

Subject: COVID-19

Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020

Dear Child Care Provider,

As reported by DHSS, the majority of COVID-19 cases in Missouri are concentrated in the St. Louis and Kansas City metro areas. While social distancing practices have managed to slow the spread, new cases of COVID-19 continue to be reported both in the metro areas and throughout Missouri. As we travel, so too does the virus, and as a result we are seeing an upward trend in cases along the I-55, HWY 67, HWY 60 corridors. For now, the state is monitoring the Southeast region, as well as Jefferson and Moniteau counties for increased activity. To ensure there is not a further spike in cases, this is the time to remind everyone of the importance of social distancing, cleaning and sanitization, and frequent handwashing.

The CDC has updated guidance for child care programs that remain open. You can find the guidance at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html#ScreenChildren>

We encourage all providers to practice the following:

- Use PPE as appropriate and recommended by the CDC and DHSS
 - [PPE Usage Guidance](#)

Note: When PPE is not available, consider the use of heavy plastic gloves that can be cleaned and reused, make your own face covering (make several so that they can be changed often and cleaned), consider using clothing such as scrubs for gown applications. Laundering is known to inactivate the virus and the clothing can be reused after being laundered.

- Talk with staff about social distancing—they should remain six feet away from individuals as much as possible while still providing essential care.
 - When you cannot remain six feet apart, make sure you are using a surgical mask or face covering and wash your hands thoroughly before and after providing care.
 - Encourage your staff and their families to practice social distancing at home by not going out or interacting with others unless it is to get essential supplies or medical care.
- Use surgical masks or cloth face coverings when leaving home for work or to get essential supplies and medical care.
- Encourage staff and families to practice good hand hygiene frequently
 - Frequently wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and warm water or use an alcohol-based sanitizer.
 - Avoid touching your face (eyes, nose, and mouth) with unwashed hands.
- Encourage your staff and families to increase efforts to clean high-touch surfaces
 - High touch surfaces include door knobs, faucets, toilet handles, light switches, appliance handles (oven, microwave, and refrigerator) remote controls, phones, tablets, etc.
 - [Environmental Cleaning and Disinfecting Recommendations](#)
- Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and be alert for symptoms in your customers, yourselves, and your families.

We all have a responsibility to each other and to those in our care to do our best to prevent the spread. Thank you so much for all you are doing. Please be safe.