

Operations at Cornerstone Center for Early Learning in the Time of COVID-19



CORNERSTONE CENTER FOR EARLY LEARNING

OVERVIEW

Cornerstone Center for Early Learning (CCEL) puts the health and safety of children, families and staff first. We continue to stay apprised of the latest information regarding the COVID-19 virus through the St. Louis City Health Department, Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS), and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). CCEL will use guidelines, recommendations and regulations from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and St. Louis City Health Department to establish best practices to remain open during the COVID-19 pandemic. Constant communication between these organizations is required to have the most up-to-date information to make informed decisions around the operation of programming.

This information will be used in conjunction with the CDC's guidance for [programs that remain open](#) and their guidance for administrators of [child care programs and K-12 schools](#). This guidance does not supersede applicable federal, state, and local laws and policies for child care programs.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html#General>

**Cornerstone Center for Early Learning will continue
with modified hours of 7:30am-4:30pm Monday-Friday**

Supporting the Emotional and Social Well Being

Cornerstone Center has continued operations during Covid-19 since June 2020. Now after a year things continue to evolve. This document is to help families understand current protocols.

Teacher Support

Your classroom teacher is your number one supporter right now. If you have not already done so, please plan to connect with your child's classroom teacher(s). If you need help with that let us know.

Administrative Support

The Administrative Team members are here to support children and families. Families who may have individual concerns or issues should schedule a time to meet virtually or via the phone with Ta'Lisha Franklin, Center Director. It is our goal to best support you and your family.

General Preparedness and Planning--Preventing the Spread of COVID-19

Our staff have received training in the proper three-step cleaning and sanitizing process and our classrooms and communal spaces reflect necessary changes in the environment to mitigate the spread of the virus. We ask that all families review proper personal hygiene techniques with their children on a daily basis.

Hand Hygiene and Cleaning Procedures

- [Wash hands](#) often with soap and water. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
 - Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
 - Remember to supervise young children when they use hand sanitizer to prevent swallowing alcohol.
- Nightly deep cleaning and sanitizing will occur
- Playground equipment will be sanitized daily
- Bathrooms and other high contact areas will be sanitized throughout the day
- Toys will be sanitized throughout the day after use

Personal Protective Equipment

Staff at CCEL have been provided with at least three reusable/washable cloth face masks. Disposable face masks are on hand in the event they are needed. Staff will continue to wear gloves during cleaning, diapering and preparing food. Hand washing or use of an alcohol-based hand sanitizer after these procedures is always required, whether or not gloves are used.

Per City of St. Louis Mask Guidelines, all children age 5 years and older are required to wear a mask while at Cornerstone for Early Learning.

Procedures for sick children and staff

- If children are sick (uncontrollable cough, runny nose, fever, fatigue), please keep them at home and notify the center of the absence.
- If a staff member is sick, please remain at home and notify the center immediately.
- Anyone who is out sick will be asked the following questions:
 - *Are you exhibiting flu-like symptoms such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath?
 - *Do you feel fatigued?
 - *Do you have a loss of taste?
 - *Have you recently been exposed to anyone that tested positive for COVID-19?
 - *Have you been tested for COVID-19? If yes, what were the results?
- Staff will continually monitor the health of children throughout the day. If a child shows any symptoms (cough, runny nose, fever, fatigue, changes in behavior), the parent or guardian will be notified and the child will be escorted with a staff member to the designated sick area.
- Children may return to the center after clearance from a physician or a negative COVID 19 test or when symptoms have resolved for 24 hours without medication.
- Sick staff members should not return to work until they have met the [criteria to discontinue home isolation](#) or have a negative COVID 19 test.
- Staff and families must notify the center immediately of any pending COVID-19 tests and remain out of work until the negative test result is received.

If someone becomes sick:

- A designated space in the main office is set as the sick space. Any child who becomes sick at the center will stay there (with another adult at all times) until he or she is picked up. The room will then be cleaned and disinfected.
- Families at the center will be notified when any child or adult is positive for COVID-19.
- CCEL will follow CDC guidance on how to [disinfect the building or facility](#) if someone is sick. We have contracted with a cleaning crew that has the proper disinfectants to properly clean our building.

If COVID-19 is confirmed in a child or staff member, we will:

- Notify local health officials. Cornerstone Center will follow the advice of the Health Department on if and when to close the center or classroom and for how long.
- Notify all individuals who have come in contact with or in close proximity to the confirmed individual.
- Close off areas used by the person who is sick.
- Wait up to 24 hours or as long as possible before cleaning and disinfecting to allow respiratory droplets to settle before cleaning and disinfecting.
- Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who is sick, such as offices, bathrooms, and common areas.
- If more than 7 days have passed since the person who is sick visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary.



If an adult at Cornerstone is exposed to COVID-19, is not experiencing symptoms, and has been vaccinated within last 6 months or has received their booster

- No Quarantine required unless symptoms develop

If an adult at Cornerstone is exposed to COVID-19 and is unvaccinated or it has been longer than 6 months since they received their vaccine and is not experiencing symptoms:

- Must quarantine for 10 days and receive a negative PCR test after day 5 to return to work

If an adult is experiencing Covid-19 Symptoms

- Automatically must be tested with either available PCR test.
- At this time, Cornerstone does not accept at-home test results.

If test result is negative

may return to work after 24-hours symptom free without medication.

If test result is positive

isolate for 10 days from the date of positive test result

If COVID-19 is confirmed in a household member of a child or staff member, we will follow CDC/St. Louis City Health Department Guidelines.

What are the public health recommendations for close contacts who have ongoing exposure to COVID-19?

People who are unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated and have ongoing exposure to COVID-19 should:

- Get tested immediately when they are identified as a close contact.
- Begin quarantine immediately and continue to quarantine throughout the isolation period of the person with COVID-19.
- Continue to quarantine for an additional 10 days starting the day after the end of isolation for the person with COVID-19.
- Get tested again 5-7 days after the end of isolation of the infected household member.
- Wear a mask when in contact with the person with COVID-19 throughout the person's isolation period.
- Wear a mask when in contact with other people in the home until quarantine ends.
- Isolate immediately if they develop symptoms of COVID-19 or test positive.

People who are fully vaccinated and have ongoing exposure to COVID-19 should:

- Get tested 5-7 days after their first exposure. A person with COVID-19 is considered infectious starting 2 days before they develop symptoms, or 2 days before the date of their positive test if they do not have symptoms.



- Get tested again 5-7 days after the end of isolation for the person with COVID-19.
- Wear a mask when in contact with the person with COVID-19 throughout the infected person's isolation period.
- Wear a mask indoors in public until 10 days after the infected person's isolation period ends or until the fully vaccinated close contact receives their final test result.
- Isolate immediately if they develop symptoms of COVID-19 or test positive.

When can a person who was sick return to the program?

- The minimum criteria is that a person must be symptom free WITHOUT the use of medication for 24 hours

Additional readmission factors based on answers to COVID exposure and symptoms

Procedures During Time of COVID-19

Clean and Disinfect

[Caring for Our Children](#) (CFOC) provides national standards for cleaning, sanitizing and disinfection of educational facilities for children. Toys that can be put in the mouth will be cleaned and sanitized. Other hard surfaces, including diaper changing stations, door knobs, and floors will be disinfected continuously throughout the day by teachers and the cleaning crew.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) provides [guidance on cleaning and disinfecting objects and surfaces](#). This guidance provides specific information and supplies that are needed to implement a vigorous cleaning and disinfecting schedule.

Here are the procedures that CCEL has in place:

- All toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will be removed from classrooms.
- All cleaning materials are to be kept secure and out of reach of children.
- Cleaning products should not be used near children, and staff should ensure that there is adequate ventilation when using these products to prevent children from inhaling toxic fumes.
- Cot sheets, crib sheets, lovies and blankets are laundered weekly. All soft blankets and lovies must remain at the center and be machine-washable.
- Cots and cribs are sanitized after each use.
- The playground equipment will be sanitized daily.
- Children's books, like other paper-based materials such as mail or envelopes, are not considered a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfection procedures.

Healthy Hand Hygiene Behavior

- All children and staff engage in hand hygiene at the following times (not an exhaustive list):
 - Arrival to the facility and after breaks
 - Before and after preparing food or drinks
 - Before and after eating or handling food, or feeding children
 - Before and after administering medication or medical ointment
 - Before and after diapering
 - After using the toilet or helping a child use the bathroom
 - After coming in contact with bodily fluid
 - After playing outdoors or in sand
 - Before and after handling sensory material such as playdough
 - After handling garbage



- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Hand sanitizer is available at the entrance to the building where soap and water are not readily available.
- Assist children with handwashing, including infants who cannot wash hands alone.
 - After assisting children with handwashing, staff should also wash their hands.

Parent Drop-Off and Pick-Up

- For the most specific information on drop-off and pick-up, please see this [document](#).
- Children will be dropped off at the center at the gate to the playground.
- A portable handwashing station is set up at the entrance of the facility, so that children can wash their hands before going to their classroom.
- Parents/guardians will sign in using an electronic sign-in system.
- The staff member assisting with drop-off will use a no-touch thermometer to take the child's temperature. Then the child will wash their hands at the portable handwashing station. Infants and toddlers will wash their hands in the classroom.

Screening and Exclusion Procedures Upon Arrival

Persons who have a fever of 100⁰ or above or other signs of illness (cough, runny nose, fatigue) will not be admitted to the facility. Parents should be on the alert for signs of illness in their children and to keep them home when they are sick. Please call the center if you are keeping your child home due to this reason.

- Individuals who have a fever or other signs of illness will not be admitted into the center.
- Individuals with a history of COVID-19 exposure and those showing signs of illness will not be admitted into the center.
 - Children who are sick, with the typical reasons kids get sick (vomiting, rash, diarrhea, pink eye etc.) should be excluded in accordance with licensing policies.
 - **Individuals should be symptom and fever free for at least 24 hours**, without the use of fever-reducing medications (Tylenol® or Advil®) before returning.
 - Current information about when individuals who have been exposed to COVID-19 or individuals with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should stay home is available on the [COVID-19 Resource Center](#).

Therapy/Volunteer Program at Cornerstone

Cornerstone Center has resumed a limited volunteer and therapy program. All those entering classrooms must be fully-vaccinated and go through same screening procedures as staff and children

Food Preparation and Meal Service

- Breakfast, lunch and snacks will be prepared by Cornerstone staff.



- Formula and baby food will continue to be provided.
- All meals will be served to children instead of family-style dining so children are not using the same serving utensils.
- Staff will continue to eat with children at tables

Class Groupings

- We will try to maintain children in their regular classroom with their consistent classroom teachers as much as possible
- We will always maintain ratio and at times may need to move a child to a different classroom to maintain those ratios
- We will keep accurate records of children and staff that were in a classroom space in the event that contact tracing becomes necessary

Physical Space

- Rugs will be removed, replaced with plastic mats, or steam cleaned on a regular basis.
- To maintain a sense of LOVE, BELONGING and APPROPRIATE POWER for our center, the physical space in each classroom will include family boards/pictures, individual cubbies, job charts, etc. Child artwork will remain on the walls so children may see themselves reflected.
- In infant-toddler classrooms, all adults will wear shoe coverings when entering or designated 'classroom shoes' to reduce the risk of outside contaminants being on the floor where children crawl and play.

Use of Playgrounds/Outdoor Space

Spending time outside is an important time of the day to retain. Children of all ages will have an opportunity for daily outdoor play, weather permitting.

- Two classrooms at a time (stable groups) on the playground
- Clean and disinfect equipment daily

What should we bring to school?

- Children should come to the center with two extra changes of clothes in a ziplock bag with his or her name on it on the first day.
- Families are asked to minimize outside toys brought into the center. Lovies or special naptime blankets or toys may be brought to the center on the first day, but will be washed and kept in the child's cubby throughout the time here.
- CCEL will continue to provide all diapers and wipes.



Communication with Families

Regular communication with families is important. It will be even more difficult now that you cannot physically see your child's teacher. Every Sunday we will send a school-wide electronic newsletter. (Infants and toddlers will continue to receive daily sheets.) Families are also encouraged to call throughout the day to check in on his or her child's progress or well-being. Family members may call the center and be transferred to their child's classroom throughout the day.