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STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD



Connecticut Office of
 Early Childhood

Beth Bye
 Commissioner

DATE: May 20, 2021 **REVISED December 13, 2021**

TO: Providers of Services to Young Children

FROM: Beth Bye, Commissioner

RE: Coronavirus Memo 41 **REVISED**
 Update to Requirements and Guidance; Change in Mask Requirement for Staff;
 Expiration of memos 21 and 27

Revision December 13, 2021	Updated link to CDC COVID-19 Guidance for Operating Early Care and Education/ Child Care Programs
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As Governor Lamont eases restrictions and the public health emergency nears an end, the Office of Early Childhood is able to transition many requirements to recommendations. This memo summarizes the current status of requirements and recommendations, so that providers may continue to ensure healthy settings and maintain compliance. Providers are strongly urged to continue to reference guidance and check for updates from the [CDC](#), [DPH](#), including [What You Need to Know: COVID-19 Vaccination, Mask-Wearing, and Social Distancing](#) and OEC. The OEC is currently updating resources and will continue to remove memos as the public health emergency ends.

Requirements

As of May 20, 2021, mask guidance is changed. Staff, vaccinated or unvaccinated, are no longer required to wear masks outdoors. The requirement for staff, vaccinated or unvaccinated, to wear masks indoors in child care and youth camps will continue in accordance with OEC memos. Children 3 years of age and older in child care and youth camps must continue to wear masks indoors, with exceptions provided for children including those with documented medical conditions, disability or special education needs; who are eating, sleeping or resting; are newly enrolled and working toward mask wearing; and those who have just turned 3 years old and provided up to 2 months to acclimate to mask wearing. Children in Residential Camps who sleep together in a cabin, bunkhouse, or other quarters may be defined as a “household cohort” and do not need to wear masks when they are together, whether indoors or outdoors, provided no non-household cohort members are nearby. As infection rates decline, and vaccine eligibility expands, a decision regarding when to lift remaining mask requirements will be made in conjunction with the Office of the Governor and Department of Public Health.

All currently effective waivers of licensing requirements as outlined in OEC memos will end as of June 30, 2021. This includes the waiver that allows licensed family child care providers (DCFH) to serve school age children who are remote learning, full time without an additional staff member.

In February 2020, COVID-19 was added to the List of Reportable Diseases. Those required to report such diseases must report cases of COVID-19 infection immediately to the DPH Epidemiology and Emerging Infection Program (860-509-7994) and the local department of health in the town of residence of the case-patient by telephone on the day of recognition or strong suspicion of the disease. For weekend and afterhours reports to DPH, dial 860-509-8000. Contact information for the local health department can be found at <https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Local-Health-Admin/LHA/Local-Health-Administration---Site-Map>. This requirement will remain in effect permanently and is not dependent upon a declared public health emergency.

Guidance

Providers are reminded to prepare their programs to return to compliance with all licensing requirements. All waivers will expire on June 30, 2021. Licensing inspectors have returned to the field to perform full routine inspections.

It is important to note that while requirements may be lifted, **the OEC strongly recommends that providers continue their efforts to implement public health policies and procedures consistent with CDC recommendations**, to ensure the continued safe operation of programs serving young children. Some programs or individuals may prefer to continue to implement enhanced health practices.

The OEC produced guides, frequently asked questions, and fact sheets to provide education and guidance on how to implement programming during the pandemic. Some of these documents are being replaced with resources that provide expert advice on continuing operations. Some information such as Pyramid and social emotional resources will transition to the OEC's permanent webpage. Pandemic-specific information including [memos](#), funding opportunities and public health information will remain on our [COVID-19 webpage](#).

OEC Memos 21 and 27 are no longer in effect.