

American University
Child Development Center

2022 Parent Handbook
COVID-19 Supplement

4400 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20016-8015
www.american.edu/hr/cdc
Office: 202-885-3330
Fax: 202-885-1388

CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER CONTACT INFORMATION

Office Phone: 202-885-3330

Office Fax: 202-885-1388

Office Email: cdc-info@american.edu

Director : Elizabeth Root
eroot@american.edu

Assistant: Suah Cheong
scheong@american.edu

Green Room: 202-885-3331

Louise Van Schaack
lvans@american.edu

Carmela Daponte-Smith
cdsmith@american.edu

Orange Room: 202-885-3332

Marie Argant
margant@american.edu

Veronica Chirlin
vchirlin@american.edu

LETTER TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

July 2022

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As we continue to operate using protective procedures against Covid-19, we have updated our supplement to the Parent Handbook to highlight policies and procedures associated with COVID-19. For ease of reference, we will refer to this document as the Supplement. The Child Development Center ("Center") teachers and administration are committed to providing a quality program to our students that is safe, child-friendly, and educational.

While many things may seem different with safety procedures in place, we will continue to provide an environment that fosters fun and learning. Our goal is to draw out and inspire the best in our students as we provide them with opportunities to create, explore, and learn.

As the pandemic situation evolves, the changes outlined in this Supplement will remain the "new normal" and is subject to additional changes as warranted or required by law. All modifications for staff and children are informed by guidelines of the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the DC Department of Health (DOH), and the DC Office of the Superintendent of Education (OSSE). These policies and procedures are intended to facilitate a safe and enjoyable place for your children and family. We've made every effort to ensure that the information in the Parent Handbook and Supplement is clear. In instances where there might be conflicting information, the Supplement will supercede the Parent Handbook and you should seek clarification from us as needed. Please read the Parent Handbook and Supplement closely, acknowledge receipt of these documents and agreement with the policies by signing and returning the last page electronically.

Don't hesitate to contact me at eroot@american.edu if you have any questions about the policies and procedures outlined in this Supplement or the Parent Handbook.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Root
Director

*We will refer to all parents, guardians, caregivers of The Center students as "parents/guardians" in this handbook. The AU Child Development Center acknowledges that all families look different, and we strive to find inclusive language that reflects that.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Child Development Center Contact Information	2
Letter to Parents/Guardians.....	3
Communication with Staff and Families	5
Staff Training	5
Parent/Guardian Education.....	5
Arrival and Departure Procedures	5
Daily Health Screening.....	6
Symptoms Check.....	6
Contact Check.....	6
Temperature Check.....	6
Visual Inspection.....	6
Personal Safety and Hygiene Practices	7
Hand Hygiene	7
Schoolwide Hygiene.....	7
Face Masks	8
Requirements for Staff	8
Recommendations and Requirements for Children	9
Physical (Social) Distancing.....	9
Cleaning, Disinfecting, and Sanitizing.....	10
Daily Program Procedures.....	11
Classroom Activities	11
Outdoor Activities.....	11
Lunch and Snacks.....	11
Naptime	12
Personal Belongings.....	12
Late Pick-Up Policy.....	12
Criteria for Exclusion, Dismissal, and Return to the Center.....	13
Exclusion Criteria	13
Dismissal Criteria.....	13
Returning to the Center.....	13
Communication, Exposure, Closure, and Reporting Requirements	14
Communication	14
Exposure.....	14
References.....	15
Parent Handbook Receipt Acknowledgement.....	16

COMMUNICATION WITH STAFF AND FAMILIES

Staff Training

All Center staff members have received pandemic-related health and safety training. Topics included COVID-19 prevention, proper hygiene techniques, the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), signs and symptoms of coronavirus infection, and the guidelines we have established for safe operations.

Staff generally follows the latest OSSE guidance during the COVID-19 pandemic for best practices for health and safety of all staff and children.

Parent/Guardian Education

We will provide parents/guardians with information on the program's policies related to COVID-19, including symptoms, transmission, prevention, and when to seek medical attention. We will also provide parents/guardians with guidance on sharing information with their children in developmentally appropriate ways.

Our plan to share information and guidelines with parents/guardians includes:

- A system to check with parents/guardians daily on the status of their children when children are dropped off at the facility.
- Creating and testing communication systems with parents/guardians (e.g., Listserv)
- Obtaining email addresses and home, work, and mobile phone numbers from parents/guardians so they can be reached at any time.

While the Center will follow guidance from applicable health and licensing local and Federal authorities on minimizing spread and prevention of COVID-19, we cannot eliminate all risks or guarantee that your children and families will not become infected with COVID-19 due to your children's attendance at the Center.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROCEDURES

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Child Development Center will be adjusting child drop-off and pick-up to ensure the safest possible environment for parents/guardians, children, and staff. We may have to adjust our times based on staffing and the ability to maintain these new safety standards if precautionary measures increase based on community outbreak levels.

When we open our doors, the Center will operate and look different. Although our official operating hours of 8:00 am to 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday, remain the same, student attendance hours may need to be adjusted to allow enhanced opening and closing procedures to be completed each day. If hours are changed, parents/guardians will be notified with as much notice as possible. We will generally follow the below steps:

- Parents/guardians will line up at the building's main entrance, lining up six feet apart.

- Parents/guardians are required to wear disposable or cloth face coverings for drop-off and pick-up.
- A staff member will meet families at the front door to receive and deliver their children. Parents/guardians may no longer enter the building or classrooms to limit the traffic in and out of the school.
- Following a successful health screening, a staff member will escort your child to their classroom, and a classroom teacher will assist the child in washing their hands.

DAILY HEALTH SCREENING

Symptoms Check

Parents/guardians will be required to submit an online acknowledgement each morning before their child may attend the Center, indicating that their child does not have any of the following symptoms:

- Fever of 100.4° or chills
- Cough
- Nasal congestion or runny nose
- Sore throat
- Headache
- Poor feeding or appetite
- Difficulty breathing
- Diarrhea
- Nausea or vomiting
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- New loss of taste or smell

A child may not attend the Center for the day until a parent/guardian completes the form, which can be found at on the Center website at <https://www.american.edu/hr/cdc/>

Contact Check

The parent/guardian will confirm in the online acknowledgement that their child has not been in close contact within the past 10 days with a person who has COVID-19 or a person who is awaiting COVID-19 test results due to symptoms.

Temperature Check

In addition to the online acknowledgement from each parent/guardian, staff may confirm a child's temperature upon arrival using a contactless thermometer.

Visual Inspection

A staff member will visually inspect the child for signs of illness, including flushed cheeks, rapid breathing, difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity), fatigue, or extreme fussiness.

A child will not be admitted to the Center if he or she meets any of these exclusion criteria based on the below screens:

- Temperature of 100.4°F or higher; or any symptoms listed in the Symptoms Check.
- Answers yes to any of the questions on the Symptoms Check or the Contact Check during the Daily Health Screening.
- Has signs of illness upon visual inspection during the Daily Health Screening.
- The child is confirmed to have COVID-19 and has not yet been cleared to return by their healthcare provider.
- The child has been in close contact in the last 5 days with an individual confirmed to have COVID-19.
- The child is awaiting COVID-19 test results or has a household member who is awaiting COVID-19 test results due to symptoms.

Families should contact their health care provider to determine the next steps. See [Criteria for Exclusion, Dismissal, and Return to the Center](#) for further details.

PERSONAL SAFETY AND HYGIENE PRACTICES

Center staff and children will follow the safety and hygiene practices outlined below:

Hand Hygiene

- Teach and model good hygiene practices, including covering coughs and sneezes with an elbow or tissue and washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Handwashing must take place frequently throughout the day, including:
 - Upon entry to the facility
 - After going to the bathroom or changing a diaper
 - Before eating or handling food
 - After blowing or supporting a child with blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing
 - Before and after a staff gives medication to a child
 - After handling wastebaskets or garbage
- If soap and water are not available and the hands are not visibly dirty, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol should be used. This should only be used by a child under very close observation from a staff person or parent/guardian and follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Schoolwide Hygiene

- Ensure adequate supplies (e.g., soap, paper towels, hand sanitizer, and tissues) to support healthy hygiene practices.
- Sanitation of frequently used items such as pens and pencils.

- Prepackage lunches, including silverware, napkins, and seasonings, or serve meals individually plated.
- Restrict common areas such as staff breakrooms.
- Increase air circulation only where safe and possible and ensure ventilation systems are operating properly.
- Have tissues readily available in classrooms; request that students sneeze into their elbow if tissues are not available.
- Encourage staff and students to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash, and hands washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Keep each student's belongings separated from others' and in individually labeled containers and cubbies.
- Ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing of high-touch materials to the extent possible or limit the use of supplies and equipment by one group of children at a time and clean and disinfect between use.
- Where possible, avoid sharing electronic devices, toys, books, and other games or learning aids.
- Discourage sharing of items that are difficult to clean or disinfect.

The Center will place signage in every classroom and near every sink reminding staff of handwashing protocols.

FACE MASKS

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends wearing face masks in public settings and circumstances in which physical (social) distancing is difficult, including in childcare facilities, when feasible.

The benefit of a face mask is to limit the spread of secretions by stopping individuals from touching their mouth or nose, limiting spread if an individual has COVID-19, and limit individuals from contracting COVID-19 if around a COVID-19 positive person

Requirements for Staff

- All staff members must wear a face mask while at the Center. Face masks must cover the nose and mouth, fit snugly, allow for breathing without restriction. Outdoors, staff will wear a face covering during drop off and pick up, or when they are unable to socially distance.
- Staff will have face masks available and replace them if they become contaminated. The Center will provide additional masks for staff if necessary.
- Staff may elect to wear a clear barrier shield during certain tasks, which will be cleaned after contamination. The shield does not replace a face covering.
- While changing children's diapers, helping with food preparation, staff must also:
 - Pull long hair off of the neck, as in a ponytail.

- Wear a large, button-down, long-sleeved shirt as an additional layer of clothing.
- Remove their clothing and/or the child's clothing if touched by any secretions, place the child's soiled clothing in a plastic bag and their own soiled clothing in their personal cubby.
- Wash their hands and face if touched by secretions or after handling soiled clothes.
- Parents/guardians should wear face masks any time they interact with a staff at drop-off and pick-up times.

Recommendations and Requirements for Children

- OSSE guidelines state that children age two and older must wear a face mask when feasible and if deemed developmentally appropriate by the parent/guardian and childcare provider.
- Children should be able to safely put on, wear, and remove their own mask without assistance.
- Children will have face coverings labeled with their names each day. Face coverings will be stored in a paper bag or container labeled with the child's name when not in use. All face coverings belonging to the Center will be kept at Center to be cleaned.
- Face masks coverings **should not** be placed on any child who has trouble breathing or anyone unconscious or unable to remove the mask without assistance.
- Face coverings **will not** be worn by children during snack, lunch, and naptime. Children may choose to remove face coverings during outdoor play.

PHYSICAL (SOCIAL) DISTANCING

The Center will follow appropriate social distancing by taking the following actions:

- Staggering drop-off and pick-up, and requiring families to wait six feet apart during these times to avoid large groups congregating.
- Allowing only children and staff inside the Center (no parents/guardians, enrichment teachers, or visitors).
- Limiting large group activities that require children to sit or stand in close proximity (e.g., circle time).
- Spacing children apart during lunch and snack times as much as possible.
- Spacing cots apart at nap time as much as possible, with children's heads at least six feet apart. Children will be placed head-to-toe when necessary, to maximize distance between their heads.
- Minimizing interaction between groups, when inside the building to include mealtime, in the restroom, in the hallway, and other shared spaces.
- Maintaining standard square footage requirements per child and room setup to maximize spacing (six feet at a minimum) between individuals in a classroom, including while at tables and in group and individual activities.

CLEANING, DISINFECTING, AND SANITIZING

All childcare providers must regularly clean, disinfect and sanitize surfaces, toys, and materials per [District guidance on cleaning and disinfecting](#) and the CDC's [updated guidance for childcare providers](#).

- High-touch surfaces: The Center will place additional emphasis on regular cleaning and disinfecting of high-touch surfaces, including but not limited to door handles, chairs, light switches, toilets, and faucets.
- Toys: Staff will clean and sanitize all toys frequently and throughout the day, including those used indoors and outdoors:
 - Toys that have been in children's mouths or soiled by bodily secretions must immediately be set aside. These toys must be cleaned and sanitized by a staff member wearing gloves before being used by another child.
 - Toys should be assigned to individual groups to avoid mixing of toys between groups. For any toys shared between groups, they must be cleaned, sanitized, and disinfected prior to use by another group.
 - Soft toys (e.g., stuffed animals) will be unavailable for general play. However, parents/guardians may send soft toy comfort items that are needed by their child, particularly during nap time. These items will be stored in individual bags after each nap and must be taken home by families every day to be cleaned.
- Cots: Cots and bedding are to be individually labeled and stored.
 - Cots must be placed at least six feet apart while in use and cleaned and sanitized between uses. They will be placed no fewer than two feet apart, and children will be placed head-to-toe to maximize distance between their faces. Masks must not be worn while sleeping.
 - Bedding must be washable and laundered at least weekly or before use by another child.
- Playgrounds: Playground structures must be included as part of routine cleaning, especially high touch surfaces, e.g., handlebars, but do not need to be disinfected.
- Bathrooms: For shared bathrooms, assign a bathroom to each group of children; only one child will use the bathroom at a time. Teachers will assist with water, soap, and paper towels to avoid cross-contamination between children. Bathrooms must be cleaned and disinfected after each group has finished.
- Diapering: Teachers will follow OSSE regulations and procedures for diapering children. Teachers will wear gloves and change paper sheets after each diaper change. The diaper changing table will be cleaned and disinfected between each child's use.

For all cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting products, staff members will follow the manufacturer's instructions for concentration, application method, contact time, and drying time prior to use by a child. See [CDC's guidance for safe and correct application of disinfectants](#).

DAILY PROGRAM PROCEDURES

Classroom Activities

- Children will remain with their classroom or group during 9:00-5:00 and will only co-mingle with the other classroom from 8:00-9:00 and 5:00-6:00 outside, weather permitting.
- Teachers will not require children to sit or stand in close proximity until deemed safe by OSSE (e.g., circle time).
- Whenever possible, staff will make use of small group activities that enable physical distancing between children.
- Teachers will promote activities that do not require close physical contact between multiple children and limit item sharing.
- Staff will limit the number and types of toys available at a time and increase daily sanitation practices.
- Teachers will reduce the sharing of materials between children. They will ensure that those shared materials are cleaned and disinfected between each use.
- Indoor enrichment classes (e.g., yoga/music/soccer) and will only take place on the play yard.

Outdoor Activities

- Children will have a scheduled time for the playground, twice a day.
- Two groups can be on the playground at the same time, yet remain separate.
- The Center will follow [CDC guidance](#) for cleaning and disinfecting outdoor areas which advises that outdoor areas require normal routine cleaning, but do not require disinfection. CDC advises against spraying disinfectants on outdoor playgrounds.
- The Center will clean all playground high-touch surfaces made of plastic or metal, such as grab bars and railings, between each classroom's use.

Lunch and Snacks

- Do not bring lunches that need to be heated.
- All meals must be served in individual classrooms, and maximum space will be kept between children during meals.
- Morning and afternoon snacks are provided daily.
- Staff will wear gloves when serving food to children.
- Children must wash their hands before and after eating and may not share utensils, cups, or plates.
- Staff must wash hands before and after preparing food and after helping children to eat.
- Tables and chairs must be cleaned and sanitized before and after the meal.
- If handling individual lunch boxes, staff must wash their hands between the handling of each lunch

box. Food items should be removed from the lunch box and placed with the child or plated separately, and then the lunch box returned to the child's cubby.

- Food Allergy: **We are a peanut-free facility**, so please do not provide lunches that contain peanuts. If your child has an allergy to any foods, please be sure that it has been indicated in your child's paperwork and put in writing.

Naptime

- Cots will be placed head-to-foot with at least six feet between children's heads. Children will be placed no fewer than two feet apart, and will be placed head-to-toe to maximize distance between their faces. Masks must not be worn when sleeping.
- All bedding and comfort items will be stored in individual bags after each nap.
- All bedding will be cleaned weekly.

Personal Belongings

- Children should have ample supplies (sneakers, sunscreen, diapers, wipes, fabric masks, and clothes) in their cubbies or storage bins.
- Lunches should be brought in a lunch box to keep items cold or hot as needed.
- Soft toy comfort items that are needed by the child, particularly during nap time, will be stored in individual bags after each nap and must be taken home by families every day to be cleaned.
- Items from home (e.g., toys, books) are prohibited from being brought into the Center.
- All fabric masks will stay at the Center and be laundered daily.
- Bedding will be sent home on the last day of each week for proper washing. Bedding must be laundered before returning the following week.

LATE PICK-UP POLICY

The Center closes promptly at 5:00 pm. If a child has not been picked up by this time, parents/guardians will incur the following fees:

- 1 to 5 minutes: \$10
- 5 to 10 minutes: \$20
- 10+ minutes: \$20 plus \$2 per minute (over 10 minutes)

If a child has not been picked up by 5:00pm, the child's parents/guardians will be called. If the parents/guardians cannot be reached, the emergency contact listed on the child's DC Registration Record will be called.

CRITERIA FOR EXCLUSION, DISMISSAL, AND RETURN TO THE CENTER

Exclusion, dismissal, and return criteria come from OSSE, the CDC, and DC Health. The Center will monitor these recommendations and update our guidance accordingly.

Exclusion Criteria

1. A child or staff member must stay home or will not be admitted to the Center if they meet any of these exclusion criteria:
 - Temperature of 100.4°F or higher; or any symptoms listed in the Symptoms Check.
 - Answers yes to any of the questions on the Symptoms Check or the Contact Check during the Daily Health Screening.
 - Has signs of illness upon visual inspection during the Daily Health Screening.
 - The child is confirmed to have COVID-19 and has not yet been cleared to return by their local healthcare provider.
 - The child has been in close contact in the last 5 days with an individual confirmed to have COVID-19.
 - The child is awaiting COVID-19 test results or has a household member who is awaiting COVID-19 test results due to symptoms.

In the event a child is excluded, families should contact their health care provider for the next steps.

Dismissal Criteria

If a child or staff member develops a fever or other signs of illness while at the Center, the administrative team will follow OSSE Licensing Guidelines regarding the exclusion and dismissal of children and staff.

For children, a Center staff member will immediately place the child in an isolation room or area. The child's parents/guardians will be notified of the symptoms and asked to pick up the child immediately or within one hour at the latest. Teachers will remove any toys the child touched and move his or her classmates to another area of the room, if possible. The parent/guardian should call when they arrive, and a staff member will bring the child to the front door for dismissal. A staff member will clean and disinfect the isolation room. The Center will work with DC Health to safely return the child to the Center.

For staff, the staff member will go home immediately. Another staff member will follow cleaning and disinfecting procedures for any area, toys, and equipment or with which the staff member was in contact. The Center will work with DC Health to safely return the staff member to the Center.

Returning to the Center

If a child or staff member is **excluded or dismissed from the Center based on any of the exclusion criteria** or if a **child or staff member has a confirmed case of COVID-19**, the child or staff member may not return to the Center until the following clearance conditions are met:

- **At least ten days** quarantine but may return on day 11 if symptoms have passed; **and** an Antigen or NAAT lab test was performed with negative results.
- If a child or staff member has been **in close contact with a person awaiting a COVID-19** negative test results.
- **Following possible symptoms associated with Covid-19:**
 - Documentation of a negative PCR (NAAT) test
- **Following a positive Covid-19 test:**
 - 10 full days of isolation, with no fever without use of fever-reducing medications for at least 48 hours, OR
 - 5 full days of isolation, with a negative antigen (rapid) test taken on day 5, and no fever without use of fever-reducing medications for at least 48 hours
- **Following close contact with a person who tested positive for Covid-19:**
 - A negative Covid-19 test taken 5 days following the last exposure to the person who tested positive for Covid-19, OR
 - If no Covid-19 test is taken, 10 full days have passed since the last exposure to the person who tested positive for Covid-19

If a child or staff member has been in close contact with a person with confirmed COVID-19, then the child or staff member may not return to the Center until they have completed their quarantine period without becoming symptomatic or diagnosed with COVID-19. The child or staff member may not return to the Center until authorized by the Center's Administrator. The Center will work with DC Health to safely return the child or staff member to the Center.

COMMUNICATION, EXPOSURE, CLOSURE, AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Communication

We can only best promote the safety of our children, staff, and families through candid communication about potential exposure to COVID-19, both inside and outside of the Center. We ask that families think carefully before spending time with large groups or traveling beyond the District and neighboring states.

Exposure

The Center will seek guidance from DC Health and OSSE and follow their recommendations if there is reason to believe a member of the Center community has or has been exposed to COVID-19, including communications with staff and parents/guardians.

In the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19 in a child or staff member, the Center generally will take the following steps:

1. **Report to OSSE and DC Health.** The Center must file an Unusual Incident Report and notify DC Health if five or more children from the the Center are confirmed to have contracted COVID-19. OSSE will make all decisions on the timeline of exclusion and any other responses to a COVID-19 exposure.
2. **Communicate with parents/guardians and staff.** The Center will communicate with parents/guardians and staff per DC Health directives and protect the privacy of individuals while also alerting parents/guardians and staff of a confirmed COVID-19 case. At a minimum, the Center will:
 - Provide notice to staff and parents/guardians of children in close contact with the individual and state the quarantine requirement (as determined by DC Health).
 - Provide notice to all staff and families about the cleaning and disinfection protocols it will undertake, the length of closure of the facility (as determined by DC Health).
3. **Clean, sanitize, and disinfect all affected spaces.** Center will follow any steps outlined by DC Health and [CDC guidance](#) on cleaning, disinfection, and sanitization

References

For resources and information about the District of Columbia Government's coronavirus (COVID-19) response and recovery efforts, please visit:

- coronavirus.dc.gov
- <https://osse.dc.gov/page/covid-19-guidance-and-resources>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>.
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated.html>

PARENT HANDBOOK RECEIPT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

American University
Child Development Center

Parents/Guardians,

Please review the Parent Handbook and COVID-19 Supplement for the 2022-2023 school year, which contains the policies and procedures for the American University Child Development Center, including the COVID-19 health and safety protocols.

After reading the Parent Handbook and this Supplement, complete this form and return it to the Center via email as soon as possible. This form will be kept in your child's file for the duration of the school year.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Root

Director

I, _____ (print your name), the parent/guardian of
_____ (print child's name), hereby acknowledge receipt
of the Parent Handbook and COVID-19 Supplement. I have read and agree to all the policies and
procedures set forth in this Handbook.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____