



**Family Communication Package**  
**Returning to Care during Stage Two of**  
**Alberta's Relaunch Plan**  
**September 2020 Version**

On March 15, 2020, the Albertan Government decided to close all schools and child care centres to protect the province against COVID-19. Thanks to the efforts of Albertans, Alberta Health Services, and essential health care workers, the conditions surrounding COVID-19 in Alberta is improving and we have moved to Stage 2 in the relaunch plan.

The details surrounding the changes to our program are within this document and must be signed off on that our members have read and understand the new changes.

With a team of capable and resilient Early Childhood Educators, Glenora Childcare Society will uphold our commitment to quality child care and supporting our youngest citizens throughout the changes and additional procedures and policies.

We advise families to speak to their employers about our regulations prior to starting care, so that your employers can also support you if your child needs to be picked up or cannot attend childcare due to health reasons. We thank you in supporting Glenora Child Care Society and the safety of children, families, and educators within the centre.

**Together, we discover our confidence, strength, and possibilities**

**Enroll Today!**

Contact [Nicole@glenorachildcaresociety.ca](mailto:Nicole@glenorachildcaresociety.ca)

When children are welcomed back into care they will be faced with new procedures and schedules, this can be confusing and scary. At GCCS we want to ensure we are not only meeting the need of care for children but also their wellbeing and mental health.

Children are naturally drawn to one another, to talk, touch, play and laugh. We want to support children is doing what comes natural to them, play. We will encourage children to be mindful of physical distance but understand it's not developmentally appropriate to expect children to constantly keep distance. This has been discussed and approved with our licensing officer.

Some Important things to know

- Parents can transition children into care
  - There are children that will be entering care for the first time, and this is a big change. The centre will work with Parents in finding time that they can bring their child in for visits and help their child adjust.
  
- Children will play with friends.
  - The day **will not** be filled “you are to close or Physical Distance”.
  - Children will engage with other children. They will play and have fun. Educators will be mindful of physical distancing and if they notice an activity is drawing in a lot of children, it will be re-evaluated. Educators will observe children's play, room setup and activities daily and make changes as needed. This has been a corner-stone of our play philosophy at the centre prior to this pandemic.
  
- Children’s emotional needs will be attended to.
  - Children will be given developmentally appropriate comfort as it is required.
  - We will work with parents during drop-off if their children are having a difficult time separating. If children need their parents for a bit longer, that is ok. We want to support children in feeling supported through this transition and parents leaving feeling confident that their child is ok and that they are also emotionally ok.
  - When children are sad or upset, they will be comforted, and their feeling acknowledged.

Our Focus will be on creating a space for children to come to that is welcoming, calm, positive, safe, playful and creates opportunity to make connections with peers.

## **1. Mandatory Stage 2 Regulations**

### **1.1 Cohorts**

- 30 people per cohort, including children and Educators
- Cohorts cannot be mixed at any time during the day
- Educators that enter multiple rooms must wear a mask and ensure proper hand washing

## 1.2 Additional Cleaning

- Any toys or equipment must be disinfected before another classroom can use it
- Frequent, thorough disinfection each day
- Shared soft toys and shared sensory cannot be used
- Discontinue use of shared items that cannot be properly sanitized (natural items)

## 1.3 Additional Risk Mitigation

- Only one cohort allowed outside at a time
- Each cohort will have designated outdoor toys
- We must develop procedures for drop off/pick up (see typical day at GCCS)
- A log will be kept tracking anyone in the centre for more than 15 minutes (No non-essential visitors/volunteers at this time)
- Attendance records will need to be reported to Ministry of Children's Services weekly
- Adults always need to stay 2M away from other adults
- Signage on doors
- Hand sanitizer available at all entrances for adults, out of reach of children to avoid ingestion
- Educators must complete a health questionnaire prior to entering the centre
- No toys from home
- Families will review the health questionnaire at home prior to coming to the centre
- Educators will wear masks, unless eating or able to maintain a 2M distance from children and adults.
- Adults entering the building will wear a mask.

For more details on the mandatory regulations through the Alberta Government please read <https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/covid-19-relaunch-guidance-daycare-out-of-school-care.pdf>

## 2. Cross-Contamination Policy and Procedures for COVID-19

**Staff members, parents and guardians, and children have additional illness procedures due to Covid-19 and reducing the risk of transmission**

**Covid-19 Symptoms include:**

1. **Fever**
2. **Cough**
3. **Shortness of breath**
4. **Runny nose**
5. **Difficulty breathing**
6. **Sore throat**
7. **Generally feeling unwell**
8. **Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea**
9. **Muscle aches**

**10. Headache**

**11. Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)**

**Educators, parents, and other guests to GCCS must not enter the building if they have any of the symptoms related to Covid-19.**

Where an educator knows, or has reason to believe that a child may be suffering from signs and symptoms of COVID-19, the license holder must ensure that the child's parent removes the child from the program premises forthwith as per the Alberta Health Services regulations. Alberta Health regulations also determines how long the child must be excluded from care and if a covid-19 test is required.

As per the **Memorandum of Agreement** between Glenora Child Care Society and the parent, signed upon registration; "Parents shall not deliver children who are ill to the Society's premises and shall immediately upon being requested to do so by the Director, pick up or make arrangements to have ill children picked up."

Children have different regulations surrounding illness.

If a child has **ANY** of the following core symptoms: cough, fever, shortness of breath and loss of taste or smell:

- Isolate for 10 days or have a negative Covid-19 test and symptom free for 24 hours before returning to care

If a child has **ONE** of the following symptoms: chills; sore throat or painful swallowing; runny nose or congestion; feeling unwell or fatigue; muscle or joint aches; headache

- Stay home and monitor symptoms for 24 hours, if symptom is improving they can return to care. If symptoms worsen or additional symptoms appear, they should stay home until 24 hours symptom free.

If a child has **TWO** of the following: chills; sore throat or painful swallowing; runny nose or congestion; feeling unwell or fatigue; muscle or joint aches; headache

- Stay home until symptom free for 24 hours

GCCS will take the following steps when a child shows COVID-19 symptoms while attending the program:

1. According to regulations if a child is displaying symptoms, he/she is to be kept as far away as practical from the other children and directly supervised by a primary educator. If an administrative team member is on the premises the child may stay in their office. If educators are not able to leave the classroom with the child due to staffing, the child will be kept 2M away from other children. Educators will be provided N95 masks while directly supervising children with symptoms.
2. Parents will be contacted. If the parent cannot be reached within 30 minutes of the child becoming ill the centre will then call the family's emergency contacts.

3. The centre will allow up to **60 minutes**, from first contact with the parent or emergency contact, for the child to be picked up. The Executive Director may give parents more time depending on the circumstance. If parents have not arrived to pick up their child within the allotted time frame the centre will call the families emergency contacts.
4. Parents should call 811 and follow their advice. If a child develops symptoms that could be caused by either COVID-19 or by a known pre-existing condition (e.g. allergies), the child should be tested for COVID-19 to confirm that it is not the source of their symptoms before entering or returning to the program. A child with pre-existing conditions that has tested negative for COVID-19 does not need to be retested unless new or different symptoms develop.
5. **The centre must be informed of any related symptoms in order to report potential cases to AHS.**

If parents are negligent in bringing their child while displaying the described symptoms, the society shall give a warning in written form. In this case, the Society defines negligent as the parent bringing their child to the centre while displaying symptoms during the drop off procedure. Should the parents after such written warning continue to be negligent in bringing their child(ren) to the centre while displaying symptoms, the Memorandum of Agreement may be cancelled without notice resulting in a cancellation of child care services.

Prior to starting care, if your child has pre-existing conditions with symptoms related to COVID-19, we recommend talking to your family doctor to obtain a doctor's note listing the symptoms and causes of the pre-existing condition. The centre will always follow AHS recommendations.

If a child has symptoms that could be caused by a known pre-existing condition (e.g. allergies), the child should be tested for COVID-19 to confirm that it is not the source of their symptoms before entering or returning to the program. A child that has tested negative for COVID-19 does not need to be retested unless new or different symptoms develop.

To minimize risk, Educators are also encouraged to keep themselves healthy and to remain at home if they are ill.

### **3. Medication Policy**

Fever reducing medications will not be administered at GCCS until further notice. Children who have received fever reducing medication at home should not attend child care while under the influence of these medications.

This is to ensure that indicating symptoms of COVID-19 are not being masked by medications and to minimize the chance of spreading COVID-19 or related symptoms to other children, families, or educators.

### **4. Typical day at GCCS**

#### **4.1 Drop off - Allow additional time at Drop off in case of waiting times**

- Masks are mandatory for adults (parents, family members, designated pick up people) within the centre at all times
- Our Front Doors will be marked Entrance and Exit with sign
- At drop-off families will be required to review the Health Questionnaire prior to entering the centre.
  - Health Questionnaire
    - The questionnaire must be reviewed daily. Parents will acknowledge on the sign off form that they understand the importance of reviewing this questionnaire and will not bring the child to the centre if they have answered “yes” to any of the questions.
    - Childrens temperatures will be taken by an educator in the room prior to the parents leaving and the educators will complete a visual health check looking for signs of illness.
- Should you arrive with another family, we ask you to allow them to enter the building and make their way inside before entering and ensure that you and your children adhere to physical distancing practices.
- Only one family should be in the boot room at a time
- **We ask that you limit the number of people dropping off and picking up to 1 adult.**
- If the hallway appears to be busy, please wait outside for families to leave prior to entering.
- Only one family at a classroom door at a time. Physical distancing markers will be placed around classroom doors to assist with physical distancing.
- Parents cannot enter rooms and if needed can schedule a visit through administration. Siblings cannot enter a room that they do not belong to.

## 4.2 Outside Time

- Classrooms will have scheduled outside times, with only one cohort outside at a time
- This will lead to more time off site for many classrooms and at least one hour of scheduled outside time per classroom. This is a reduction from our regular outside hours.
- Classrooms will use the playground once a day and can utilize green spaces and walks in the community for additional time outside.
- Classrooms will have designated outside toys
- Designated outdoor toys will be sanitized at least weekly
- Large equipment will be disinfected between uses where possible
- Staggered transitions to stop cohorts from being in a transition outside of their classroom at the same time.
- Indoor/outdoor shoes will be stored in lockers
- Handwashing upon returning inside for educators and children

- OSC may use public playgrounds, ensuring they are washing hands before and after use.

#### **4.3 Meals**

- Full snack and lunch service will return for Chickadees through Kindergarten children
- Afternoon snack service will return for OSC children (grades 1 – 6)
- Food will be placed away from children
- Educators will serve children all food using utensils
- Kitchen will be off limits during food preparation to children, families, and educators

#### **4.4 Activities/Free Play**

- Materials in rooms have been specifically chosen for their ease of disinfection, while still being developmentally appropriate and entertaining.
- Group circle time will not continue unless educators make necessary arrangements to ensure spacing of children. (using two carpets, reading/singing to small groups, mats to show where to sit, etc)
- Classroom arrangements have been created to encourage few children to be within an area at a time
- Educators will facilitate social distancing and avoidance of large group activities when planning experiences for the children

#### **4.5 Nap Time**

- Beds will be placed 2m apart, or head to toe positioning when 2m is not possible
- Bedding will be placed in bags and stored in lockers when not in use and laundered weekly as usual
- Sunshine's bedding will be in the classroom in their bed bags
- Comfort items can be used if they stay at the centre

#### **4.6 Pick Up**

- Social distancing and mask requirements continue at all times.
- One adult per family within the centre
- Please leave the centre as quickly as possible to reduce the amount of people within the hallways
- If the hallway looks too busy, please wait to enter until a family has left.
- Please refrain from entering the classrooms.

### **5. Additional Cleaning and Disinfecting Procedures**

#### **5.1 Classroom Toys and Equipment**



- Classroom toys will be cleaned at least once daily with soap and water, disinfected with a bleach solution, and air dried
- Classroom furniture and equipment will be disinfected at least once daily with a bleach solution
- Bleach solution will have a higher potency than regular operating procedures
- Mouthed toys will be taken away immediately and placed in a bin for disinfection
- Additional educators will be assigned cleaning duties and will only enter rooms when necessary (will wear a mask when entering rooms)
- Floors mopped with diluted bleach
- Toilets disinfected regularly

## 5.2 High Touch Surfaces

- Frequent disinfection of high touch surfaces (door knobs, sinks, ipads, mirrors, railings, etc)

## 6. Additional Risk Mitigation Policies

- PPE available to educators
- Discontinue teeth brushing
- No centre provided extra clothing. **Mandatory 2 full changes of clothes in locker and all necessary outdoor clothing**
- Children must wash hands upon entering the program
- Educators must wash hands upon entering the classroom
- Encourage more frequent and thorough hand washing
- Outdoor sink purchased for hand washing outside
- All adults entering the building must wear a mask
- Educators may take off their masks if eating or able to maintain a 2M distance from children and other adults.

## 7. Physical Distancing

### 7.1 Educators and Parents/Guardians

- 2M distance between all adults
- Follow 2M tape around classroom doors (one family in square at a time)
- Families cannot socialize within the hallways and can do so outside at a 2M distance
- Both educators and parents must wear a mask

### 7.2 Educators and Educators from Different Classrooms

- 2M distance between educators in different classrooms
- Staff bathrooms will be disinfected after each use

- Staggered breaks to ease the number of educators on break at the same time
- PPE available and must be worn if under 2M distance from other educators or children
- Virtual Zoom meetings for staff meetings
- Additional spaces created for educators to take their breaks

### **7.3 Children**

- Educators will be mindful of activities and room arrangement to promote social distancing
- Educators will plan age appropriate activities to teach about social distancing
- We will encourage distancing when possible between educators and children, but know that the impact on distance for mental health and based on children's development is not always possible
- PPE is not recommended for children
- Discourage physical games like rough and tumble, tag, doctor, etc.
- Discourage hugs and high fives
- Educators will be creative on how to investigate children's interests without body contact (ex. children are interested in doctors, so educators will get baby dolls to be the patients. Children are interesting in praising one another, so educators will allow children to write something nice about others on a chalk board.)
- Educators will wear a mask at all times when interacting with children

## **8. Q & A's**

### **I have multiple children in multiple rooms, what will my drop off and pick up look like?**

Parents cannot enter rooms and siblings cannot enter their sibling's room. We suggest dropping off the child that has the quickest goodbye first and picking up the child that takes the longest to get ready first. That way the other sibling doesn't get bored while waiting. Each child will need their own individual health forms filled out.

### **What would create another closure?**

We would close if mandated by the Alberta Government or AHS. If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 we will close for two weeks.

A child care in Calgary had a confirmed case of COVID-19 within a pair of siblings. The centre closed for 72 hours for cleaning and the unaffected rooms reopened. The cohorts with the siblings within them were closed for two weeks. This was mandated by AHS. A similar structure may be recommended if the same situation were to happen at GCCS.

In a worst-case scenario, depending on staff illness, we may have to close due to under staffing if 4 – 5 educators are absent at a time due to licensing required child to educator ratios. This may result in individual rooms closing or the entire center depending on the circumstances.

## **Would you follow the same procedures for a long-term mandated closure as GCCS did in “Wave 1”?**

Spots – Your child’s spot will be held. The time the spot is held may differ depending on the circumstances.

Fees – Financial decisions are decided by the Board of Directors and are greatly impacted by our current financial situation.

## **When and how do we get reimbursed for the half month fees from March?**

Upon return to care your half month reimbursement will be credited towards your owing fees prior to or on September 1, 2020.

Thank you to the Families that have asked to donate their reimbursement to support GCCS financially. If a donation interests you, please contact Nicole.

## **What do we do if our child has pre-existing symptoms related to COVID-19?**

If symptoms related to COVID-19 are present the child cannot attend child care. If your child has a pre-existing condition they will need to be tested for COVID-19. Along with a negative test result, you will have to get a doctor’s note outlining their preexisting conditions, including the cause of their condition and the symptoms of their conditions. For example, A high pollen count causes sneezing and runny nose. Therefore, we know if any other symptoms appear or the cause is not present then we may have another cause for the presenting symptoms.

If a child has symptoms that could be caused by a known pre-existing condition (e.g. allergies), the child should be tested for COVID-19 to confirm that it is not the source of their symptoms before entering or returning to the program. A child that has tested negative for COVID-19 does not need to be retested unless new or different symptoms develop.

## **What if my child has a comfort item or soother?**

Comfort items and soothers can only be used if they stay at the centre and do not go home. Soothers are kept in individual labeled containers in the classroom.

## **If my Infant is teething causing symptoms related to Covid would they have to stay home for 10 days?**

Families must follow the above sickness/illness policy and be able to answer “no” to all questions on the health questionnaire. There is little evidence that teething causes fevers, runny noses, diarrhea, etc. Families are expected to call 8-1-1 for recommendations. Many think symptoms typically thought to be related to teething are due to a lowered immune system teething or mouthing more items to relieve discomfort.

Here are some links to determine if your child is sick, or teething.

<https://www.webmd.com/parenting/baby/baby-teething-sick#2>

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/322686#can-teething-cause-a-runny-nose>

### **Do you know if AHS plans to update protocols or will they remain into the fall?**

We are unsure. On Alberta's Relaunch Strategy website, it states that in phase three "Some restrictions and enhanced protection controls will remain in place". We do not know what that means for the centre. We do know that we will likely be operating at full capacity and are unsure what other protection controls will be used or maintained within child care centres.

We have also been informed that regulations may change throughout the winter in regards to outdoor play.

<https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-relaunch-strategy.aspx>

### **I have changing pick up and drop off times, how would I mitigate staggered drop off?**

We would need to know in advance. You can communicate through email, phone call, or hi-mama your expected drop-offs. The staggered drop-offs are more that we are prepared, can ensure social distancing, and can communicate high volume times with families, so that they are prepared for possible wait times. This is also a mandated regulation for re-opening.

A survey was sent out to provide us with the earliest and latest possible times for your family to need care, so that we can staff accordingly. Staffing each room independently adds additional challenges and we need to know when to have additional educators for your child if needed.

### **How would we transition into daycare for new siblings and existing children?**

Parents cannot enter the rooms unless they have arranged a visit through administration. Scheduled visits for new children will be arranged between the family and Admin to ensure a smoother transition. At this time parents are expected to wear a mask and wash hands if visiting. If visiting or know that your child will need time with a parent at drop-off, please communicate this with Nicole, so that the classrooms can be informed. Please note that siblings cannot enter a room that they do not belong to.

### **Will siblings be together or see each other?**

At this time seeing siblings in other rooms will be limited due to the Alberta Health Guidelines.

### **Someone in my household is under mandatory isolation for 14 days, can my child attend care?**

The current health questionnaire does not exclude children where someone in their household has had close contact with a person diagnosed with Covid-19 or have traveled outside of the country and is under a 14 day isolation. If your child is a close contact to someone with Covid-19 they cannot attend care.

### **Key Takeaways**

- All adults must wear a mask within the daycare and OSC space.
- Only one adult per family inside the centre at drop off and pick up

- A health questionnaire must be reviewed prior to leaving home and temperature check must be complete at drop off
- Families must follow the illness/sickness policy
- Each classroom will be their own cohort and cannot be mixed at any time
- Do not enter the classroom
- Prepare your employer for possible closures and child illness
- No toys from home
- Practice social distancing
- Keep your children with you in the hallways and wait to enter if the hallway appears too full.
- Cleaning will be enhanced
- Handwashing will be increased

With evolving information, this document may change. Families will be notified of any updates to the new policies and procedures.

**Covid-19 Policies and Procedures Form - September 2020**

Parents' Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Children's Names: \_\_\_\_\_

By signing this document, I \_\_\_\_\_ have read, understand, and will follow the above amended policies and procedures related to COVID-19 from the Family Communication Package Updated on November 25, 2020

I also acknowledge and understand the importance of reviewing the necessary and most current health questionnaire prior to leaving home and know that answering "yes" to any of the questions means that my child cannot attend childcare.

Health Questionnaire: <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/56c020ed-1782-4c6c-bfdd-5af36754471f/resource/6607784e-b42e-46c2-ba76-031c3b0217c5/download/covid-19-information-alberta-health-daily-checklist.pdf>

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_