

COVID-19 Guidance for Indoor Playgrounds

This interim guidance is to support owners and operators of indoor playgrounds to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Indoor playground facilities may have different structures, policies and operation of play, and it is the responsibility of owners/operators to ensure infection prevention and control measures are implemented and maintained.

Owners and operators should prepare their indoor playground facilities to comply with all emergency orders, the [Reopening Ontario \(A Flexible Response to COVID-19\) Act, 2020](#), and these public health guidelines so that they are ready to reopen safely. Please check www.toronto.ca/COVID19 regularly for any updates to further control the spread of infection or to loosen restrictions.

Bylaw on use of masks and face coverings

Effective July 7, 2020, the use of non-medical masks or face coverings is required in all indoor public spaces, as per a new City of Toronto [bylaw](#). Operators are required to develop a policy and protocols on the wearing of masks. Refer to the [guidance on mask and face covering bylaw](#) for a sample policy that your organization can adapt. More information is available [here](#).

Staff Health Screening and Attendance

- Inform staff about the changes being made to protect them against COVID-19 by posting signage, updating information on the website or by mail.
- Ensure all staff complete a [health screening questionnaire](#) before each shift. The questions can be completed online, on paper or by asking your staff directly.
- Adjust work hours and shifts to reduce the number of staff in your facility at any one time.
- Have a flexible sick policy so staff do not come to work ill.
- Remind staff about the importance of reporting illness to their supervisor/manager.
- If staff become ill with [symptoms of COVID-19](#) while at work, they should go home right away and [self-isolate](#). Instruct staff to call Telehealth at 1-866-797-0000, a health care provider, or an [Assessment Centre](#) to get tested.
- Staff should report to their Occupational Health and Safety Department prior to returning to work.
- In general, staff can return to work 14 days after their symptoms began if they had COVID-19.
- There are no clearance tests required for staff to return to work.
- For other illnesses, or if a staff has tested negative for COVID-19, they should not attend work until they are symptom-free for at least 24 hours.

Staff Training

- Staff should receive clear instructions on the new mask policy, and understand who is exempted from wearing a mask. Proof of exemption by customers is not required.
- Masks should not be placed on children under two years of age.

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- Educate staff on the proper [use of masks/face coverings](#). They should change masks when moist or dirty, but in areas away from customers (e.g. lunch room, private office).
- More information on use of non-medical masks or face coverings can be found [here](#).
- Additional [resources](#) for staff training is available from Public Health Ontario.
- Discourage staff from gathering together in the lunchroom or common areas.
- Educate staff on hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette:
 - Wash hands frequently with liquid soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer (70-90% alcohol concentration) if water and soap is not available.
 - Cover cough or sneeze with the elbow or a tissue. Immediately throw the tissue in the garbage and wash hands.
- Encourage staff to download the [COVID Alert app](#) so they can be notified directly if they have been in close contact with someone who was contagious with COVID-19.

Limit Admission

- Limit entrances to control the number of customers entering the facility at any given time.
- Set a capacity limit for the number of customers (children and their parents/guardian) allowed in the premises at any given time.
- The capacity limit should be based on available floor space, to ensure ease of movement while maintaining two metres (six feet) of distance from others. Consider one person for every two metres square (four squared metres) of floor space.
- Post signage at the entrance stating of the maximum number of customers permitted at any one time.
- Set limits on the number of customers permitted in each play area at any given time. Post signs by the entrance to each play area, and at attractions, party rooms, and washrooms.
- Consider measures to prevent crowding, such as:
 - Creating a reservation system with pre-assigned times of use.
 - Implementing time limits (e.g. during peak use periods).

COVID-19 Screening

- All customers and visitors should complete a self-screening questionnaire (for [adults](#) or [children](#)) before entering the facility.
- Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 or has been in contact with a person with COVID-19 should not be allowed in.
- Make alcohol-based hand sanitizer (70-90% alcohol concentration) available for use by the entrance.

Communication

- Inform customers about the changes you have made to protect them against COVID-19, using posters, website updates, email, or public announcement (PA) systems.

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- Designate a contact person (e.g. supervisor) to respond to COVID-19 concerns from staff and customers.
- Encourage customers to pre-book their hours of play and number of players. This may avoid disappointment if the facility is full.

Physical Distancing

- Use visual markers, stickers or pylons to encourage physical distancing while waiting outside.
- Post [physical distancing signs](#) at all entrances, by cashiers or service counters.
- Place markers or circles so customers know where to stand when waiting or interacting with staff.
- Where possible, arrange play equipment to create walkways to allow for physical distancing.
- Install plexiglass/barriers if possible, where there will be close contact between staff and customers, between play areas/attractions, and at the checkout.
- Move seating, at least two metres/six feet apart or tape off alternate fixed seating.
- Mark the floor with tape, where seats should be placed so it can be repositioned, if moved.
- Remind children to avoid direct contact and keep their distance as best as possible from people outside of their household or social circle when using the indoor playground.
- Discourage staff and customers from congregating in all areas of the playground.

Play Areas and Attractions

- Ensure toy materials and equipment to be used can be cleaned and disinfected between uses.
- Rope off play areas or attractions, where high-touch equipment, attractions or toys cannot be frequently cleaned and disinfected (e.g. ball/foam pits).
- Use visual markers or tape on the floor to encourage physical distancing while waiting at each play area or attraction.
- Monitor each play area/attraction to ensure the posted capacity limits are being followed.
- Stagger the flow of people entering and exiting each play area or attraction to prevent crowding.
- Use floor markings, barriers and signs to create one-directional walkways where appropriate (e.g. entrances, play structures, washrooms).
- Consider marking spaces for people in the same household or [social circle](#).

Signage

- Print and post signs in highly visible areas, including the entrance, play areas, attractions, and washrooms as a reminder for everyone to practice public health measures:
 - [Mandatory face mask bylaw](#) by building entrance
 - [Children's health screening](#) or [adult health screening](#) by building entrance
 - [Physical Distancing](#)
 - [Protect Yourself](#)
 - [Information about COVID-19](#)
 - [Wash your Hands](#)
 - [Cover your Cough](#)

- [Water Filling Station](#)

Restaurants or Food Service Premises

- Food premise(s) operating inside playground facilities should follow the [Guidelines for Re-Opening your Restaurant, Bar and other Food Service Premises](#) for their food preparation and service operations.

COVID-19 Outbreaks and Contact Tracing

- It is recommended that operators collect the names and contact information of staff and customers (children and their guardian) who attend the facility (i.e. name, date, check in and check out time, phone number and/or email address). This is to support public health contact tracing efforts in the event that an attendee tests positive or an outbreak is identified.
- Providing information is voluntary for customers. Operators must obtain a person's consent and inform them of the purpose and legal authority for collection. Operators must make reasonable security arrangements to protect personal information (e.g. locked drawer in private office).
- Any personal information that is collected for COVID-19 contract tracing can only be used for this purpose, unless an individual provides their consent. Records should only be kept for 30 days, and then shredded.
- Toronto Public Health will use this list to notify and provide instructions for close contacts to self-isolate or self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms.
- Additional public health advice in the event of an outbreak may include additional cleaning and disinfecting measures to reduce the risk of spread in the setting.
- Encourage families to download the [COVID Alert app](#) so they can be notified directly if they have been in close contact with someone who was contagious with COVID-19.

Cleaning and Disinfection

- Develop enhanced environmental cleaning and disinfection policies and procedures.
- Maintain a log to track cleaning and disinfecting activities.
- Increase the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting washrooms, as required.
- High traffic areas and frequently touched surfaces, objects, fixed-equipment, and attractions should be cleaned and disinfected at least twice per day, and when visibly dirty (e.g. doorknobs, toilet handles, countertops, hand rails, slides, climbing structures, obstacles, arcade buttons or joysticks).
- Shared toys, equipment and other materials must be cleaned and disinfected between users (e.g. balls, riding toys, play houses).
- Review Public Health Ontario's [Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings](#) fact sheet.
- Refer to Health Canada's [list of hard-surface disinfectants](#) for information on disinfectants effective against COVID-19.

Drinking Water Fountains

- Where possible, switch drinking water fountains to touchless or foot pedal operation.
- Encourage staff and customers to bring their own water bottle to stay hydrated.

Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Systems

- Ensure the HVAC system(s) for the facility are maintained according to manufacturer's instructions, or more frequently.
- Use the highest efficiency filters that are compatible with the HVAC system, if provided.
- Indoor ceiling fans, if turned on should have an upward airflow rotation.
- Keep areas near HVAC inlets and outlets clear.

Workplace Health and Safety

- Employers must have written measures and procedures for staff safety, including for infection prevention and control.
- Ontario has general information on [COVID-19 and workplace health and safety](#), where employers can learn about their responsibilities and how to protect workers at work.
- Workers can also get information about [health and safety protections](#) at the workplace.

Other Resources

[COVID-19 Guidance for Workplaces and Businesses](#)

[COVID-19 Guidelines for Re-Opening your Restaurant, Bar or other Food Premises](#)

More Information

For more information, visit our website at toronto.ca/COVID19 or call us at 416-338-7600.