

INFORMATION BULLETIN

December 30, 2021

TO EDUCATIONAL CHILDCARE SERVICE PROVIDERS

1. Childcare services are open

Educational childcare services remain open and must take children according to their usual schedule. The health and safety measures in force (e.g. 2-metre physical distancing, wearing masks, frequent handwashing) are being maintained and must be strictly followed. For a reminder of these instructions, see the page [Educational childcare services in the context of COVID-19](#).

In order to align with the government's message on December 22, 2021, parents are asked to keep their children home whenever possible. However, as it is up to parents to decide whether or not their child will attend daycare, they must cover the usual costs of the service whether or not their child is present.

2. Guidelines in the event of a case or an outbreak in a childcare facility

The roles and responsibilities shared by childcare services and the public health authorities have evolved. From now on, if a child in a group receives a positive test result or if several cases are diagnosed within a childcare facility, the recommendations below will apply. However, it is possible that the public health authorities will contact you if it becomes necessary to close a group or childcare facility. Specific rules for different regions could apply as well.

- Staff members are encouraged to monitor for symptoms at all times and to carry out a test (RADT or NAAT) if they develop symptoms compatible with COVID-19. They must also watch the children at the childcare facility for symptoms. Please see: [Children and COVID-19 \(quebec.ca\)](#)
- All children in the same group as a child with a case of COVID-19 should be considered to be at moderate risk. Please see: [Instructions for people who have been in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 | Gouvernement du Québec \(quebec.ca\)](#)
 - Note that children in childcare facilities who have been in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 are not required to wear a mask.
- Children and staff members who have been in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 but who are asymptomatic are not required to take a screening test and may attend the childcare

facility UNLESS they are in isolation for another reason (e.g. a household member has received a positive result on a screening test).

Children presenting symptoms that are not related to COVID-19 may attend the childcare facility unless they meet the criteria for exclusion set out in Table 3 of the *Guide de prévention des infections dans les services de garde et écoles du Québec*. Please see: [Prévention et contrôle des infections dans les services de garde et écoles du Québec - Guide d'intervention édition 2015 - Publications du ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux \(gouv.qc.ca\)](#) (Available in French only.)

3. Workers with positive COVID-19 test results

On December 29, the government set out the conditions allowing people with COVID-19 to return to work. This exceptional measure does not apply to workers in educational childcare centres.

4. Outdoor reception for parents

In the current situation, it is very important to limit the presence of parents inside the daycare service as much as possible. If the area outside and weather permit, the childcare centre can welcome the children outside. Otherwise, follow the “Recommendations for access to the childcare facility by parents and other adults” on the [Educational childcare services in the context of COVID-19 pandemic](#) web page.

5. Continued mask wearing and physical distancing of 2 metres

Since Monday, December 20, the Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST) is requesting that workplaces implement the following three measures:

- Mandatory telework (if possible)
- Minimum distance of 2 metres between people
- Quality masking at all times

The CNESST COVID-19 kits and tools are currently being updated.

6. Wearing masks outdoors

Winter conditions can affect the comfort and effectiveness of masks. They may need to be changed more frequently. In extremely cold weather, the mask can be covered with a scarf, making sure that there is no condensation.

However, it is likely that wearing equipment outdoors is more problematic in extremely low temperatures (e.g. -20 degrees Celsius), or at times when people go outdoors less often.

Wearing a mask can sometimes be a particular concern for those who wear prescription glasses. Here are some suggestions from the CNESST to eliminate these problems:

- Wear a proper-fitting mask. The mask should cover the nose, chin, mouth and cheeks. Position the mask higher up the nose and put the glasses on top of it. The weight of the glasses prevents air from escaping.
- Fold the upper part of the mask inwards to create a better seal.
- Consult your optician or optometrist for advice on how to reduce the amount of fogging on your glasses (e.g. product compatible with lenses and frames).

As mentioned in the [Hierarchy of Control Measures in the Workplace](#) document of the Institut national de santé public du Québec (INSPQ), wearing a face shield alone does not offer the same level of protection as wearing a procedural mask alone. Wearing a face shield only, covering the face up to the chin, is possible, but only as a last resort in a context where the external conditions jeopardize the effectiveness of the procedural mask (severe and prolonged bad weather, excessive humidity, etc.) and where no other solution is possible.

The Information Bulletin is a publication that provides periodic information updates for educational childcare providers during the pandemic. Be sure to always consult the latest version of the Bulletin because the information on a given topic will most likely be updated as the situation evolves.

If you are unable to find the answers to your questions on these websites, please call the Ministère's Direction de l'amélioration des services à la clientèle et de la gestion des plaintes at the toll-free number 1-855-336-8568 between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday.