



COVID GUIDELINES 2022-2023

(updated 12/8/22)

OVERVIEW

Important Notice

It is important to understand that when your child is present at PIC, they will most likely be in contact with staff members and other children (and by extension, their families) who are at risk of exposure to COVID-19 in the community. No amount of restrictions, guidelines or policies will eliminate all risk of exposure to COVID-19, as the virus can be transmitted by persons who are not symptomatic and/or prior to showing signs of infection.

Family Responsibility

Each family plays a *critical* role in reducing the risk of COVID-19 exposure and spread at PIC by following the practices and procedures outlined in this handbook. ***The importance of open and honest communication between parents/guardians and PIC staff and teachers cannot be overstated.*** We expect that all families will read and follow the directives in these guidelines in order to help ensure the health and safety of our children, staff and community.

PIC Oversight

As a licensed child care center in Philadelphia, we need to follow the COVID guidance for early childhood that is released by the Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH.) We are at liberty to put into place more stringent policies at any time.

We also stay informed of guidance from the CDC, the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL,) and the School District of Philadelphia. While often COVID guidance from various organizations aligns, in some situations the guidance can be different and/or quite challenging to interpret.

Vaccines

As of this update, there are currently two FDA-approved COVID-19 vaccines in the US (Pfizer-BioNTech mRNA vaccine and Moderna mRNA vaccine), and a third that is approved under emergency use authorization (Johnson & Johnson vaccine). There are vaccines available for anyone 6 months old or older, including pregnant and lactating individuals. You cannot catch COVID-19 infection from the vaccine, and these vaccines do not affect your DNA. The vaccines do not cause your COVID test to be falsely positive.

It is **highly recommended** that all family members and children receive a full COVID vaccination series and boosters when eligible. The vaccine is required for employment at PIC for all those who do not qualify for an exemption.

100% of our PIC staff members are fully vaccinated and vaccination is required of all new employees.

If your child receives the COVID vaccine, please send a copy of your child's vaccine card to Deb at dgreen@parentinfantcenter.org AFTER the vaccine series has been completed. We need to continue to track the number of vaccinated children

DEFINITIONS

Close contact: Closer than 6 feet apart AND for more than 15 minutes over a 24-hour period.

Exposure: Close contact with a COVID-positive person anytime between 48 hours before through 5 days after the onset of their symptoms (or the date of the positive test, if they don't have any symptoms).

Household: A household consists of people who live in a shared space for an extended period of time.

Quarantine: Separates and restricts people to stay in their household if they may have been exposed to COVID-19.

Fully vaccinated:

- Over 18 years old:
 - After 2 doses of Pfizer or Moderna mRNA vaccines, or
 - After 1 dose of Johnson and Johnson vaccine
- Children 12-17 years old: After 2 doses of Pfizer or Moderna mRNA vaccines
- Children 5-11 years old: After 2 doses of Pfizer or Moderna mRNA vaccines
- Children 6 months - 4 years old: After 3 doses of Pfizer vaccine or 2 doses of Moderna vaccine

Vaccinated and boosted:

- Over 50 years old and/or immunosuppressed: Two booster doses of Pfizer/Moderna mRNA vaccines
- 18 - 49 years old: One booster dose of Pfizer/Moderna mRNA vaccines
- Children 12-17 years old: One booster dose of Pfizer vaccine if primary vaccine series was completed with Pfizer vaccine (and none if primary vaccine series was completed with Moderna)
- Children 5-11 years old: One booster dose of Pfizer vaccine if primary vaccine series was completed with Pfizer vaccine (and none if primary vaccine series was completed with Moderna)
- Children 6 months - 4 years old: No boosters recommended as of yet

MITIGATION CRITERIA

We are able to put reduced quarantine in place because we meet the following criteria for COVID-19 mitigation as outlined by the Philadelphia Department of Public Health. These mitigation strategies include the following:

- Encouraging the PIC community to get vaccinated against COVID-19.
- Enhancing ventilation (opening windows wherever possible and spending as much time as possible outdoors.)
- Practicing hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.
- Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities.
- Informing families of COVID exposures.
- Requiring face masks for all staff and students over 2 years of age after a COVID exposure (home or at PIC) and always making masks widely available for students and staff.

SICK OR SYMPTOMATIC STAFF MEMBERS, FAMILIES, AND CHILDREN

Confidentiality of all health information, including symptoms and COVID-19 testing/diagnosis, will be maintained for all PIC children, staff and family members.

Children, staff members or family members should not be on site if they are showing signs of COVID-19 like symptoms, as defined by PDPH:

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ● Fever (over 100.4 F) or chills | ● Fatigue | ● Sore throat |
| ● Cough | ● Muscle or body aches | ● Congestion or runny nose |
| ● Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing | ● Headache | ● Nausea or vomiting |
| | ● New loss of taste or smell | ● Diarrhea |

Children or staff members who have COVID-like symptoms must:

1. Stay home OR
2. Get a COVID-19 PCR test or a rapid antigen test (home antigen test is acceptable) AND
3. Fill out the [COVID EVENT SUBMISSION FORM](#) on our website

When submitting results of a negative rapid antigen home test result, please take a photo of the test strip on a piece of paper with the child or staff member's name and the test date clearly written on the paper.

If a child over the age of 2 or staff member has COVID-like symptoms without a test the child or staff member must quarantine for 5 full days after symptoms and can return on their 6th day after the symptoms started AND wear a mask from days 6 through 10 from the date the symptoms started. Children under the age of 2 who have had COVID-like symptoms and do not submit a negative test, must stay home for 10 full days

Note, for children with an isolated runny nose, PIC will not send the children home mid-day but we do require COVID testing prior to their return the following day.

NEGATIVE RESULT: Children and staff members with COVID-like symptoms may return with a NEGATIVE test result if they are fever-free without use of any fever-reducing medications (e.g., acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) **for 24 hours; AND other symptoms (e.g., cough, runny nose) are improving.**

POSITIVE RESULT: Email Executive Director Deb Green (dgreen@parentinfantcenter.org) and Assistant Director Jessica Carter (jcarter@parentinfantcenter.org) immediately if the child or staff member tests POSITIVE.

If a staff member discovers that a child has "COVID-19 like symptoms" during the school day, the family member (or emergency contact number) will be called and asked to pick up the child as soon as possible (with the exception of an isolated runny nose).

EXPOSURE TO COVID

The medical evidence is strong that mask wearing can substantially reduce the risk of exposure to the COVID-19 virus.

As of mid-October 2022, we moved to following the PDPH guidance in making mask wearing optional in child care centers and schools. Mask wearing is **REQUIRED** at PIC in the following circumstances:

- A child over 2 or a staff member who tests positive for COVID and is able to mask **MUST** wear a mask for 5 days after their return to PIC following their 5 full days of quarantine.

- A child over 2 or staff member who has been exposed to someone who tests positive for COVID and is able to mask **MUST** wear a mask at PIC for 10 days following the last day of the exposure.
- When the COVID-19 Community Level is high according to the [CDC COVID-19 Community Level Indicators](#). In this instance, we will notify families and staff that indoor masking will be required at PIC until the Community Level returns to medium. **At a Community Level of medium, masking is strongly recommended, but is optional.**
- In specific instances where universal masking may be required, regardless of the COVID-19 Community Level, including:
 - classroom- or center-wide outbreak
 - upon return from extended breaks and holidays when increased social gatherings may heighten the risk of exposure to COVID-19. **All children over the age of 2 and staff members MUST wear a mask through Friday, January 13 after the return from the Winter Break.**

Wearing a N95 or KN95 mask is highly recommended when masking is in place at PIC.

Masking when using public transportation or when in any crowded settings continues to be highly recommended.

For many children, mask wearing is now second nature. But for those moving into the 2-year-old rooms or who are new to PIC, we ask that families practice on-going mask wearing at home so that children can successfully mask when needed at PIC.

Mask to Stay (if exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID at home or at PIC)

Children and Staff over 2 years old (who are able to mask)

- No quarantine is needed **unless** symptoms develop.
 - We highly encourage children and staff to get tested even if there are not any symptoms present. Either a PCR or rapid antigen test is acceptable. We encourage testing within 24 hours of the exposure and again 5 days after the last contact with the person who tested positive with COVID.
 - We require indoor and outdoor masking at PIC for 10 full days after the exposure.
 - We strongly recommend masking in public indoor locations outside of PIC.

Test to Stay if exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID at home or at PIC)

(for those unable to reliably mask all day at PIC)

There are children and staff members who are unable to mask for reasons that include

- They are under the age of 2.
- They are in a 2-year-old classroom and are still learning to mask (but not yet reliably doing so.)
- They have medical conditions that make masking impossible.
- They have different abilities or neuro differences that make it impossible to tolerate masking.

For children and staff members in any of the above categories, there is the option of COVID testing at home in regular intervals (every other day) for 10 full days after the exposure. With this test-to-stay option, children and staff members in these categories may continue to come to school as long as they have no COVID-like symptoms.

All test results must be submitted to this link [COVID EVENT SUBMISSION FORM](#). Please submit the test strip showing the negative test on a piece of paper with the child or staff members' name and date clearly written on the paper. **Exposed children who cannot mask may not continue to come to PIC without submitting the negative test results every other day for 10 days from the date of the exposure.**

Children and staff members who are able to mask cannot test out of the 10-day masking period.

All close contacts of someone who has tested positive for COVID must be monitored (if a child) or monitor themselves (if a staff member) for fever and cough, shortness of breath and other COVID symptoms for 10 days after their last exposure to someone with COVID.

All symptomatic staff members and children who test negative for COVID and are able to wear a mask **MUST** mask until resolution of symptoms.

PIC reserves the right to put more stringent COVID policies in place in the event there is community spread in any classroom after there has been an exposure to someone who has tested positive for COVID. This may include requiring DAILY testing in order to follow the test-to-stay protocol, requiring quarantine for all exposed children, or closing a classroom.

COVID INFECTION (testing positive for COVID)

If a child or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, they must begin isolation immediately.

Children over 2 (who are able to reliably mask) and staff members

Children or staff members who have tested positive for COVID may return to PIC **5 full days (return on day 6) from the start of symptoms or the positive test date (whichever comes first)** as long as the following circumstances are met:

- No fever without use of any fever-reducing medications (e.g., acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) **for 24 hours AND**
- other **symptoms (e.g., cough, runny nose) are improving.**
- A mask is worn at all times (excluding eating and napping) between days 6 and 10 (including outside when around others.)

If a child over 2 or a staff member tests positive for COVID and has quarantined for 5 full days, **no negative test is needed before returning to PIC.**

Children under 2 and those who cannot reliably mask must quarantine at home for 10 full days (return on day 11). No negative testing is needed in order to return on day 11.

POSSIBLE CENTER CLOSURE OF PIC DUE TO COVID

PIC is required to work with the Philadelphia Department of Health to determine if/when closure of the Center is appropriate or required.

PAYMENT DURING QUARANTINE

Families are responsible for continued payment of tuition if their classroom is closed due to a COVID exposure.

We continue to all be in this together!