

Frequently Asked Questions

General questions

How does KinderCare make decisions regarding coronavirus?

We're working closely with the CDC and state and local health departments to respond as quickly as possible to their latest guidance and direction.

How does coronavirus spread?

The [CDC](#) is a good resource for the latest information on how coronavirus spreads. Coronavirus (also known as COVID-19) is a new disease, and we are continuing to learn about how it spreads and its severity.

Can someone spread the virus without being sick?

Because coronavirus is a new disease and we are continuing to learn about it, the [CDC](#) is a good resource for the latest information.

What are your criteria for closing a classroom or a center?

We have developed our own industry-leading internal response plan (in partnership with our medical advisors) to proceed with as much caution as possible in securing a safe environment for your children. We also continue to closely monitor and follow the guidance of the CDC and the local health department.

There are a few scenarios in which we would close a classroom or the center:

- If a child or teacher from a pod is presumed positive or tested positive for COVID-19, we will close the pod for a minimum of 72 hours and a maximum of 14 days.
- If more than one child or teacher from a pod is presumed positive or tested positive for COVID-19, we will close the pod for 14 days.
- If children and/or teachers from more than one pod become ill, we will close the center for 14 days.

Any decision to close our classes or centers would be made in partnership with local health departments. If a case of COVID-19 is found at the center, we would follow our response plan and the direction of public health officials. We'll be sure to quickly communicate with you so you're informed about all actions we take.

How likely is it that the center would close?

Due to the many unknown factors and evolving circumstances, we cannot determine the likelihood of a center closure. We continue to closely monitor the guidance of the CDC and local health department. Any decision to close would be made according to our own response plan and in partnership with the local health department. If a center closure is required, center directors will keep families updated with frequent correspondence.

What if you don't have enough teachers because they are all out due to concern of coronavirus in the community?

We're hard at work to ensure that our centers stay open to support our communities.

How would we be notified about closures and reopening?

We will communicate closures and reopening with you via email, the KinderCare App (in all centers where applicable), and updates to the KinderCare website (for closures lasting longer than 72 hours). The website will not always be up to date for closures lasting only 48–72 hours due to how quickly circumstances evolve. In these cases, your center director will be in close communication with you about updates.

Do I get charged tuition if the center is closed due to COVID-19 concerns and will my child's spot be held?

- For a 72-hour center closure, tuition will not be suspended so we can continue to pay our teachers.
- For a 14-day family-specific isolation, tuition can be suspended, but your child's spot cannot be held or guaranteed. If you choose to continue your tuition payments, we will hold your child's spot.
- For a 14-day full-center or pod-specific closure, tuition will be suspended, and your child's spot is held.

Keeping our children and staff safe and healthy

Are children required to wear masks?

The CDC and our team of pediatric experts have found evidence that the COVID-19 virus is airborne. We also have more information about how the virus spreads once an individual is vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus. Because of this, our mask guidance is as follows:

- We recommend children ages 2+ wear a mask.
- We require children 5+ in our school-age classrooms to wear a mask.
- We require all adults (parents and teachers) to wear a mask, regardless of vaccination status.

We want to ensure we're doing everything we can to protect these children and their teachers. Wearing masks is one of the most effective ways we can prevent exposure.

How are you keeping children safe and healthy in your centers?

We're partnering with local health departments and closely monitoring the latest updates from the CDC and WHO to ensure we're following their guidance on the most up-to-date recommendations.

In our centers, we're practicing extra precautions to ensure your children's health and safety. [Please see a complete list of our newest health and safety measures.](#)

To ensure the safety and well-being of everyone in our community, we're being vigilant about enforcing our policy of excluding all children who have been sick until they've been symptom-free without medication for at least 24 hours (depending on your state's requirements). While we realize this may be a burden, staying home when sick is one of the best ways to keep illness from spreading.

How does coronavirus affect children?

The [CDC](#) has the most up-to-date and reliable information on coronavirus's impact on children.

What personal protective equipment (PPE) do you use in your centers to protect children and staff?

All teachers are required to wear masks. We ask that all adults and children over the age of 5 wear masks in our center. You may see staff in our school-age classroom wearing face shields in addition to masks, and staff in our other classrooms wearing face shields in addition to masks during activities like feeding, changing, and toileting. Also, teachers in our infant and toddler classrooms may wear smocks during close contact.

How do you limit exposure between classrooms?

To limit potential exposure, we've implemented a "pod" structure where children are grouped appropriately to stay separated from others. Teachers and staff will also stay within their assigned pod each day to minimize cross-contamination. As we begin to reassess our health and safety procedures, your center may adopt "homeroom" classrooms. These classrooms will serve as your point of pick-up and drop-off each day and will allow us to create a quick and safe solution for starting and ending your child's day. These "homerooms" will combine children of multiple ages under supervision, with developmentally appropriate activities.

What if a child or teacher shows symptoms associated with coronavirus while they are at the center?

If a child or teacher begins to show symptoms of coronavirus or any other illness, we'll follow our illness policy. In that case, the child or teacher would be asked to return home, see a doctor, and partner with the local health department to obtain a recommendation on how to proceed. If a child or teacher become sick, we ask that they stay home until they've been symptom-free without medication for at least 24 hours (depending on your state's requirements).

We'll continue to be diligent about enforcing our existing policy of excluding sick children and employees. While we understand the additional burden this may cause, staying home when sick is one of the best ways to stop illness from spreading.

What can I do with my child to help prevent transmission?

We see our centers as safe and clean sanctuaries for children to learn and grow, and we need your partnership. [Please review our updated health and safety measures so you're prepared for our pick-up and drop-off procedures.](#) Many of these measures can be done at home or when out in public to help keep your child healthy and safe.

If your child has a fever or trouble breathing, we ask that they stay home until they've been symptom-free without medication for at least 24 hours (depending on your state's requirements). If you choose to keep your child at home, please call your center and let us know. While we understand the additional burden this may cause, staying home when sick is one of the best ways to stop illness from spreading.

Does KinderCare have the necessary cleaning supplies?

Yes, we have all necessary supplies available in all of our centers. We use hospital-grade cleaning products from EcoLab to keep our centers and our playgrounds safe. If you have any concerns, please contact your center director directly. We also use MERV-13 air filters to capture particles in the air.

Are you hiring a professional vendor to clean the center?

We're diligently cleaning and disinfecting the center throughout the day, as well as regularly practicing good handwashing and respiratory etiquette. These are the most effective methods outlined by the CDC to prevent spreading illness.

We're working closely with local health departments to determine when a professional cleaning is recommended. In the event an individual in the center has confirmed direct exposure to a confirmed case, is being tested for, or has been confirmed to have coronavirus, we would ensure a cleaning takes place prior to the return of any employee, child, or family.

Can my family attend the center after vacation/travel? Do we have to quarantine for 14 days before we return to the center?

Being part of a center community means you have an obligation to inform your center when there may be an opportunity for increased risk or exposure to COVID-19. When traveling, some areas and activities pose a higher risk than others. Please let your Center Director know about any activities that might increase your family's risk of exposure to determine if you should stay home from the center for 14 days when you return. [See tips from the CDC](#) and the [CDC's FAQs](#) for additional guidance around traveling during the pandemic.

Supporting our teachers and staff

How is KinderCare taking care of employees that are impacted by coronavirus?

Nothing is more important than the health and safety of our employees and the children and families we serve every day. We have a dedicated team supporting all our centers across the country to ensure they have what they need to continue serving our communities. We also support our teachers' decisions around their and their families' health and safety, and are providing them with options for how to cover their time off should they choose to stay home.

What happens if a teacher or staff member believes they had direct exposure or close contact with a confirmed case in the community?

In this instance, we'd work with the teacher or staff member to gather details and then work with the local health department on guidance. Until we have that specific guidance, we ask that the teacher to stay at home.

If the employee confirms they've had close contact exposure to a confirmed case, we follow [CDC guidance](#) and ask them to stay home in self-isolation for a period of 14 days. We will welcome them back to our center at the end of 14 days if they haven't experienced any symptoms. If they do experience symptoms, they'll need to notify us and get medical clearance before coming back.