



COVID-19 Childcare Frequently Asked Questions

Where does the COMO receive their guidance and guidelines for reopening?

As a licensed childcare facility, the COMO has a long-standing partnership with the state of Connecticut and works closely with the Office of Early Childhood to implement and stay up-to-date on new and changing policies surrounding best practices to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19. As a nationally accredited facility through NAEYC, the COMO also has access to NAEYC experts and resources directly relating to the early childhood field and best practices.

Why does child care remain open when the schools are closed?

The State of Connecticut has deemed childcare as an essential function in the Governor's Executive Order 7H, therefore, the state has not mandated closure. For those programs that are open or opening, the state has outlined several new guidelines for programs to implement to support the health and safety of staff and children by reducing the risk of exposure to COVID-19

What is the new drop-off procedure?

Upon arrival, and before entering the building, all staff and children will be screened for any observable illness, including cough or respiratory distress. The screening will also include identifying the body temperature for each individual entering the building to confirm that temperatures are below 100 degrees.

- Drop-off screening will occur at the main entrance of the building and in between the two entry-way doors.
- There should be one family at a time in the space while drop-off screenings are occurring.
- Once the child's temperature is taken, it will be shown to the COMO staff member through the established barrier (the entryway door) to confirm that it is below 100 degrees.
- Parents will then help their child wash/sanitize his or her hands at the hand-washing station set up in the vestibule.
- COMO staff will then sign in the child to the program.

Do I need to bring my own thermometer for the health screening?



Families are encouraged to bring and use their own thermometer for the screening. If a COMO thermometer is used, the family will need to disinfect the thermometer after use (there will be a sanitizing station set up for this purpose).

What if my child's temperature is above 100 degrees?

Any staff or child with a temperature above 100 degrees will not be permitted into the building.

What if my child has allergies, not covid-related?

Each child will have their temperature taken prior to being admitted into the building each day. Staff will also observe children for any signs of illness which could include flushed cheeks, rapid breathing or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity), fatigue, or extreme fussiness, cough, or respiratory distress. If any of these symptoms are observed, the child will not be permitted into the building.

How will you help my child adjust to the new guidelines including staff wearing masks?

In the recent weeks, COMO staff and teachers have been trained on how to talk to and support children during a pandemic. This training will help when discussing the new guidelines with children specifically relating to social distancing and teachers wearing face coverings as these are both very new concepts that can seem very unusual at first. Staff will emphasize how we are going to keep the day fun for the children despite the new guidelines.

Has staff received training on supporting children in a pandemic?

COMO staff and teachers were trained through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) on Talking to and Supporting Children and Ourselves During the Pandemic. Staff have been staying informed and updated on all new information coming out from our various state partners including: OEC, the CDC, and NAEYC regarding best practices in a pandemic.

How will social distancing be implemented for the groups of children?



Group sizes will be limited to no more than 10 children per space/classroom and each group will maintain the same space/classroom each day. In addition, we are preparing individual activity baskets to limit the use of shared materials that cannot be easily disinfected (playdough, crayons, art supplies, and other sensory materials). Games have been researched and created that do not require shared equipment or children to be in close proximity to each other. COMO outdoor classrooms, and outdoor spaces in general, will be integrated more frequently into the daily activities.

Where do we wait while other families are being screened in the vestibule?

Families will wait in their vehicle, in the order of arrival, until their turn to be screened for drop-off.

Can I enter the building with my child?

Drop-off will occur at the main entrance of the COMO, in between the two doors. A staff member will bring your child to their designated room from this point. Parents will not be permitted in the building as a means to reduce children and staff's chances of exposure to COVID-19.

What if a child becomes sick while in the program?

There will be an identified space, away from other children, for any child with an elevated temperature or who may be ill while in the program: a "sick room".

What if there is a positive COVID diagnosis in the program?

Any positive cases of COVID-19 will be reported to the Connecticut Department of Public Health, local department of health, and the Office of Early Childhood. Families and staff will also be notified due to potential exposure. Depending on the extent of exposure, closure of the room OR the entire program for 14 days may need to happen.

Does my child need to wear a mask?

A child in a child care setting, including those in youth camps, are not required to wear a face mask, per the Office of Early Childhood. Children over age 2 may be permitted to wear masks if requested by families.



Will staff be wearing masks?

All COMO staff will be wearing face coverings at all times while in the building and in outdoor spaces.

What are the COMO's cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitizing policies?

The COMO follows cleaning and sanitizing procedures as outlined by [NAEYC](#) and the [CDC](#). In effort to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19, COMO staff will continue with and intensify current practices of cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitizing procedures. Staff will check-off, date, and initial the Cleaning, Sanitizing and Disinfecting Chart posted in each classroom on a daily basis. As an extra precaution, the COMO building is being completely fogged with disinfectant on a weekly basis.

What is the COMO's hand-washing policy?

All staff and children will wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Hand-washing should occur:

- upon arrival to the program and before coming in contact with any other person
- before and after eating
- after sneezing, coughing or nose blowing
- before handling food
- after using the restroom
- after touching or cleaning surfaces that may be contaminated
- after using any shared equipment.

All staff and children will continue to implement proper respiratory hygiene.

- Children and staff will cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or the corner of their elbow.

Will hand sanitizer be available and used throughout the day?

Hand sanitizer will be available for use.

Information from the Centers for Disease Control states that handwashing is one of the best ways to protect yourself and your family from getting sick. Wash your



hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

Will my child be using shared spaces?

Group sizes will be limited to no more than 10 children per space/classroom and each group will maintain the same space/classroom each day.

Will the playground be disinfected?

COMO staff will disinfect frequently touched areas (monkey bars, handrails, etc.) prior to leaving the playground with a group.

How are you making programs fun for the children while still maintaining the guidelines?

The COMO is dedicated to creating a safe and fun environment for our program participants. Our staff has been hard at work designing fun activities that take social distancing and other health guidelines into account. Our aim is to take advantage of the COMO Campus and incorporate substantial outside time. We have also prepared individual activity baskets.

Can my child bring in nap items from home?

Families are encouraged to bring in nap bedding for their preschool-aged child. Children also may bring in a soft toy to be used as a comfort item while napping. The CDC recommends to use bedding (sheets, pillows, blankets, sleeping bags) that can be easily washed. Each child's bedding will be kept separate and will be sent home weekly.

What is the new child pick-up policy?

If your child is in programming in Preschool 1, pick-up will be at the side door that has direct access to the classroom. If your child is in programming in Preschool 2, pick-up will be at the side door that directly accesses the hallway in front of the classroom.



If your child is a camp participant, pick up will occur at the side door of the COMO building, nearest the parking lot. Families can call the COMO site cell phone to alert teachers that they have arrived to pick up if they plan to do so before the scheduled pick up time.

- Parents will practice social distancing by remaining in their vehicles until the door is clear of other families picking up.
- Parents will remain outside, 6 feet from the door, while their child is being released to them from programming.
- COMO staff will sign each child out for the day.

Where do I wait to pick up my child from the program?

If your child is in programming in Preschool 1, pick-up will be at the side door that has direct access to the classroom. If your child is in programming in Preschool 2, pick-up will be at the side door that directly accesses the hallway in front of the classroom. If your child is a camp participant, pick up will occur at the side door of the COMO building, nearest the parking lot.

We ask that you please wait in your car until the pick up area is clear of other families. For those picking up their child in Preschool 1 we ask that you maintain at least 6 feet of social distancing from other waiting families.

Will my child still be going to the beach?

Yes. The requirement for no more than 10 children in one space also applies when children are engaged in swimming activities.

Please note, as safety precautions due to COVID-19:

The water spigot will not be operational.

The floating dock will not be installed.

What is the COMO's cancellation and refund policy?

COMO credit will be granted, minus a nonrefundable 20% fee, when written notice of withdrawal is submitted two weeks prior to the program start date. A full refund will be granted when a program is cancelled by the



COMO. During COVID: A refund will be granted, minus a nonrefundable 25% fee, with written notice.