational hours or rotating days off between children. This decision would be made as required, and would be communicated with parents in writing, via email.

This document outlines HEOC's updated Covid-19 Pandemic response and guidelines. All policies are guided by VIHA, the Provincial Health Officer, School District 61, and WorkSafe BC. Information regarding Covid-19 may be found here: [About Covid-19](#)

Health and wellness policy

HEOC's health and wellness policy continues to apply during a pandemic or communicable disease outbreak, however, additional restrictions may apply, based on government / licensing officer directives. This may include, but is not limited to, extending our required at-home "symptom free" time period following any symptoms, or requiring children with symptoms - *even if they are feeling well and have plenty of energy* - to remain at home.

Before arrival, families are asked to conduct a health assessment for their child. Self-screening is an effective tool in reducing the transmission of Covid-19 in the child care setting. Symptoms to monitor for are:

Symptom(s)	What to do
Fever Chills Cough Loss of sense of smell Difficulty breathing	If your child has <u>1 or more</u> of these symptoms: please keep them home until they are well enough to return to program. Many children may not be eligible for a covid test, please see When to Get Tested for COVID-19
Sore Throat Headache Loss of Appetite Body Aches Extreme Fatigue Diarrhea	If your child has 1 of these symptoms, keep them home until they feel better. If your child has 2 or more of these symptoms, keep them home for at least 24 hours to see if symptoms lessen. If they do, they

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Nausea or Vomiting	may return to program. If they do not, please call 8-1-1 for further instructions.
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All employees are required to self-assess daily. If any symptoms are present, employees must stay home until their symptoms have subsided and they feel well enough to return. If no covid test is advised, staff may return to work when symptoms improve. If a covid test is required, employees may not return to work without a negative test result. Many staff and children will not meet the requirements for COVID-19 testing. Please see [When to Get Tested for COVID-19](#) for more information. The [B.C. Self-Assessment Tool](#) also provides further guidance.

Parents and staff should visit the [BCCDC](#) website for guidance on self-isolation time lines as these lengths are continuously changing with improved knowledge.

Any temporary changes to our health and wellness policy during a pandemic / outbreak will be communicated in writing, via email, and will link to the authorized source of information that our temporary change is based on.

Immunization/Vaccinations

“19 (1) A licensee must not employ a person in a community care facility unless the licensee or, in the case of a person who is not the manager, the manager has first met with the person and obtained all of the following:

f) evidence that the person has complied with the Province's immunization and tuberculosis control programs.”

All employees of HEOSC are required to be up to date with B.C.'s immunization program, including COVID-19 vaccinations as per [Child Care Licensing Regulation](#).

Child/Staff Develop Symptoms while at HEOSC

Child Care Licensing regulations,

“54. If a child becomes ill while under the care of the licensee, a licensee must

- a) provide in the community care facility a quiet and clean resting area for the child, and*
- b) ensure that the child is under the close supervision of a responsible adult.*

Notification of illness or injury

55. 1) A licensee must immediately notify a parent or emergency contact if, while under the care or supervision of the licensee, the child

- a) becomes ill or injured*

Children or staff who become sick while in the child care setting will go home as soon as possible. Parents will be notified if their child becomes ill during program hours and will be required to pick up their child immediately. If a parent cannot be reached, the emergency contact should be called. The following guidelines will be followed while waiting to go home:

- Symptomatic children or staff will be immediately separated from others in a supervised area until they can go home. In addition, where possible, anyone who is providing care to the child or staff should maintain 2 meters distance. If a separate space is not feasible due to licensing ration, the child or staff will remain in the room with others, but maintain a 2 meter distance as well as wear a mask.
- If a 2-metre distance cannot be maintained from the ill child or staff, advice from the local public health unit will be necessary to prevent/limit virus transmission to those providing care.
- While contacting the public health unit, at minimum the child and childcare worker should wear gloves and surgical / procedure mask (if tolerated).
- Hygiene and respiratory etiquette should be practiced while the child or staff is waiting to be picked up.

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- Environmental cleaning of the space the child or staff occupied should be conducted once the child (or staff) has been picked up.
- Children or staff with symptoms must contact 8-1-1 for further instructions. If a covid test is advised, a negative test result is required to return to HEOSC. If a test is not advised, and symptoms improve, children or staff may return when they feel well enough. If new symptoms develop after speaking with 8-1-1, staff or parents are required to contact 8-1-1 to see if a test is now required.
- Children or staff who have been exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19 or symptomatic person(s), will be contacted by public health and will be required to isolate for 10-14 days.

Entering & Exiting Building

As HEOSC is located inside Hillcrest Elementary, our Covid guidelines provided by VIHA align with school guidelines. Parents, caregivers, volunteers, adults, and children entering the school is limited to those who attend the school or work within the school building.

Parents/guardians dropping off and picking up children will remain outside. Children in both Before and After School Care have been permitted by Hillcrest admin to use the entrance closest to our rooms, located by the staff parking lot. Please note that this is not the main entrance, it is to the right if you are facing the school. For both Before and After School Care operational hours, as well as Preschool hours, please come to our door and ring the white doorbell to the left of the door to pick up your child. A staff will come greet you and help you track down your child.

Cleaning & Disinfection + PPE + Environmental Measures

In the event of a pandemic or communicable disease outbreak, HEOSC, while in operation, will follow additional cleaning measures as recommended by government and licensing officer directives. This includes:

- Using a Ministry of Health-approved sanitizing solution within the program twice a day, to sanitize the facility (including faucets, doorknobs, coat hooks, etc.), toys, and all equipment. Information about approved sanitizing solutions can be found here: [Sanitizer Information: Child Care](#)
- Snack provided by our program will be served directly to children and will not be shared. Staff will serve snack following proper hygiene protocols (hand washing for 30 seconds, using gloves, or serving utensils to handle food, etc).
- Masks will be worn by all employees and children during program. Children will not be forced to wear their masks, however, they will be encouraged in a positive and inclusive manner to wear a mask if they come to program with one. If children request a mask from staff, we will provide them with one.
- Increasing handwashing and using social stories and/or direct teacher instruction with children will be promoted for healthy handwashing habits. Children will be asked to wash their hands upon entering program, before and after snack, before and after going outside. When hand washing is not available, hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol will be used.
- Windows will remain open, or as much as possible, when weather and temperature permits to ensure air circulation.

Travel within BC

Families and staff who travel within the province are asked to stay home if they feel unwell. They may return to program when they feel better. Please check travel advisories for the health unit you are travelling to and from. Please see [BC CDC Travel](#) for more up to date information.

International travel

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Families and staff who travel internationally are required to follow federal travel guidelines. Please see [Travel and COVID-19](#) for up to date travel information as guidelines can change often.

Fees during pandemic / communicable disease closures

In the event of a long term closure due to a covid-19, fees will be eliminated. This will be evaluated on a case by case basis by the HEOSC Board of Directors. HEOSC will continue contact with families as this situation unfolds.

Fee reductions such as the CCFRI or ACCB are provided through MCFD, and may or may not be provided during a covid-19 closure. Parents may directly contact the MCFD office at 1 888 338-6622, to discuss MCFD's policy regarding CCFRI or ACCB payments; this decision is outside of HEOSC authority.

Individual exclusions

In the event that the Ministry of Health provides a regional or provincial quarantine recommendation for individuals - be it due to international travel, linked to potential exposures, or linked to individual symptoms, HEOSC will require all families and children to comply with this recommendation. In the event this occurs, the Ministry of Health will provide our child care program with written information; this recommendation will be shared directly with families. These exclusions will apply equally to all children, families, and employees.

Authorized sources of information

A pandemic or localized communicable disease outbreak is subject to governance by official sources: our child care licensing officers, the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Children and Families, and the federal government. While we appreciate that social media and news sources provide an extensive amount of information, we will respond to official, authorized sources of information only.

A non-biased, inclusive approach

Fear-based responses in times of pandemic or communicable disease, have historically led to actions stemming from bias and self-protective measures. Not only can these measures lead to conflict between parents, child care educators, and community members, but they can also lead to actions rooted in racism. HEOSC has an inclusive-based approach and works to be a safe space for all families and children; we will not tolerate acts of racism or bigotry towards any parent, child, employee, or community member. Any such acts may be subject to an immediate dismissal from our program.

COVID19

Information about COVID-19, including advice and guidance to schools, is regularly updated on the BC Centre for Disease Control site. Information on Covid2019 and current recommendations from the health authority are found here: [Public Health Guidance for Child Care Settings](#)

The provincial pandemic plan can be found here: [British Columbia Pandemic Provincial Coordination Plan](#)