

COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan

June 1, 2020

The mission of Holt Public Schools Child Care and Early Childhood Center has always been to create a safe environment that earns the trust of the children and families we serve. We are as dedicated to that mission now as we have ever been. Holt Public will continue to lead the industry in best practices during this time, a responsibility we do not take lightly. Accordingly, we have created a Covid-19 Operating Manual that details the necessary policy and procedures and aggressive actions we have taken to mitigate the potential spread of Covid-19. This new operating model supplements our existing and overarching operations manual. As we move forward in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, we would like to communicate those aggressive actions we have taken to assure you of our steadfast commitment to the health and safety of our Holt and Dimondale families.

OVERVIEW

All child care providers must develop and implement a COVID-19 preparedness and response plan consistent with LARA guidelines. The Holt Public plan will be available online on our district website. A digital copy will be sent to parents and staff for signature prior to reopening.

Our plan will include:

- How Holt Public will monitor symptoms of COVID-19.
- How Holt Public will practice social distancing, as developmentally appropriate.
- How Holt Public will ensure hygiene (including regular cleaning and disinfecting).
- How Holt Public will use safety equipment (including PPE, when appropriate).
- Communication protocol for families to report symptoms or a positive test and policies on when children will be excluded from care.
- Isolation procedure in case of symptoms or confirmed cases onsite.
- How to maintain required staff to child ratios in the event that a staff member(s) becomes ill.

All family questions related to COVID-19 are to be directed to Peter Trezise our Human Resources Director. He will be responsible for handling questions and reporting about COVID-19 concerns.. Email: peter.trezise@hpsk12.net Phone number: 517-694-6392

PREPARING THE BUILDING

Holt Public will make changes to our physical space to make it safer for children and staff. Each guideline below helps prevent the spread of COVID-19 and encourage social distancing.

1. A separate room in the building will be used to safely isolate children who develop symptoms during care.
2. Toys and objects which cannot be easily cleaned or sanitized between use will be removed to the fullest extent possible.
 - a. Wooden toys will be appropriately cleaned on at least a daily basis.
 - b. Cloth toys will not be in circulation at this time.
3. There will be a dedicated staff person to rotate 3 stepping (wash with soapy water, rinse with clean water, and sanitize with a bleach water solution) toys and commonly used items throughout the day.
4. Common spaces such as the gym, cafeteria and playground areas will be used on an as needed basis and cleaned and sanitized in between groups using. Classes will eat snacks and meals outside or in their rooms as much as possible. If weather does not permit eating outside, the cafeteria will be used. Only one class will be in the area at a time.
5. Seating will be rearranged to seat children six feet apart (when possible) and limit the number of children sitting together.
6. Use touchless trash cans to provide a hands-free way to dispose of tissues and contaminants if they are available.
7. Weather permitting, we will increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible.
8. Ensure water is safe. Drinking fountains will be cleaned and sanitized on a regular basis. Water bottles from home are encouraged.

MONITOR SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

Holt Public will perform a health screening on anyone entering the building.

When children arrive:

1. Parents/Guardians are not permitted to enter the buildings. A staff person will be assigned to relay the children from the check in/out station outside to the classroom each day.

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2. That staff member will perform a temperature check at the check in station. A touchless FDA approved thermometer will be used to scan the body temperature. Children arriving with fever at or above 100.0 or other symptoms will be sent home or not permitted into the building.
 3. Parents will be asked:
 - a. Has your child been in close contact with a person who has COVID-19? (If yes, the family should self-quarantine for 14 days.)
 - b. Has your child felt unwell in the last 3 days? (persistent cough, temperature, shortness of breath, cold, diarrhea and/or vomiting)
 4. Staff will visually check the child for signs of illness, including flushed cheeks, rapid or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity), fatigue, or extreme fussiness.

As young children are not reliable reporters of their symptoms, asking children about additional coronavirus symptoms is not useful (for example, shortness of breath, change in taste).

Staff will continue to monitor symptoms throughout the day and monitor temperatures when children appear ill or “not themselves.”

Children with a fever alone, or a fever with a cough and/or diarrhea will be isolated from the group and parents will be contacted for **PROMPT** pick up. At that point, parents should contact their primary care physician/medical provider.

When staff arrive:

1. Upon entering the building, staff will apply hand sanitizer to their hands.
2. Temperature checks will be performed when staff arrive. A touchless thermometer will be used for scanning.
3. Staff will be screened for cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, change in smell or taste, and diarrhea by filling out a health screening form.
4. Staff arriving with fever above 100.4 or other symptoms will be sent home.
5. Staff should report contact with anyone outside of work who has had a documented case of COVID-19. Staff will be instructed to self-quarantine if they have been exposed to COVID-19.
6. Staff will wash their hands immediately when entering their classroom.

Due to child care staff members being part of Michigan’s essential workforce, they are eligible to be tested for COVID-19. Find a test site near you [here](#).

Families

A communication of this plan will be sent to families prior to reopening and will be posted on our website.

Parents should communicate with the center if they are concerned about possible or confirmed cases of COVID-19. Families should report possible illness if anyone in their household shows symptoms or has tested positive for COVID-19, including the child or family members if they or their children experience possible symptoms or have a positive test. Please contact the Community Ed office at 517-694-3411, or Jenn Phinney at 517-699-1587 to report an illness.

Respond to Possible or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19

Child care providers are a critical part of helping communities limit the spread of the virus.

- Anyone who becomes symptomatic will be sent home **immediately**.
- Those who can not leave immediately will be isolated in a separate room until able to be picked up. A staff person will stay with a child until their parent comes to pick them up. If the child has not been picked up in 30 minutes we will contact the emergency contact person.

Report exposure. If a child, staff member, family member, or visitor to our child care, becomes ill with COVID-19 symptoms, we must contact our local health department and licensing consultant for next steps. Staff and families of children in care are also required to report to the provider if they become symptomatic or receive positive COVID-19 test results. When notifying parents if a positive case of COVID-19 was present in the facility, the privacy of individuals will be respected by not sharing health information of a specific person.

We will determine whether to close the classroom or facility based on guidance from our local health department. If an individual in a classroom is identified with a positive test for COVID-19 the classroom should be closed, cleaned and everyone in that classroom should be quarantined for 14 days initially.

Set Guidelines for Returning to Care and Work

Staff members and children should stay home and self-isolate if they show symptoms of COVID-19. It can be challenging to determine when to isolate young children because they are ill more often than adults, and the cause of a fever is sometimes unknown.

If a staff member or child has a fever or a cough, providers should follow their child and staff illness policy. At this time, it is recommended by the State of Michigan LARA department that children be fever free for 72 hours before returning to care (even if other symptoms are not present).

If a staff member or child exhibits multiple symptoms of COVID-19, you suspect possible exposure, or an individual tests positive for COVID-19, the individual must stay home until:

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- Has been fever-free for at least 72 hours without the use of medicine that reduces fevers AND
 - Other symptoms have improved AND
 - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

Holt Public will not accept a Doctor's note stating the child is not contagious.

Most children and staff members can return to care/work based on improved symptoms and the passage of time. Local health departments may recommend that some individuals (for example, immunocompromised individuals) receive two negative tests in a row, 24 hours apart.

The provider should allow staff who are not feeling well to remain home without penalty. Under [Executive Order 2020-36](#), employees may not be discharged, disciplined, or otherwise retaliated against for staying home when he or she is at particular risk for infecting others with COVID-19. See the Executive Order for complete details on whether employees must be paid and when they must return to work.

Families are encouraged to have back-up child care plans if the child or a family member becomes ill or is required to self-quarantine due to possible COVID-19.

The CDC recommends people use the following guidelines to determine when to return to child care or work after showing symptoms of COVID-19. You can view the full recommendation from the CDC [here](#).

Practice Social Distancing

When creating a plan to safely provide care during COVID-19, “less is best.” Limiting group sizes, limiting the number of staff members caring for the children, and limiting the number of spaces a child is in during the day as much as possible. We acknowledge that social distancing is very challenging in a child care setting. These best practices identify steps we are taking to help.

Maintain Consistent Groups

Whenever possible, Holt Public will keep group sizes at or below 10 for our Midway children. If a school age center classroom has more than 10 children, Holt Public will attempt to spread out the classes across multiple rooms when possible. This is especially important in classes with more children (for example, preschool classrooms.) As much as possible, classrooms will include the same group of children and caregivers. With limited group sizes there may be only one teacher per room. If your child is experiencing behavior issues, such as running out of the room while care, we may need to visit and discuss if our program is the best placement.

In the center, consistent adults will remain with groups of similar aged children. It is particularly important that our infants less than six months stay separated from older children because they cannot be vaccinated against influenza.

Child care will be provided to full time, (5 day per week), families who are essential workers, first. We will then move to part time schedules for families who are essential workers. This is necessary in order to provide consistent groups and keep smaller classroom sizes.

Contact with external adults and between groups of children will be limited.

Cribs, cots and mats for children who rest will be at least six feet apart, when possible. Bedding will be placed in head-to-toe positioning.

Eliminate any curriculum component (i.e. circle time, large group, small groups) that involves children touching for any reason.

Limit, or Eliminate, Use of Common Spaces

As recommended in the “physical space” section, one strategy to promote social distancing is to close our common spaces. Holt Public has also canceled field trips or special events that convene larger groups of children or families. Holt Public will:

- Create standing spaces to eliminate bunching together when lining up to go from one location to another (i.e. outside).
- Stagger times for outdoor play and gym times. One classroom will be permitted to use the playground/gym at a time.
- Eliminate use of water and sensory tables. Playground equipment and frequently touched objects will be sanitized regularly.
- If a common space remains in use, staff will clean the space in between groups.

Drop Off and Pick Up Times

In order for our staff to clean and disinfect properly our Holt Public child care programs will have new operating hours. **Our new program hours will be 7:30-5:30.**

Holt Public will set up hand hygiene stations at the entrance of our facility so children and staff can clean their hands.

Holt Public may consider staggering arrival and drop off times and plan to limit direct contact with parents to the extent possible at a future date as guidelines ease. Holt Public will have designated staff meet children at the front entrance check in station and escort them into and out

of the building. These practices will be balanced with the impact on a child's transition time, the parent's work schedule, and the impact on instructional time. Parents should plan to allow additional time at drop off and pick up to allow for health screenings and child transitions.

At drop off:

If no one is standing at the check in station, please call the Community Ed office at 517-694-3411.

- At a later date, when guidelines have eased. Holt Public will limit the number of people dropping off or picking up a child to one adult.
- Please plan for extra time at drop off, while we prepare to get all children into the center safely.
- Staff will sign children in and out for attendance at drop off and pick up.

At pick up:

- Parents will call their child's classroom 15 minutes prior to arrival. If the teacher cannot be reached you will send a direct message to the teacher through your classroom app.
- The teacher will then work to gather your child's belongings and will change them back into their home shoes.
- The staff person will then walk your child out the check out station.
- Upon reentering the building, the staff will use hand sanitizer and then wash their hands again when reentering the classroom.
- Please plan for extra time at pick up, while we prepare to get your child ready to go home.

Late Pick Up

- Parents will be charged \$1.00 for every minute they are late past 5:30
- If picking up late becomes a pattern we will need to discontinue care.

Limit Visitors

Holt Public child care will limit non-essential visitors, to contractors. No volunteers will be allowed.

Transportation

Holt Public will cancel all scheduled field trips until further notice.

Reinforce Best Practices to Promote Hygiene

Child care providers are experts in limiting the spread of illness. Holt Public child care staff will reinforce the best practices we already use with children and staff members to limit the spread of COVID-19 and any other illness.

Hand Washing

Holt Public will reinforce regular health and safety practices with children and staff by washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. This is especially important after blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.

- Staff will continue to implement CDC handwashing guidelines. Wearing gloves does not replace appropriate hand hygiene.

Do not have children wait in line for handwashing. Only have one child at a time at the sink.

- Soap and water are the best option, especially if hands are visibly dirty. If staff use hand sanitizer, due to no soap and water nearby, they will use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of their hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry.
- Holt Public staff will continue to teach children how to cover coughs with a tissue or sleeve.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Holt Public staff will continue to use robust cleaning protocols on at least a daily basis for items touched frequently. This may require designated cleaning staff.

- Common areas require at least a daily deep clean (for example, sinks, bathrooms, doorknobs, tabletops, and shared items). Custodial staff will clean at the end of each day.
- Clean toys frequently, especially items that have been in a child's mouth

Utilize disinfectant fogger twice a week in open buildings where children are in care.

Items from Home

- We will limit the number of items brought into Holt Public child care sites because this can be a way to transmit the virus. For example, children should be brought into the center without car seats.
- Parents should leave a pair of shoes at the facility for each child. Those shoes will remain at child care for use the next day.

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- Comfort items may be especially needed during this time of transition as they may reduce stress for children. To avoid these items coming into contact with many children, efforts will be made by staff for these items to be placed in a cubby or bin and be used at naptime or as needed. If possible, a comfort item should remain at the child care facility to avoid cross contamination from another site. Items should also be washed at least weekly.
 - Soft materials (such as blankets, soft comfort items, or clothing) will be washed daily, at the facility.

All lunches must now be provided by parents ready to serve. Staff will not prep lunches.

Appropriate Safety Equipment

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is necessary in many settings to keep individuals safe. Child care providers do not need to wear N95 or surgical masks, smocks, or face shields, however, other protective equipment is appropriate.

Masks or Cloth Face Coverings: For Staff Members

- Holt Public child care staff will wear cloth face coverings when with children/parents.
- Holt Public will provide cloth facing coverings to staff. By Executive Order, Governor Whitmer has required all employers whose workers perform in person work to provide non-medical grade face coverings to their workers. This includes child care providers. Cloth face coverings, such as a homemade mask, scarf, bandana, or handkerchiefs, are best.
- Attending to children's social emotional health is a priority. Holt Public staff will use strategies to prepare children for seeing their caregivers in masks and attend to children's emotional responses to this new normal.

Before Opening:

Teachers Zoom with children in the class to:

1. Express excitement about their return
2. Show children in the zoom meeting what s/he looks like with and without a mask, approach the discussion with positivity and encouragement.
3. Explain wellness checks using positive language.

Masks or Cloth Face Coverings: For Children

- Holt Public child care will NOT require masks for children. By maintaining consistent groups, children will not need to wear a mask when with their consistent group. Medical professionals recognize that many young children will not reliably wear a mask, and a mask may result in

increased touching of the face which would negate the purpose of the mask. Young children will take the masks off multiple times a day and in the process the mask will touch the floor and other objects making them a potential source of infection.

- If parents do choose to send their child in wearing a mask, parents must ensure children can remove the face covering without assistance. Cloth face coverings should never be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or anyone unable to remove the face covering without assistance.

Gloves

Holt Public staff will wear gloves in a manner consistent with existing licensing rules (for example, gloves should be worn when handling contaminated items, changing diapers, cleaning or when serving food). Staff members should wash hands before putting gloves on and immediately after gloves are removed. Gloves are not recommended for broader use.

Partner and Communicate with Families

Holt Public staff will actively contact families to determine when children will return to care and discuss new policies and procedures.

Proactively Contact Families

Holt Public staff will reach out to families that have not been in care to:

- Determine when they will return to care.
- Discuss concerns or questions families have about returning to child care and how you can address them together.
- Discuss any health concerns/conditions which may make the child at higher risk for complications if exposed to COVID-19.

Holt Public staff would like to remind families that immunocompromised children and children with chronic respiratory conditions should only return to child care under the direction of their primary care provider.

It is recommended that children should be up to date with current vaccination schedules to protect from vaccine-preventable infectious disease outbreaks, including influenza. If vaccines have been delayed as a result of the stay-at-home order, families should have a plan with their child's medical provider for catch-up vaccinations in a timely manner.

Share New Policies and Expectations

Holt Public staff will review new policies and procedures with parents before a child returns to care and set clear expectations for when sick children must stay home and when they may return.

Support Children's Social-Emotional Needs

Holt Public will provide families and staff with resources to prepare for the transition back to child care.

Children should be prepared for the return to child care by parents and the child care provider.

Resources

- [Crisis Parent and Caregiver Guide](#), from the Michigan Children's Trust Fund
- [Talking with Children about COVID-19](#), from the CDC
- [Helping Young Children Through COVID-19](#), from Zero to Thrive (includes Arabic and Spanish translations)
- [Georgie and the Giant Germ](#), from Zero to Thrive and Tender Press Books

Partner and Communicate with Staff Members

Proactively Contact Staff Members

Holt Public administration will reach out to all staff members to:

- Determine their return to work date.
- Discuss concerns or questions staff members have about returning to work and discuss how you can address them together.
- Discuss any health concerns/conditions which may make a staff member at higher risk for complications if exposed to COVID-19. Staff with underlying health conditions or at higher risk should consult with their primary care physician/medical provider before returning to work.
- Share the steps you are taking to make your facility as safe as possible.

Notify team members of face-covering expectations and provide them with the following information:

- The correct way to wear and remove a mask.
- How to introduce children to the concept of teachers wearing a mask.

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- How to respond to children's questions about masks

Share Employees' Rights

Under [Executive Order 2020-36](#), employees may not be discharged, disciplined, or otherwise retaliated against for staying home when he or she is at particular risk for infecting others with COVID-19. See the Executive Order for complete details on whether employees must be paid and when they must return to work.

Create a Staffing Plan

- Holt Public administration/directors will assess staffing needs based on projected enrollment, the need to limit exposure across groups, and the need to practice social distancing.
- Holt Public administration will have on-call staff subs to handle the potential need to quarantine staff or allow for longer absences from work than normal.

Train Staff

Holt Public administration/directors will train employees about COVID-19. This includes how COVID-19 is transmitted, the distance the virus can travel, how long the virus remains viable in the air and on surfaces, signs and symptoms of COVID-19, steps employees must take to notify employers of signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and a suspected or confirmed diagnosis, and measures the employer and employees are taking to limit the spread of the virus (including PPE).

Holt Public administration will specifically:

- Ensure staff are provided training opportunities to better understand COVID-19 and care for children safely. These courses may help meet our training requirements:

- [Caring for children in care during COVID-19](#), from the federal Office of Head Start.

- [Preventing and managing infectious diseases in Early Education and Child Care](#), free from the American Academy of Pediatrics.

- Limit in person staff meetings to no more than 10 people. Maintain social distancing requirements.

Provide Resources to Support Children's Social Emotional Needs

Holt Public staff will work together to develop a plan to support the emotional reactions of children returning to child care. Some children will be relieved, some will have initial challenges with separation from their parent(s), some may demonstrate anger at the "disappearance" of their child care provider, and some may act out toward other children..

Provide Resources to Support Staff Members' Social Emotional Needs

To ensure the well-being of the children, it is also imperative to ensure the well-being of Holt Public teachers and caregivers, and to provide them with the emotional and administrative support necessary during this time of reintegration, and in the months ahead.

As essential workers in the COVID-19 pandemic, child care providers may have worries about their own physical or psychological health, and the potential risk to their family members at home. Young children internalize the stress of the adults who care for them, so it is vitally important to provide support and services to the child care providers to ensure their emotional well-being.

Strategies to “help the helpers” can include professional development supports such as access to behavioral health consultation, and reflective consultation, which can help providers remain emotionally available, sensitive, and responsive to the needs of the infants and young children they care for.

If a confirmed case of COVID-19 has been identified at Holt Public, the CDL will coordinate with local health officials. Once learning of a COVID-19 case in someone who has been in our program, we will immediately notify local health officials, our child care licensing consultant, and Holt Public Human Resources Department. These officials will guide us in determining a course of action for the program.

- Ingham County Health Department Contact Person: Tamara Jones
- Holt Public HR: Peter Tresize
- LARA Childcare Licensing Consultant: Cheryl Gillespie

RESOURCES

www.michigan.gov/coronavirus Go to “Frequently asked questions” and click on “Childcare”

Center for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/>

American Academy of Pediatrics: <https://services.aap.org/en/about-the-aap/>

State of Michigan Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) Guidelines for Safe Child Care Operations During COVID-19 <https://www.michigan.gov/lara/>

This plan was made with guidance from LARA, CDC, and the MI Department of Health.

These guidelines are subject to change as we know more from the federal government and Ingham County