



## **Montessori Children's House COVID-19 Health & Safety Handbook**

This Handbook has been created to ensure we all are taking appropriate action to protect our MCH community, staff, children, and families from the potential outbreak of illness. We are all in this together, staff and family alike. We must all commit to the wellness of each other to the best of our ability. Ultimately, it is our united efforts that will allow MCH to offer a safe place for work and learning for our children and staff.

The policies are based on guidance from both the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Oregon Health Authority (OHA), and the Early Learning Division (ELD). We will strive to take the strictest measures in terms of guidance from these sources for the health and safety of our community. Each policy outlined in this handbook applies to all employees and community members while on MCH property. Policies outlined in this handbook override existing ones from our current parent handbook where they overlap.

In addition to Oregon laws prohibiting discrimination, MCH will not refuse to enrollment to a child based on a belief that the child is more susceptible to contracting COVID-19 due to the child's or parent's/caregiver's occupation, race, ethnicity, geographic location, disability, or pre-existing health condition.

Due to the nature of the pandemic, changes are inevitable and MCH will provide clear communication in a timely manner regarding any changes to policy or protocols. Together we can work to continue the quality program that this community has created, while offering a safe place for work and learning for our children and staff.

This document, it's appendices, and other COVID-19 resources, can be found on our website at: [mch-pdx.org/covid-19](https://mch-pdx.org/covid-19)

Head of School, Nick Stocco, is responsible for the overall implementation of the procedures and protocols outlined in this handbook. Please contact the school ([office@childrenshousepdx.com](mailto:office@childrenshousepdx.com)) if you need the information included in this handbook to be shared in a language other than English.

*[v. 10/19/20]*

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## HEALTH & SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR FAMILIES & STAFF

Prior to arriving at MCH each day we ask families and staff members to undergo the following protocols to maintain a healthy and safe environment. Staff members may self-screen and attest to their own health on a daily basis.

### General Wellness Guidelines

These are our general health and wellness policies we adhere to from the OHA. Staff and children may not attend school if they have one or more of the following symptoms:

- Signs of a new cold or illness: clear runny nose, feeling unwell, lethargic
- Fever over 100 degrees F in the last 72 hours
- Diarrhea or vomiting in the last 72 hours
- Nausea or imminent vomiting
- Persistent cough
- Stiff neck or headache with one or more of above symptoms
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Complaints of severe pain

In addition, the OHA maintains a list of daycare-restricted diseases including chickenpox, scabies, and staph and strep infections, in which cases we must exclude the child and notify the Health Department of any outbreak.

### COVID-19 Daily Health Check

Prior to leaving home each staff member and family member must read and comply and answer the wellness questions below.

1. Has anyone in your household been exposed to a person with a positive case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days?
2. Has anyone in your household been exposed to a person with a presumptive case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days?
3. Is anyone in your household experiencing an unusual cough, shortness of breath, or fever? "Unusual cough" means something not normal for this person (e.g., allergies, asthma)
4. Does anyone in the household have symptoms of diarrhea, vomiting, headaches, sore throat, or rash?

If the answer is NO to all the questions above, the child or staff member is able to enter school. If the answer is YES to any of the questions above, refer to the [Exclusion Summary Chart](#) (appendix) to determine whether the child or staff member can attend school or not. If symptoms are linked to a pre-existing condition such as asthma, allergies, etc., the child or staff member may come to school if they have a doctor's note explaining the symptoms are not related to COVID-19.

### Protocol if a Child or Staff Gets Sick or Exhibits Symptoms While at MCH

If a child or staff member exhibits any COVID-19-like symptoms while at school:

1. The child will be taken to the office to be isolated and caregivers will be called. Staff members will be sent home immediately.

2. A member of the admin team will remain with the child until they are picked up. The admin representation will wear a mask, use gloves, and use as much social distancing as possible while providing as much comfort to the child as possible.
3. The office space will be closed for 24 hours to reduce the potential for respiratory droplets. If a 24-hour period is not feasible a MCH staff member will wait as long as possible and follow required sanitation protocols. MCH will ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants and keep disinfectant products away from children.
4. The Head of School will contact local health authorities of a possible or confirmed case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
5. The Head of School will inform staff members and families if they have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 and require them to stay home for 14 days and self-monitor for symptoms. Staff will be required to update the Head of School daily about symptoms.
6. Children and staff exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms will be asked to stay at home for a minimum of 10 days after onset of symptoms and 72 hours after resolution of both fever and cough, **unaided by medications**.

If a child develops a low grade fever, between 99-100 degrees, we will alert you and monitor your child's behavior and temperature regularly. If their temperature should rise above 100 degrees, we will follow the protocol outlined above and the same restrictions for returning to school will apply.

#### **Confirmed Case of COVID-19 Within the Facility**

If anyone who has entered the school has tested positive for COVID-19, we will report it to the Oregon Health Authority. We will communicate, in coordination with OHA, with all families and other individuals who have been in the facility in the past two weeks. MCH will close the school temporarily and consult with the OHA to ensure that the appropriate steps have been taken to make the school as safe as possible before bringing students and staff back.

#### **Presumptive & Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 Within a Child's or Staff's Household**

If anyone in a child's or staff's household has been exposed to someone who has a presumptive or confirmed case of COVID-19, the exposed individual and staff/children in the household may not attend school. They must enter into a quarantine period for a minimum of 14 days after their last date of exposure to a known case. Children or staff who have a family member at home with symptoms of COVID-19 who have not been tested need to be monitored for symptoms carefully. The ill family or household member should be strongly encouraged to seek testing.

If anyone in your household is diagnosed with COVID-19, notify MCH and any known "close contacts" immediately. Be prepared to discuss the dates you were on MCH premises and where you may have been or who you may have come in contact with while at MCH.

#### **What if a child or staff member has taken a COVID-19 test and the results were negative?**

Children or staff members would continue to self-monitor and can return after 72 hours when they are symptom free and unaided by medications. [See our General Wellness Guidelines.](#)

#### **Special Health Needs**

If a child has a particular health need or susceptibility to disease, including COVID-19, MCH will work with the parents/caregivers to develop a plan for the child to participate in school. MCH will ensure that all staff engaging with the child understand the plan.

### **Behaviors & Health Risk Prevention**

As stress and trauma increase during the time of COVID-19, MCH staff anticipate more challenging and dysregulated behaviors for many children. Implementing and communicating predictable routines and procedures will be very important for all of the children and adults. Taking the time to review the new procedures with your children will help them maintain a sense of psychological safety.

Due to the need for increased, strict health and safety guidelines and MCH's reduced number of staff, we will be implementing the following policy:

- For the safety of all those in the community, any behaviors that put the health of other children or staff at risk during this time will result in a call to guardians for immediate pick-up. This may include spitting, biting, removing masks from staff member faces, or any behaviours that increase the risk to our staff or impact the ability to maintain a safe environment for the children and our community.
- An assessment meeting will be scheduled with the Head of School and caregivers before a child may come back to school.

### **Staffing**

All staff working at MCH have completed the necessary First Aid & CPR training. MCH will continue to provide staff members access to professional development that contributes to their learning and development. All staff have reviewed these guidelines contained in this document, the Health and Safety Guidelines for Child Care and Early Education Operating During Covid-19, as well as any updates to the Guidelines that occur, prior to implementation, including new hires prior to their first day of work or during employee orientation.

### **DROP-OFF & PICK-UP PROCEDURES**

The CDC recommends the same parent or designated person should drop-off and pick-up the child every day. If possible, older people such as grandparents or those with serious underlying medical conditions should not drop-off or pick-up children, because they are more at risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

All adults must wear a face covering for pick-up and drop-off. All adults must maintain physical distancing when not engaged in hand-off of children to staff.

The admin team or classroom staff will be checking children in and out at designated areas outside the building. For each stable group, staff will record the time the child arrived and departed, along with who dropped off and picked up. They will use writing utensils that have been sanitized and are specific to them. These logs will be retained for a minimum of 2 years.

The pick-up/drop-off person will not be permitted to enter the building unless permission is granted by our Head of School, Nick Stocco. The check-in and check-out process will include a wellness screening (*see below*). Classroom staff will be ready to receive children after they complete the wellness check.

### **Drop-off**

Each classroom has an assigned drop-off period (see below). We ask that families respect social distancing guidelines and, if you see 1-2 families already waiting in line, to please give space or wait in your vehicles until there is room. An admin team or staff member will complete a daily student wellness screening including a temperature check for each child. After the screening process you will say goodbye to the child and they will walk to a waiting teacher from their classroom. We will only note that the screening was conducted and the child either passed or failed.

### **Pick-up**

At the assigned pick-up time (see below) a staff member will bring their group of children up to a designated area to be ready for pick-up. A member of the admin team or volunteer will go through a check-out wellness screening to take a final temperature and sign the child out once we see their approved pick-up adult has arrived.

### **Schedule & Location**

Please be sure you arrive on time for your assigned drop-off/pick-up window. If families miss their designated time slot they will need to wait in their car until after the last group has finished.

Classroom Drop-off & Pick-up Periods:

<u>Classroom</u>	<u>Drop-off</u>	<u>Pick-up</u>	<u>Location</u>
Chickadee Grove	8:15-8:30	2:30-2:45	@ Chickadee Grove door
Tanager Meadow	8:15-8:30	2:30-2:45	@ Main entrance doors
Heron Cove	8:30-8:45	3:00-3:15	@ Main entrance doors

- If you have children in both toddler and primary, the school will contact you individually to make a plan.
- We will have markings on the sidewalk in front of school to encourage social distancing while each group is undergoing the check-in process. We encourage families to wait in their cars if there are 1-2 families already in line.
- Please respect and follow social distancing on the sidewalk in front of school.

### **Daily Student Wellness Screening**

In order to ensure the health and safety of our children, staff, and families a staff member and/or volunteers will be administering a wellness check with each child in our program (same questions as outlined in [COVID-19 Daily Health Check](#) section). Please remember our goal is to be safe; we ask for your patience as we all learn this new process.

Every morning at drop-off and again in the afternoon at pick-up, a staff member will sign in/out each child. For the health and safety of all, childcare providers are required to keep detailed records for the purpose of tracking if someone is diagnosed with COVID-19. All staff performing daily health checks will wear a clean outer layer of clothing (apron).

The procedures for signing in/out are listed below:

1. One caregiver will escort each child or children to the sign-in area they've been designated
2. A staff member will conduct a COVID-19 Symptom Assessment which will have questions for both the child and their guardian.

3. The staff member will also take each child's temperature. If your child's temperature is under 99 degrees, they're able to attend school. If your child's temperature is between 99-100 degrees, they are able to attend school but we will check their temperature regularly. If your child's temp is 100 degrees or higher, they will not be allowed to enter school.
4. The form will also include the name of the person dropping off and picking up.

### **Daily Preparedness Checklist**

During the drop-off/sign-in procedure, a MCH staff will ensure the child has all the necessary items for each day. We will ask the child's caregiver if they have:

- A snack and lunch
- A clean, full, and sanitized water bottle
- Utensils (we will provide cloth napkins)
- Nap gear (if needed)
- Multiple sets of extra clothes (to be kept on the premises) Primary students should have at least 2 extra sets of clothes and toddlers at least 4 extra sets.
- Any medications (we will have medication authorization forms on hand) -- sunscreen should be applied at home before drop-off, if needed
- Face mask (required for Primary students) -- please send multiple masks daily and a ziploc bag for soiled or damaged mask

### **CLEANING & SANITIZING**

MCH will follow the guidelines outlined by the "Health and Safety Guidelines for Child Care and Early Education Operating During COVID-19" (published August 14, 2020). Shared classroom materials will be cleaned and sanitized between uses. You can view Sanitation Recommendations & Cleaning Schedules (pages 43-50) [here](#).

### **HAND HYGIENE**

Hand Hygiene is one of the most effective actions we can all take to reduce the spread of pathogens and prevent infections, including the COVID-19 virus. MCH has based this policy on current guidance from the CDC and ELD. We will strive to take the strictest measures in terms of guidance from these sources for the health and safety of our community.

All children and staff will wash their hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, including the following times:

- Before and after eating or preparing food.
- Before and after administering medication.
- Before and after toileting or assisting with toileting.
- Before and after diapering.
- After wiping nose, coughing, or sneezing.\*
- Upon entering and leaving the child care facility.\*
- If staff are moving between stable groups.\*
- After sharing learning materials.\*

\*Hand sanitizer with 60-95% alcohol content may be used

Adults should avoid touching their face and cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue and throw the tissue away immediately. Staff will model and teach these expectations to the children. Except for toileting or when eating, preparing, or serving food, hand-sanitizing products with 60-95% alcohol content may be used as an alternative method to handwashing. Hand sanitizer will be stored out of reach of children when not in use.

## FACE COVERINGS

We will strive to take the strictest measures in terms of guidance from these sources for the health and safety of our community. Cloth face coverings do not replace regular handwashing practices. Face coverings must follow the CDC recommendations found [here](#). Exceptions can be made for staff and children if they have a medical condition or disability, as documented by their doctor's order, which prevents them from wearing a face covering.

### Expectations

For Adults: All staff members, caregivers, and approved visitors (*see Visitor Protocol*) are required to wear a face covering in order to enter the building.

- Parents are required to wear face coverings for pick-up and drop-off.
- All staff members will wear face coverings while inside MCH, except if they are eating lunch with the children or eating while on a break.
  - Staff members will be provided with several face covering options
  - Staff members are encouraged to take breaks outside or at a socially distanced space away from colleagues and children.
  - Staff members will be provided clear face coverings or protective plastic barriers to provide language lessons as we recognize the importance of seeing the mouth for the child's development in this area.

For Children: The state of Oregon requires that face coverings for children ages five and above. Based on this guidance, we require that all children in our Primary classrooms (3-6 years old) wear a face covering while inside school. Children in the Toddler Community (16 months-3 years old) will not be required to wear a face covering.

- Families must provide face coverings for their children.
- Staff will give grace and courtesy lessons to the children around the usage of masks, the reasons for wearing them, and how to effectively take them on and off.
- If a child refuses to wear a mask, staff will work with the child to help them feel comfortable wearing a mask.
- Children will not be disciplined for the inability to safely wear a face covering.
- Each classroom will set up a designated space for each child to place their masks while eating, prior to going outside, or when taking a nap. Your child's classroom teacher will communicate these protocols with you.
- Children will be asked to remove their mask during outside play and naptime for their safety.

When Eating: You will need to remove your face covering to eat. Take off the covering as noted below, place it in a designated space for each child or staff member, and wash your hands. Enjoy your snack/lunch. When you're done eating, wash your hands then put a face covering back on. Wash your hands again prior to returning to work.

Washing Your Face Covering: For Primary children, face coverings will go home everyday to be cleaned. Staff members will be able to add their face masks to their classroom laundry or wash them at home.

### **Notes About Face Coverings**

Face coverings should:

- Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face.
- Cover the nose and mouth of the wearer.
- Be secured with ties or ear loops.
- Include multiple layers of fabric.
- Allow for breathing without restriction.
- Be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape.

Using a Face Covering

- Wearers should wash hands before and after putting on their face covering.
- Wearers should avoid touching the outside of their covering. If you do, wash your hands with soap and water. If that is not available then use hand sanitizer (60-95% alcohol content).
- Wash your hands (use the 20 seconds wash cycle) before you remove the face covering from the bag, or use hand sanitizer (60-95% alcohol content). Remove the covering from the storage bag.
- Cover your mouth and nose with the covering and make sure there are no gaps between your face and the covering. Tie the covering or use the elastic loops for your ears.
- Replace the covering with a clean one if it becomes damp.
- To remove the covering:
  - a. Remove it from behind (do not touch the front of the covering)
  - b. Fold the covering onto itself and place it in the bag for “dirty” coverings to take home to wash
  - c. Wash your hands with soap and water after removing your covering. If soap and water are not available then use hand sanitizer (60-95% alcohol content).
- Face coverings should be washed daily or a new face covering worn daily.
- Disposable face coverings may only be worn once.
- Staff must change face covering if they have interacted with a sick child.

### **SOCIAL/PHYSICAL DISTANCING**

Young children are likely to find it difficult to physically distance themselves from one another. Staff will model and create opportunities for the children to practice making space for one another while at school. As child care workers, MCH staff are considered high-contact persons. For the health and safety of our staff, we urge our families to follow social distancing guidelines when not at school.

- We will follow guidelines for group size and staff-to-child ratios as outlined by ELD. As of August 14, 2020, the max group size for Toddlers is 8 (ration 1:4) and Primary is 20 (ratio 1:2). We intend to limit Primary groups to 12 children at this time.
- Classrooms will include the same group of children each day and the staff will remain with the same group whenever possible.
- Children will remain within their classroom community at all times while at MCH and classroom groups will not mix.

- New children may be added to a group or moved from toddler to primary if it is a permanent change.
- Individual tables will be designated for children to work and eat.
- Cots for nappers will be spaced at least 3 feet apart and arranged in a head-toe-position.
- Children's belongings will be kept in a personal bag/backpack and will be spaced so they are not touching.
- Families will be asked to provide all face coverings (primary only), meals, utensils, and water bottles for each child.

## RECESS/OUTDOORS

We will continue to go outside everyday. Each classroom will play in a separate area, with a separate set of outdoor materials. Groups will practice social distancing from others while out in our neighborhood. Staff will follow our normal safety protocols while outside. Everyone will wash their hands prior to going outside and immediately upon returning to the classroom.

## SNACK & LUNCH

In the Toddler Community, we have suspended family-style meals. Staff will closely monitor the children to ensure that they're sharing and/or touching each other's food. Water bottles will stay at school and staff will wash and sanitize them daily. For Primary, instead of sitting together in small groups, each child will have their own table to sit at to eat their meals. Water bottles will be sent home at the end of each day to be cleaned and sanitized.

## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

MCH will provide the following PPE for staff members:

- A variety of face coverings.
- Staff members must avoid touching the cloth face covering.
- It is essential to continue frequent and consistent hand hygiene.
- The face covering must be changed when soiled and each day.
- An apron or equivalent of staff choice that can be washed or sanitized.
- Protective gloves for cleaning.
- Disinfecting products: i.e. Bleach or EPA-registered household disinfectants. During this time it is important to use our approved cleaners that have efficacy against multiple diseases. MCH will provide the different solutions clearly labeled with ratios and uses. It is each classroom's duty to fill them each day according to the written guidelines.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided. The preferred and most effective practice is proper handwashing but hand sanitizer will be provided for those times when hand washing isn't feasible.

## PREVENTION FOR HIGH CONTACT STAFF

Due to the nature of working with young children classroom staff are considered to be high contact employees. Interactions between classroom staff and the children are likely to include distances less than six (6) feet in order to support the mental wellbeing of the children in MCH care. Social distancing of at least six (6) feet should be observed when possible amongst adult staff members and families.

Compliance with social distancing guidelines is mandatory for all adults. Social distancing applies to all adults on MCH school property at all times.

## Requirements

In order to reduce the potential spread of contagions within the community, Montessori Children's House is instituting the following requirements:

- Whenever possible avoid passing information via paper or other items - i.e., use email or phone calls to ask questions or share notes.
- Interaction times should be reduced between staff members
- Physical items should be passed to a child and not to a staff member. For example, a child should carry their own backpack or personal items to avoid contact between adults. Go-between items can be placed in the child's bag or backpack such as notes for the teacher, paperwork, etc.
- High contact employees shall wash or sanitize their hands no less than once per hour.
- Areas of high traffic shall be cleaned frequently and on intervals required by the Oregon Health Authority's most current recommendations.
- High contact employees shall limit, when possible, movement outside of their classroom/working environments while on MCH grounds
- Staff who interact with multiple, stable groups, will wear a new outer layer of clothing (apron) when moving to a new group.
- Activities normally conducted in person, such as parent-guide conferences, will take place virtually or via telephone. If families cannot engage in virtual or phone visits, please inform the school and we will work with you to solve this challenge.

## VISITOR PROTOCOL

For the health and safety of our staff, families, and community during the COVID-19 outbreak, MCH will limit visitor entry into the building. We recognize that MCH has always had an open door policy, but given the current pandemic we have implemented the following restrictions to our building. Only these individuals may enter the school:

- Parents, if there is a concern for the health and safety of their child
- Emergency medical personnel
- State licensing/Regulators/Inspectors
- Maintenance and janitorial personnel, only when children are not present

All other individuals are subject to approval by our Head of School, Nick Stocco, before entry is permitted.

All visitors must follow the procedures listed below:

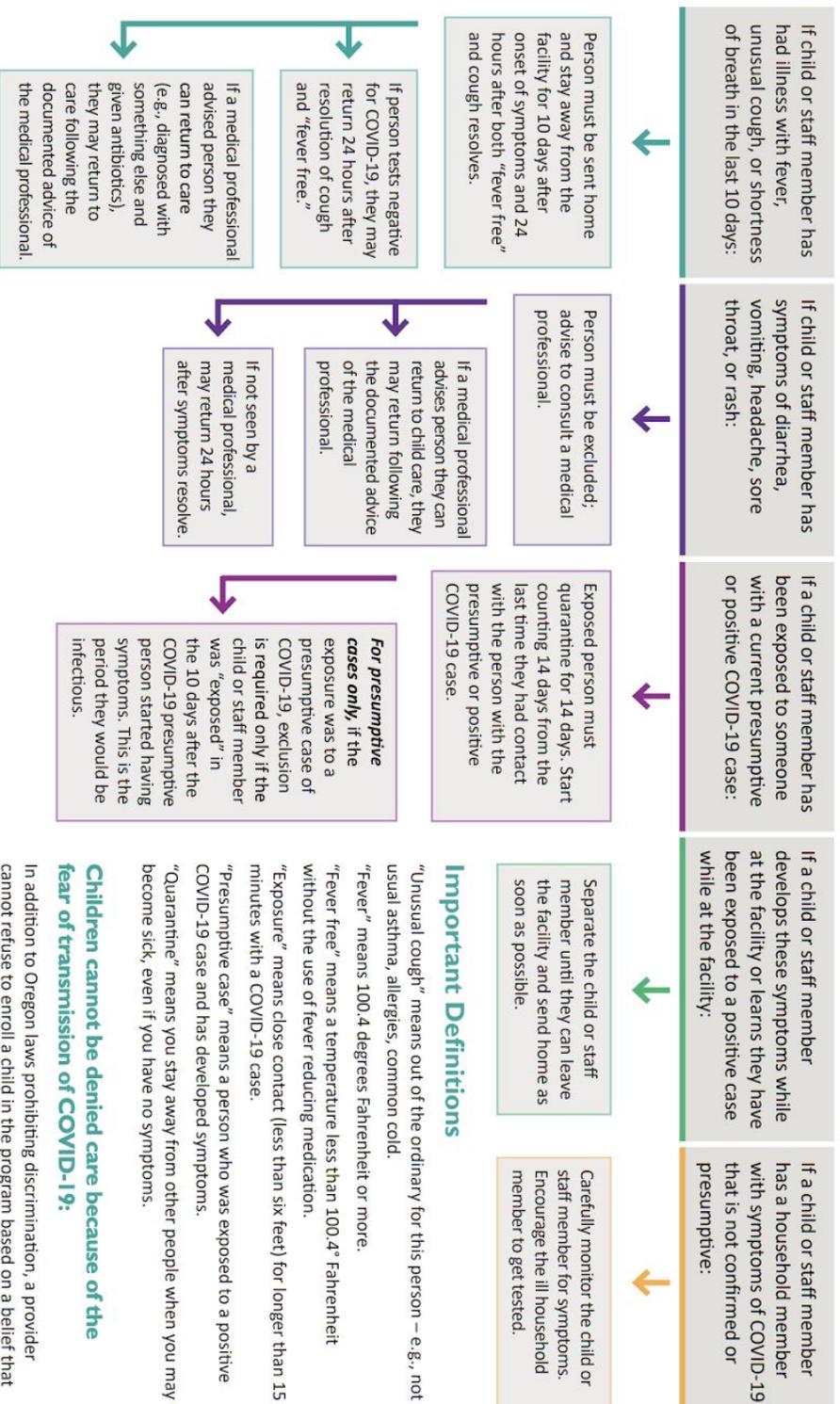
- Put on a face covering a face covering prior to entering
- Wait outside to be invited in by a staff member
- Use hand sanitizer on their hands after entering
- Have their temperature taken by a staff member
- Sign in, recording your name, date, time of arrival, temperature, and phone number (for contact tracing). Writing utensils will be sanitized between uses.
- Answer MCH's COVID-19 Daily Wellness Checklist questions in the presence of a staff member. We will only note that the screening was conducted and the visitor either passed or failed.
- Sanitize and disinfect handled items in the lobby area.
- All visitors will only be let in by the admin staff. Visitors will be accompanied by an admin staff member at all times, while maintaining physical distancing.

- Parents seeking enrollment will be permitted to visit the school only when children are not present. Only one family member may visit at a time and the family must comply with all visitor protocols and guidelines detailed above.

# EXCLUSION SUMMARY

## for Child Care and Early Education Operations During COVID-19

AUGUST 14, 2020



### Important Definitions

- "Unusual cough" means out of the ordinary for this person – e.g., not usual asthma, allergies, common cold.
- "Fever" means 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or more.
- "Fever free" means a temperature less than 100.4° Fahrenheit without the use of fever reducing medication.
- "Exposure" means close contact (less than six feet) for longer than 15 minutes with a COVID-19 case.
- "Presumptive case" means a person who was exposed to a positive COVID-19 case and has developed symptoms.
- "Quarantine" means you stay away from other people when you may become sick, even if you have no symptoms.

### Children cannot be denied care because of the fear of transmission of COVID-19:

In addition to Oregon laws prohibiting discrimination, a provider cannot refuse to enroll a child in the program based on a belief that the child is more susceptible to contracting COVID-19 due to the child's or parent's occupation, race, ethnicity, geographic location, disability, or pre-existing health condition.

For more information, visit [oregonearlylearning.com/COVID-19-Resources](http://oregonearlylearning.com/COVID-19-Resources). Providers can also submit questions by emailing [ProviderContact@state.or.us](mailto:ProviderContact@state.or.us).