

# Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy and Procedures – COVID-19

## Policy Statement

Toronto Early Learning & Child Care Services (TELCCS) is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for children, families and employees. TELCCS will take every reasonable precaution to prevent the risk of communicable diseases within all our locations.

## Purpose

To ensure that all employees are aware of, and adhere to, the directive established by Toronto Public Health (TPH), and Children's Services regarding Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

## Application

This policy applies to all employees, students, community members, and any other persons engaged in business with TELCCS.

## Procedures

PPE is equipment worn to protect the worker from infected droplets and contaminated surfaces. PPE used in a child care setting can include:

- Medical Masks - protect the inside of the nose and mouth
- Eye protection – protects the eyes from splashes, sprays and droplets
- Gloves - gloves and good hand hygiene protect you and others
- Gowns - Long-sleeved gowns protect clothing from becoming contaminated

## Medical Masks and Eye Protection

Wearing a medical mask and eye protection can help to prevent the spread of some respiratory illnesses and be worn to prevent spread from an infected person to others by containing infected droplets (source control). When wearing a mask and eye protection, you must be sure to clean your hands frequently with soap and water or 70%-90% food-grade alcohol-based hand sanitizer, before and after touching your medical mask or eye protection.

In TELCCS it is expected that staff, students, and essential visitors will wear a medical mask and eye protection at all times. This helps ensure that all adults and children in the programs stay safe.

## Exceptions

It is recognized that there are some times when staff may be able to take a break from wearing the medical mask and/or eye protection; however, time with a medical mask and/or eye protection off should be limited and physical distancing (6ft/2m) must be maintained. If a staff is unsure whether physical distancing (6ft/2m) can be maintained, then this would not be an appropriate time to take a break from wearing the medical mask and eye protection.

Medical masks and eye protection breaks can only occur at the following times:

- when a staff is on a break alone
- when a staff is on a break and eating/drinking, physical distancing (6ft/2m) can be maintained, and room occupancy limits are adhered to. When not eating/drinking a medical mask and eye protection must be worn
- when a staff is walking down the hallway alone
- when a staff is working in an office alone
- when a staff is performing a task alone in a room, i.e., toy washing, program planning or administrative duties
- when a staff is working in the kitchen alone

## **Outdoor Time**

When outdoors, a medical mask and eye protection is required unless physical distancing (6ft/2m) can be maintained. When working with children it can be difficult to determine if physical distancing can be maintained, as children's movements are unpredictable. Should you need a break from your medical mask or eye protection speak with your room partner and determine a PPE micro-break time. During this PPE micro-break, you are still responsible for supervising the children and must be there to assist a child if needed. This break should be short, and not be for extended amounts of time as staff are expected to respond to the children's needs and interact with the children.

## **Medical Exceptions**

There are also exceptions to wearing medical masks and eye protection which include medical conditions that make it difficult to wear a medical mask or eye protection (e.g. difficulty breathing, low vision), a cognitive condition or disability that prevents individuals from wearing a medical mask, hearing impairment or when communicating with a person who is hearing impaired and where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication.

Clear mask options are available to meet some of the above needs. These exceptions must be communicated with the supervisor in advance of work so appropriate planning can occur. If there are medical exceptions to medical mask wearing and/or eye protection, the supervisor must report this to disability management, the program manager and TCS health and safety so an accommodation and/or next steps can be investigated.

## **No exceptions**

There are times when there are no exceptions to medical mask and eye protection breaks, as these situations are a higher level of risk and wearing PPE at all times is important, these times are when:

- Working within the screening area
- Escorting children from the screening area into a program room
- In the isolation room with ill children
- When cleaning blood and bodily fluid spills
- When supporting dressing routines with children at drop off and pick up and when going outdoors or coming indoors
- When comforting a child who is upset
- Anytime when physical distancing (6ft/2m) cannot be maintained

### **How to Wear a Mask**

Masks must be worn properly at all times, without exception. This includes:

- On the face properly covering the mouth and nose
- Not lifted or dropped to the chin or around the neck
- All straps must be securely fastened
- Masks are single use and must only be touched with clean hands. If you touch your mask you must wash/sanitize your hands immediately after. Change your mask if it becomes moist, dirty, you touch it with soiled hands, or it comes into contact with another surface. Refer to the IPAC PPE ELI training for more information.

### **To put on the Mask:**

1. Wash or sanitize your hands.
2. Check the mask for tears or faulty straps.
3. The stiff bendable edge is at the top.
4. Holding the mask by the upper strings, tie in a bow near the crown of your head, or if the mask has bands, loop over your ears.
5. Holding the mask by the bottom strings, pull the bottom of the mask over your mouth and chin, and tie in a bow near the nape of your neck.
6. Ensure the mask covers your mouth, nose and chin.
7. Press and mold the upper bendable edge to the shape of your nose and cheeks.
8. Wash or sanitize your hands.

### **To remove the Mask:**

1. Wash or sanitize your hands.
2. Only touch the straps/ear loops; avoid touching the front of the mask as it is contaminated.
3. Untie the bottom strings and then the upper strings or remove the ear loops by touching the loops only.
4. Dispose of the mask directly into the garbage.
5. Wash or sanitize your hands.

## Eye Protection

Staff can choose between face shields or safety goggles (only those approved by OHS).

### To put on Eye Protection:

1. Wash or sanitize your hands
2. Put on eye protection from the straps
3. Ensure a snug fit; face shield should fit over the brow
4. Wash or sanitize your hands

### To remove eye protection:

1. Wash or sanitize your hands
2. Take off from the straps
3. Place the eye protection on a clean surface
4. Wash or sanitize your hands
5. Disinfect your eye protection and disinfect the surface it was on
6. Wash or sanitize your hands
  - Store the eye protection in a clean area

## Gloves

Types of gloves used are:

- Disposable nitrile or vinyl gloves
  - Used for tasks that include anticipated contact with blood and/or bodily fluids and when screening
- Dishwashing style gloves
  - Used for mixing disinfectant or immersing hands in sanitizer / disinfectant
  - These are reusable, staff should be assigned their own pair, and they should be disinfected after use

Gloves must be worn when:

- It is anticipated that hands will come into contact with:
  - Mucous membranes, broken skin, tissue, blood, bodily fluids, secretions, excretions, contaminated equipment or environmental surfaces.
  - Toileting routines, diaper changes
  - Mixing sanitizer and disinfecting products. *Refer to Environmental Cleaning and Disinfecting Policy and Procedures- COVID-19*
  - When conducting in-person screening and temperature checks. Gloves must be replaced, and hand hygiene performed if you touch the individual while screening them.

Reminders:

- Hand hygiene must be practised before donning (putting on) and immediately after removing (doffing) gloves.

- Nitrile/vinyl gloves are task specific (i.e., gloves must be changed, and hand hygiene practiced when changing tasks)
- Using gloves does not replace the need for hand hygiene
- Hands must be clean and dry before putting on gloves
- Ensure gloves are intact, clean and dry inside
- Consider removing jewelry which could tear/puncture the gloves
- Do not use hand sanitizer on gloves

### **Putting on Gloves (Donning)**

1. Perform hand hygiene
2. Put on gloves. Be careful not to tear or puncture the glove

### **Taking off Gloves (Doffing)**

6. Remove gloves using a glove to glove / skin to skin technique
7. Grasp outside edge near the wrist and peel away, rolling the glove inside-out.
8. Reach under the second glove and peel away
9. Discard gloves immediately into the garbage.
10. Perform hand hygiene.

*Also refer to TPH Glove use poster for guidance*

### **Gowns**

Wearing a gown can help with protecting clothes from becoming contaminated. Gowns will have long sleeves and tie at the back. Cloth gowns are reusable, they must be laundered after each screening shift or when used for cleaning blood and bodily fluids.

Staff must wear gowns when:

- Working in the screening area as the health screening staff
- When cleaning blood or a bodily fluid spill (please note that a diaper change is not considered a bodily fluid spill)
- Should only be worn in the program rooms when cleaning blood or a bodily fluid spill

### **Donning (putting on) and Doffing (taking off) PPE**

The following procedure will need to be followed if wearing more than one item of PPE

#### **Donning:**

1. Perform hand hygiene
2. Put on gown
3. Put on medical mask

4. Put on eye protection
5. Put on gloves

**Doffing:**

1. Remove gloves and dispose of them without touching anything else
2. Remove gown and place into dirty laundry bin without touching anything else
3. Perform hand hygiene
4. Remove eye protection and place on a clean surface
5. Remove medical mask and dispose of the mask without touching anything else
6. Perform hand hygiene
7. Disinfect eye protection and surface
8. Perform hand hygiene
9. Store eye protection in a clean area such as a Ziploc

**Policy and Procedure Review**

This policy and procedure will be reviewed and signed off by all employees before commencing employment/unpaid placement in a TELCCS location, and at any time where a change is made.

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