

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CATHY BETTS
DIRECTOR

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Director
P.O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

BESSD 22.C0410

April 19, 2022

To: Department of Human Services Registered Family Child Care Home Providers, Licensed Group Child Care Center Providers, Group Child Care Home Providers, Infant and Toddler Child Care Providers, and Before and After School Child Care Providers

Subject: Updated April 13, 2022 Guidelines for Child Care Facilities to Reopen or Continue Care and Mask Guidance

Governor David Ige announced on March 8, 2022, that the statewide indoor mask requirement would end when the current emergency proclamation related to COVID-19 expires, March 25, 2022, at 11:59 p.m. The Department of Human Services (DHS) is providing information to update our guidance in response to Governor Ige's announcement and is making additional revisions to other health and safety areas in the "Guidelines for Child Care Facilities." We recognize that state and national guidance will evolve over time and we thank you for your patience and commitment to serving Hawaii's children and families. We also recognize that every provider is unique and has different needs. As such, we would like to stress that these guidelines are based on strong recommendations, recognizing that providers may require more stringent or less stringent policies for their own facility.

The mask requirements were originally established by Governor Ige's 8th Emergency Proclamation and included in the DHS "Guidelines for Child Care Facilities" (hereinafter "Guidelines") dated May 19, 2020. The Guidelines requires all licensed and registered homes and centers and license exempt center-based providers to implement an indoor and outdoor mask policy for all children, staff, and families. Masks, when used in combination with other prevention strategies (i.e., vaccination, social distancing) are an important tool in preventing the transmission of the COVID-19 virus.

Since most DHS licensed and registered child care homes and centers serve children in an age group that is not yet eligible for vaccination, current guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Hawaii Department of Health (DOH) emphasizes the continued use of masks to protect individuals with compromised immune systems, individuals who aren't vaccinated, and those who care for people at risk of severe illness, especially in crowded settings.

In order to be in alignment with the strong recommendations from CDC and DOH for indoor and outdoor masking in all licensed centers, registered homes and exempt center-based centers for those

ages two (2) years and older, regardless of vaccination status, DHS will be making the following updates to the Guidelines for indoor and outdoor masking:

- When outdoors:
 - Masks do not need to be worn in most outdoor settings.
 - Masks should be worn in crowded outdoor settings, during activities that involve sustained close contact with others, or when community levels of COVID-19 are high.
- When indoors:
 - For the time being, masks should be worn at all times by children two (2) years and older who can safely and reliably wear, remove, and handle the masks following CDC guidance, and by staff members, contracted services providers and parent visitors to the facilities.
 - Children under two (2) years of age and anyone with trouble breathing should not wear a mask.
 - Masks should not be worn by children when they are sleeping.
 - Masks can be removed when actively drinking and eating.

In addition to the update of our mask guidance, we also revised our existing Guidelines most recently updated on March 2, 2022, to include additional information for isolation and events and field trips in response to the new recommendations from CDC and DOH. Please be advised, however, that additional updates to the Guidelines may be provided should there be a rise in COVID-19 community levels or by order of an emergency proclamation.

New in the Guidance effective April 13, 2022:

- Children and staff with known medical history of allergies or of other etiology who exhibit COVID-19 like symptoms, should isolate and get tested for COVID-19.
 - Children: If the test is negative and they are **not** identified as a close contact, they may return **prior** to the 10-day isolation time if symptoms are resolving and no fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine.
 - Staff: If the test is negative and they are not identified as a close contact, they may return prior to the 5-day isolation time, if symptoms are resolving and no fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine.
 - Children and staff should also submit a doctor's note confirming medical history of allergies or other conditions which caused COVID-19 like symptoms and indicating that they are safe to return or a negative test result.
- Providers may hold special events under the following guidelines:
 - Hold outdoors
 - Limit attendees
 - Socially distance (try to keep six (6) feet of distance between different households), especially if eating and drinking occurs at the event.
 - Have handwashing/sanitizer stations easily accessible throughout the space.
 - Consider asking attendees to show proof of vaccination or a negative test result taken within 48 hours before the event.
 - Recommend masking for large gatherings outdoors.

April 19, 2022

Page 3

- Field trip guidance:
 - All participants must wear masks when boarding, disembarking, and for the duration of travel.
 - Those who have trouble breathing should not wear masks.
 - Masks do not need to be worn in most outdoor settings.
 - Masks should be worn in crowded outdoor settings during activities that involve sustained close contact with others, or when community levels of COVID-19 are high.
 - Ensure proper handwashing/sanitizing.
 - Ensure social distancing when eating/drinking.

We thank you for your patience as we reviewed the available guidance and worked with DOH to provide guidance to help maintain a safe environment for our keiki in order to maintain in-person learning and child care services. We will remain alert for new guidance so that we can be responsive and flexible to align with any updates and recommendations for children in care, while ensuring practices that promote a healthy and safe environment across child care settings. If you have any questions, please contact your Child Care Licensing Worker.

Mahalo for your cooperation and understanding.

Sincerely,



Cathy Betts
Director