

COVID-19 Risk Assessment Tool

Introduction

CELA has created this new tool to act as a risk assessment in the context of COVID-19.

The tool will help you to navigate through a number of COVID-19 related scenarios, outlining hazards, risks, likelihood and potential control strategies.

Potential Emergency Situation: The service is directed to close by NSW Health.

Hazards	Risks	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Control Strategies
The service can no longer provide education and care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Correct communication does not occur in the event the service is closed. ▶ Correct communication does not occur when the service reopens. ▶ Cleaning and disinfection procedures are not implemented. 	Unlikely	Severe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The service implements a process to rapidly communicate with staff (including casual workers), visitors, families, the regulatory authority and the local public health unit. This will be implemented with regards to the service confidentiality policy and procedures. ▶ A 101 Notification of Incident will be submitted through the NQA ITS within 24 hours. ▶ When the service is re-opened, a notification will be submitted through the NQA ITS. ▶ The service will follow existing protocols for cleaning and disinfection for outbreaks of gastrointestinal illness/gastroenteritis outbreaks. This will include the following steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Put on gloves » Make up a fresh container of correctly diluted detergent and warm water (spray bottles are not recommended). » Immerse a cloth, wring it out, and clean the area vigorously to loosen germs. » Rinse away germs with clean water » Dry the surface to make it harder for germs to survive or grow » After this process, disinfect the clean and dry area, following the manufacturer's instructions.



Potential Emergency Situation: A child or staff member at the service is diagnosed with COVID-19

Hazards	Risks	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Control Strategies
Potential to infect others at the service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Others touch surfaces contaminated by the infected person and then touch eyes, nose or mouth. ▶ Visitors, staff or children come into contact with the COVID-19 virus. ▶ There is insufficient communication with health authorities and others at the service. ▶ Infected persons are allowed back to the service without clearance. 	Possible	Severe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ It is recommended that children, staff and parents be vaccinated for influenza (in accordance with the latest Health Department advice). ▶ Staff or children infected will stay away from the service and seek immediate medical attention. ▶ Staff and families are informed that if they have symptoms or are diagnosed with COVID-19, that they inform the service by phone or email. ▶ Staff or children infected will stay away from the service until the public health authority confirms it is safe to return. ▶ Staff will be required to provide evidence they are clear of the virus before returning to work. ▶ The service implements a process to rapidly communicate with staff (including casual workers), visitors, families and the local public health unit (1300066055). This will be implemented with regards to the service confidentiality policy and procedures. ▶ The service will follow existing protocols for cleaning and disinfection for outbreaks of gastrointestinal illness/gastroenteritis outbreaks. This will include the following steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Put on gloves » Make up a fresh container of correctly diluted detergent and warm water (spray bottles are not recommended). » Immerse a cloth, wring it out, and clean the area vigorously to loosen germs. » Rinse away germs with clean water » Dry the surface to make it harder for germs to survive or grow » After this process, disinfect the clean and dry area, following the manufacturer's instructions.



Potential Emergency Situation: A visitor, child or staff member has been in contact or has been informed by the public health authority they have been in contact with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days (including close contact in the 24 hours before the person became unwell).

Hazards	Risks	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Control Strategies
The person/ child is incubating COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The person is infected and enters the service before being declared safe to do so. ▶ Visitors, staff or children come into contact with the COVID-19 virus. ▶ Surfaces are contaminated. 	Possible	Severe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ A visitor, child or staff member who has been in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days (including close contact in the 24 hours before the person became unwell) is not permitted to enter the service until the public health authority confirms it is safe to return. ▶ The service implements a process to rapidly communicate with staff (including casual workers), visitors, families and the local public health unit. This will be implemented with regards to the service confidentiality policy and procedures. ▶ The service will follow existing protocols for cleaning and disinfection for outbreaks of gastrointestinal illness/gastroenteritis outbreaks. This will include the following steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Put on gloves » Make up a fresh container of correctly diluted detergent and warm water (spray bottles are not recommended). » Immerse a cloth, wring it out, and clean the area vigorously to loosen germs. » Rinse away germs with clean water » Dry the surface to make it harder for germs to survive or grow » After this process, disinfect the clean and dry area, following the manufacturer's instructions.

Potential Emergency Situation: A visitor, child or staff member has a fever or symptoms of acute respiratory infection (cough, sore throat, runny nose, shortness of breath) before entering the service.

Hazards	Risks	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Control Strategies
The person/ child is incubating COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The person comes into the service. ▶ Others are infected with COVID-19 ▶ Visitors, staff or children come into contact with the COVID-19 virus. ▶ Surfaces are contaminated. 	Possible	Severe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ A visitor, child or staff member who has a fever or symptoms of acute respiratory infection (cough, sore throat, runny nose, shortness of breath), is not permitted to enter the service. ▶ Families and staff are informed of the procedure to notify if they have any symptoms by email or phone before entering the service. ▶ The service will follow existing protocols for cleaning and disinfection for outbreaks of gastrointestinal illness/gastroenteritis outbreaks. This will include the following steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Put on gloves » Make up a fresh container of correctly diluted detergent and warm water (spray bottles are not recommended). » Immerse a cloth, wring it out, and clean the area vigorously to loosen germs. » Rinse away germs with clean water » Dry the surface to make it harder for germs to survive or grow » After this process, disinfect the clean and dry area, following the manufacturer's instructions.



Potential Emergency Situation: A visitor, child or staff member has a fever or symptoms of acute respiratory infection (cough, sore throat, runny nose, shortness of breath) while at the service.

Hazards	Risks	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Control Strategies
The person/ child is incubating COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Others are infected with COVID-19 ▶ Visitors, staff or children come into contact with the COVID-19 virus. ▶ The person with symptoms is not isolated or sent home. ▶ Symptoms are not reported appropriately. ▶ Surfaces are contaminated. 	Possible	Severe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ If a visitor, child or staff member presents with symptoms while at the service, policies and procedures relating to illness and infectious disease are followed. ▶ All staff will report to the Responsible Person if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » they are experiencing any symptoms » they have been, or have potentially been, exposed to a person who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or is suspected to have COVID-19 (even if the person who is suspected to have COVID-19 has not yet been tested), or » they have undertaken, or are planning to undertake, any travel. ▶ All staff will report to the Responsible Person if they observe another worker displaying any symptoms ▶ The child's family will be contacted to collect them as soon as possible and the child will be cared for in an area that is separated from other children at the service. ▶ A space has been identified to isolate staff or children who may become sick. ▶ Visitors or staff with symptoms will stop work and be sent home immediately. ▶ The service will follow existing protocols for cleaning and disinfection for outbreaks of gastrointestinal illness/gastroenteritis outbreaks. This will include the following steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Put on gloves » Make up a fresh container of correctly diluted detergent and warm water (spray bottles are not recommended). » Immerse a cloth, wring it out, and clean the area vigorously to loosen germs. » Rinse away germs with clean water » Dry the surface to make it harder for germs to survive or grow » After this process, disinfect the clean and dry area, following the manufacturer's instructions.

Potential Emergency Situation: A visitor, child or staff member returns from overseas in the last 14 days.

Hazards	Risks	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Control Strategies
The person/ child is incubating COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Persons who have travelled within the last 14 days are allowed to attend the service before self-isolating. ▶ Visitors, staff or children come into contact with the COVID-19 virus. 	Unlikely	Severe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Anyone returning from overseas in the last 14 days are not permitted to enter the service. ▶ The service will remind them if they develop flu-like symptoms, they should call their doctor to arrange testing, call HealthDirect on 1800 022 222, or go directly to a COVID-19 clinic or emergency department.



Potential Emergency Situation: A visitor, child or staff member is incubating COVID-19 and is not showing any symptoms.

Hazards	Risks	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Control Strategies
<p>The person/ child is incubating COVID-19 and spreads the disease through direct contact with people and surfaces.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Others are infected with COVID-19 ▶ Visitors, staff or children come into contact with the COVID-19 virus. ▶ Surfaces are contaminated. ▶ Hygiene practices are not thorough or consistent. ▶ Staff are not adequately consulted or trained in order to understand and fully implement procedures, changes and decisions. ▶ There is a lack of cleaning and hygiene products to support essential measures being implemented fully and consistently. ▶ There is insufficient environmental cleaning. ▶ Children do not implement increased hygiene practices. ▶ There are insufficient plans to support staffing arrangements to implement practices and procedures. ▶ Physical distancing practices are not in place. 	Possible	Severe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ It is recommended that children, staff and parents be vaccinated for influenza (in accordance with the latest Health Department advice). ▶ Staff are provided with closed bins to hygienically dispose of waste and rubbish immediately after use. ▶ Staff are provided with cleaning agents and trained to clean down and disinfect equipment immediately after use. ▶ Enhanced hygiene practices for staff, children and visitors are implemented. Washing hands frequently is the single most effective way to reduce the spread of germs that cause respiratory disease. Alcohol-based hand gel is a suitable alternative if used and stored safely around children. Staff will also avoid touching their face, handshakes or other close physical contact, dispose of tissues appropriately, wash body and clothes thoroughly every day and cover coughs and sneezes with an elbow or tissue. ▶ Alcohol based hand sanitiser with a minimum alcohol content of 70%, is available at entry and rubbish disposal points. ▶ Recirculated air conditioning is limited or reduced. ▶ Where possible touch points are reduced such as by leaving access doors open where possible. ▶ Children are provided with increased hand washing guidance. ▶ Staffing arrangements consider the need for increased cleaning and hygiene practices. This includes more regular and thorough hand washing, cleaning of high touch surfaces and restocking of necessary resources. ▶ The service ensures there is robust infection control and cleaning and routine environmental cleaning procedures in place. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » frequently touched surfaces and objects such as doors, windows, tables, benchtops, nappy change areas and toys are cleaned and disinfected frequently using appropriate detergent and disinfectant solutions, and » that people cleaning the workplace wear gloves and use alcohol-based hand sanitiser before and after wearing gloves. » personal items such as phones and glasses and workstation equipment such as keyboards are cleaned and disinfected frequently (e.g. using isopropyl alcohol wipes) » amenities including kitchens, lunchrooms, common areas, change rooms, toilets, showers and drink fountains, are cleaned industrially and the frequency of this cleaning increased. ▶ The service implements strategies (where possible) to limit movement of children staff and families between groups at the service. ▶ Handwashing facilities are kept clean, properly stocked and in good working order. ▶ Staff are kept informed of service procedures, actions to take and symptoms to be concerned about. Clear guidance is provided to ensure expectations are understood and followed.



- ▶ Staff are consulted on health and safety matters relating to COVID-19 and provided an opportunity to express views before decisions are made.
- ▶ Staff are reminded of their duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and to not adversely affect the health and safety of others.
- ▶ Where possible, staff will work from home.
- ▶ Staff are aware of appropriate hygiene measures and that they should not attend the service if unwell.
- ▶ Signs and posters are placed around the service to remind staff and others of the measures to take to stop the spread of COVID-19.
- ▶ Deliveries and contractors are:
 - » Cancelled or postponed wherever possible.
 - » Given clear instructions on requirements when on site
 - » Assisted by a minimal number of staff who use hand sanitiser after handling any goods
 - » Encouraged to implement contactless methods wherever possible
 - » Encouraged to use electronic paperwork to minimise physical interaction.
- ▶ Physical distancing measures are implemented, including:
 - » calculating the area of each room, and the number of staff and children in attendance each day, and directing workers to space an appropriate distance apart to continue performing their duties, acknowledging that staff will have to come into contact with children
 - » encouraging workers and visitors to physically distance themselves through increased signage and information
 - » encouraging the use of outdoor space as much as possible
 - » staggering staff breaks and encouraging workers to physically distance themselves in break rooms and when using shared spaces
 - » limiting the number of visitors to the centre (e.g. cancel incursions and non-essential training), and
 - » discouraging use of public transport by staff if possible, or if not feasible, recommending that workers:
 - » travel at off peak times
 - » wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or sanitise hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitiser before and after travelling on public transport, and
- ▶ maintain physical distancing measures during any trip.

Potential Emergency Situation: Planned excursions expose visitors, staff and children to COVID-19.

Hazards	Risks	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Control Strategies
External surfaces and others outside of the service may be infected with the COVID-19 virus.	▶ Visitors, staff or children come into contact with the COVID-19 virus.	Possible	Severe	▶ All planned activities are cancelled outside the service during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Potential Emergency Situation: The service cannot meet educator to child ratio's due to COVID-19 related issues.

Hazards	Risks	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Control Strategies
Supervision is insufficient to maintain children's health and safety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The service breaches the Education and Care Services National Regulation and Law. ▶ Children's health and safety is at risk. ▶ Staffing arrangements are insufficient to implement increased measures in relation to COVID-19. 	Possible	Severe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Plans are in place for increased levels of staff absences and those who may arrive at work sick. ▶ The service will contact the regulatory authority to explain the situation and receive direction.

Potential Emergency Situation: There are supply chain issues with food, and menu requirements cannot be met.

Hazards	Risks	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Control Strategies
The is a lack of food supply to adequately meet the nutritional needs of children attending the service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The service breaches the Education and Care Services National Regulation and Law. ▶ The service cannot meet the nutritional recommendations across their menu. 	Likely	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The health, safety and wellbeing of the children will remain a priority. ▶ The service will consider alternatives such as sandwiches instead of hot meals. ▶ The service will consider other ways to ensure children have a nutritional supply of food, such as families supplying their child's food each day. ▶ The service will contact the regulatory authority if they have no access to essential supplies.

Potential Emergency Situation: Staff training becomes out of date and maintenance of this during the COVID-19 pandemic is challenging.

Hazards	Risks	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Control Strategies
Staff training is not in line with regulations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The service breaches the Education and Care Services National Regulation and Law. ▶ Staff are inadequately trained to respond to emergency situations. ▶ Children's health and safety is at risk. 	Possible	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The health, safety and wellbeing of the children will remain a priority. ▶ Other methods of delivery, such as online training, will be explored. ▶ If it is not possible to complete a specific qualification, because of work placement COVID-19 control measures, training will be commenced, and work placement will be completed as soon as reasonably practicable. This means that the individual will have a record of commencing the course but will only receive a certificate upon completion of the work placement.





SOURCES

- ▶ HEALTH DIRECT:
www.healthdirect.gov.au/coronavirus-covid-19-childcare-school-exclusions-faqs
- ▶ NSW GOVERNMENT EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION:
<https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/coronavirus>
- ▶ HEALTH NSW:
www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/diseases/Pages/covid-19-childcare.aspx
- ▶ NSW GOVERNMENT – SCHOOLS, UNIVERSITIES AND CHILDCARE:
<https://preview.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/schools-universities-and-childcare>
- ▶ NSW GOVERNMENT – KEEP YOUR WORKPLACE HEALTHY:
<https://preview.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/businesses-and-employment/keep-your-workplace-healthy>
- ▶ SAFE WORK AUSTRALIA – COVID-19 INFORMATION FOR WORKPLACE:
www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/covid-19-information-workplaces
- ▶ SAFE WORK AUSTRALIA – EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE: MINIMISING THE RISK OF EXPOSURE TO COVID-19:
www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/covid-19-information-workplaces/preparing-workplaces-covid-19/early-childhood-education-and-care
- ▶ NHMRC 5th Edition Staying Healthy:
<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/attachments/ch55-staying-healthy.pdf>

This risk assessment has been compiled in the context of COVID-19 virus. Community Early Learning Australia (CELA) considers this risk assessment to satisfy what is required under current advice and information available by authorities at the time of development. CELA has taken all care in compiling this information and acknowledge the changing nature of this virus and information related to it. CELA recommends that all members undertake responsibility for assessing the relevance and accuracy of the content for their service's situation.

