



August 30, 2021

Dear Families:

The State of Minnesota and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are tracking COVID-19. A new variant, the Delta variant, is much more transmissible than previous strains of COVID-19. We want to tell you how you can help keep your family and child care providers safe.

Children, child care providers and staff, and our community are depending on you to help keep COVID-19 out of child care settings. Child care programs receiving child care federal stabilization grants through the state, are required to implement policies that are in line with guidance and orders from state, tribal, and local authorities. To the greatest extent possible, they should implement policies in line with guidance from the CDC ([cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/child-care-guidance.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/child-care-guidance.html)).

We've all got to double down on using the strategies in the guidance to stop the spread of COVID-19. Here are a few things you can do to keep your family as healthy as possible:

- **Get everyone age 12 years and older in your family vaccinated against COVID-19. Find a vaccination location near you at [Vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov).**
- **Keep your children at home when they are sick.**
  - *Children who are ill with COVID-19 need to remain at home for 10 days since the symptoms first appeared (or 10 days after a positive test if there are no symptoms) and until they are 24 hours fever-free without medication and their symptoms are improving.*
  - *Even if the illness is not COVID-19, children should stay home until their symptoms have improved and they are fever-free for 24 hours without medication.*
- **Quarantine when needed.** If your unvaccinated child has been exposed to COVID-19, they should stay home and away from others following your child care provider's policy for quarantine and return to care. The **safest option is to stay home and away from others for 14 days**. In certain situations, you may end your quarantine after 10 days, or after seven days with a negative COVID-19 test result.
  - *More information on quarantine is available at [Close Contacts and Tracing: COVID-19](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/close.html) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/close.html>).*
  - *Your child should stay home when others in your household have symptoms consistent with COVID-19 and are waiting for test results, especially if they were recently a close contact.*
  - *Unvaccinated people, including children, should quarantine and test after domestic or international travel as per CDC guidance (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-during-covid19.html>; <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/after-travel-precautions.html>).*

- **Test for COVID-19 when recommended and stay home until test results come back.**
  - *When experiencing symptoms, regardless of vaccination status, get tested right away.*
  - *MDH has outlined who should get tested and when to test at [COVID-19 Testing \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/testsites/index.html#2\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/testsites/index.html#2), including recommendations for testing:*
    - *After an exposure to a person who is contagious with COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status.*
    - *Before and after domestic or international travel for unvaccinated persons, vaccinated person should test 3-5 days after travel.*
    - *After taking part in activities that put your child at higher risk for COVID-19 if they are unvaccinated, such as large gatherings.*
- **Wear a well-fitting mask indoors and outdoors in large crowds.**
- **Keep physical distance between yourself and those who do not live with you.**
- **Build routines of hand hygiene, especially after touching shared objects.**

We understand families may have questions about why COVID-19 mitigation strategies are somewhat different in schools and child care programs. By nature, child care classrooms have more close contact for longer periods of time, so other prevention strategies may be recommended, such as closing an entire classroom during a quarantine period following an exposure.

Thank you for working with us to keep our youngest Minnesotans in our child care settings as healthy and safe as possible! And thank you to child care providers and staff for their heroic work to care and educate our littlest Minnesotans.

For questions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, call 1-833-431-2053.

Sincerely,

*Education and Child Care COVID-19 Response Workgroup*

