

**FORGE**

**Early Learning Center**

**COVID-19 Health and Safety**  
**Plan**

**Updated March 1, 2022**

This Health and Safety plan was created to comply with guidance and policy issued by the Office of Child Care and Department of Early Learning, the Pennsylvania Department of Health and with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's guidelines related to the prevention of the spread of the COVID-19 virus within childcare centers. This plan will be available to staff and families.

### **Drop off and Pick up Procedures:**

#### Child Arrival:

Parents are permitted to enter the building using their lobby access key fob. Masks are now strongly recommended for all individuals over the age of 2 entering a childcare facility. Parents have been requested to not bring sick children to the center. If their child is presenting with any of the following symptoms, parents must contact Forge ELC prior to arriving for care.

ONE of the following:

- new or persistent cough
- shortness of breath
- new loss of sense of smell or taste

TWO of the following:

- fever 100.4 or higher
- chills
- muscle pain
- headache
- sore throat
- vomiting/nausea
- diarrhea
- fatigue
- runny /congested nose

The director will determine if the child is able to attend and if the child will need a negative COVID-19 test prior to returning.

If a child has been tested positive and/or is exposed to COVID-19 or shares a residence with someone who has tested positive and/or has been exposed, the parent is to contact the director prior to arriving at the center so proper CDC guidance is followed.

Staff Arrival- Upon arrival for their shift, staff will wash their hands prior to entering their classroom. Staff will also follow guidelines written above for any individuals with symptoms of COVID-19.

The director will determine if the staff person needs to obtain a COVID-9 negative result prior to returning to the center.

If a staff person has tested positive and/or is exposed to COVID-19 or shares a residence with someone who has tested positive and/or has been exposed, the staff person is to contact the director prior to arriving at the center so proper CDC guidance is followed.

Staff are required to wear masks unless they have an approved exemption as per PA State Mask Mandate effective September 7, 2021.

#### Child Departure:

Parents may enter the building using their lobby access key fob and proceed directly to their child's classroom. Masks are strongly recommended for all family members over 2 years of age in a childcare facility. Parents are requested to not enter the classrooms if at all possible. If circumstances are such that parents need to enter the class, it should be as brief as possible. Please refrain from allowing siblings from entering into other classrooms.

#### **Hand washing:**

Hands are washed at the following times:

- At drop off each day
- After each sneeze or cough (if they aren't wearing mask)
- If the child has their hands in their mouth
- After toileting/diapering
- before/after meals.
- If a baby or young toddler sneezes or coughs on an item being shared by friends the item will be removed from use until it can be sanitized.

Staff can ensure proper hand washing by: encouraging children to follow the posted visual signs near each sink. Frequently review proper hand washing with the class.

- Remind school-aged children of proper hand washing practices
- Supervise each child ages 3-5 with hand washing
- Assist each child ages 2-3 with hand washing.
- Wash the hand of children ages 0-2 hands

#### Proper Hand Washing Procedure:

- Wet hands and apply soap
- Lather with soap between fingers/ back and front of hands for 20 sec (sing ABCs or hand washing song).

- Rinse and thoroughly dry.
- There are posters demonstrating proper hand washing instructions and images at each sink throughout the building.

Hand Sanitizer: Hand Sanitizer is for adult/staff use only and cannot be used on the children without written permission from the parent.

### **Masks:**

It is strongly recommended that all individuals over the age of 2 wear masks in a childcare center.

When not in use, place the mask in a brown paper bag labeled with the child's name or in the child's cubby.

Masks will be replaced when wet or soiled.

Parents are requested to send in additional masks in case their child's mask needs to be replaced.

### **Meals/snacks:**

- Staff should ensure children are sitting as socially distanced as possible during meals and snack
- Masks are removed for snacks and meals
- Masks should be placed in labeled paper bags during meals.
- Tables should be clean and then disinfected with bleach/water solution. Solution must sit to air dry for at least 10 mins.

### **Classroom Procedures:**

#### AM Preparation:

- Refill bleach bottles each day with freshly made bleach: water concentration solutions
- Confirm bleach concentration solutions are accurate using testing paper
- Open windows as much as possible - indoor temp can not exceed 85\*
- Return disinfected toys to shelves

#### Clean Frequently Touched Areas Schedule:

Staff will continue to frequently use the approved bleach solution or Lysol spray to clean the following areas:

- Fridge Handles
- Door Knobs (exterior and interior)
- Phones
- Staff and Children Faucets/ Sinks
- Toilets/ Flush Handle
- Light Switches
- Tablets - do not wipe the screen with any solution

Staff Bathroom: Teachers will follow a weekly rotating schedule displaying who is responsible for cleaning and disinfecting the staff bathroom/break room and lobby areas.

Cleaning of Toys/Items:

- Toys that have been in a child's mouth or exposed to bodily fluids will be sanitized using the approved disinfectant.
- Soiled items are to remain out of reach of children until disinfected.

Outside play: Classrooms will not be combined on the playground whenever possible. In addition to each class's designated outdoor time prior to lunch, a rotating schedule for morning and afternoon playground usage is posted in each classroom. We will maximize outside playtime whenever possible. Masks do not need to be worn while outdoors.

Napping- Children's bedding is to be placed head to foot, spread out as much as possible. Remove masks and place in each child's labeled brown paper bag or in their cubby. Sleeping bags are sent home weekly for cleaning.

Closing Procedures:

- Bleach bottles should be emptied and left upside down in sink to dry
- Classrooms should have toys left to dry overnight
- Cleaning and sanitizing of lobby/common areas
- Vacuum all carpeted areas once a classroom/hallway is empty
- Close and lock all windows

### **Standard Illness/ Sick Policy (Parents Handbook):**

Parents are asked to please not bring a child to the center if he/she is ill. Additionally, staff is asked to not report to the center if he/she is feeling ill. A child is not permitted in the center if he or she does not feel well enough to participate comfortably in the usual activities of the program, or if the staff cannot care for the sick child without interfering with the care of the other children. Additionally, a child will not be permitted in the center if there is any evidence of the following:

- Temperature of 100.5 degrees or higher;
- Diarrhea;
- Vomiting;
- The contagious stage of any communicable disease;
  - Severe nasal or chest congestion;
  - Rash of undetermined origin; or
  - Behavior indicating pain or distress.

If a child appears to be ill at arrival, a member of the staff will determine whether the child will be accepted for care. Children who become ill during the day must be picked up immediately. If a parent cannot be reached, staff will call your emergency contact person. The Director or senior staff member on site has final authority to determine whether a child may remain at the center. When parents arrive to pick up a child who is ill, they will be asked to sign an Illness Exclusion note. The note will specifically state the earliest time your child may return to the center. **Children must be free of all symptoms for 24 hours before returning to the center.** They must be fever free without the use of fever-reducing medication such as Tylenol or Motrin. If your physician approves the child's return to the center before the 24-hour period, a doctor's note and explanation are required.

In order to minimize disruption, we encourage all parents to make alternative arrangements in advance for those occasions when a child must remain at home or must be picked up early due to illness.

#### Illness:

Children or staff who present with any of the following symptoms must see the director prior to entering the center.

#### If a child becomes ill with ANY symptoms (COVID or otherwise) during the day:

- The child is to be isolated from other children until parents can arrive.
- Windows should be open for ventilation
- One staff person to stay with child until parents arrives

If a child or staff member is diagnosed with a POSITIVE CONFIRMED case of COVID-19 AND has been in the center within 48 hours prior to onset of symptoms.

- Director will notify parents of enrolled children of confirmed case and implement procedures based on the current guidelines. See attached.
- Director will notify staff
- Director will notify the Department of Health - Montgomery County to report the positive case of any individual 2 years of age or younger.
- Director will notify the Department of Human Services via Pelican website's COVID reporting tool CFAST for any individual 2 years of age or younger.

If a child or staff member is EXPOSED\* to someone who has tested positive to COVID-19.:

- Please see attached documents for current guidance on exposure to COVID-19.

\*As per OCDEL Announcement C-20-06: Exposure is defined as being within 6 feet of the individual who tests positive for COVID-19 for a period of 15 minutes or more. It also means coming into direct contacts with droplets from a COVID-19 positive individual. Persons who test positive are considered infectious 48 hours before the onset of symptoms. People testing positive but do not have symptoms are considered infectious 2 days after exposure (if known) or starting 2 days before test date (if exposure is unknown).

### **Medical Care**

It is Forge ELC's policy to refrain from dispensing any medication to children, even non-prescription medication. We will consider exceptions to this policy in the event of a chronic condition, extraordinary necessity, or to comply with applicable law. Medications must accompany a completed medication log from the parent. Medications cannot be given if their expiration date has passed. Prescription medications MUST have the printed pharmacy label on the medication and must be written for the child. Staff can only administer the dosage as prescribed by the medical provider.

Parents can assist in keeping all of the children and staff healthy by notifying the center promptly if their child or other family members have been exposed to an infectious illness.

In case of a medical emergency, the Director or senior staff member will call 9-1-1 as well as the child's parent or guardian. When necessary, the Director or senior staff member will accompany the child to a local physician's office or emergency room.