

This document provides a sample child care policy to use when a child develops symptoms while they are at child care and when they can return after an illness.

When a Child has New Symptoms

Children under age 2

Children under age 2 should be sent home. It is recommended the child get a PCR test, through a medical provider, pharmacy, or [state test site](#). Testing is recommended but not required.

- If they have a negative PCR test or do not test, the child may return when their symptoms have improved and in accordance with [child care licensing regulations](#).
- If the child has had COVID within the last 90 days, PCR testing is not recommended. Encourage the family to consult with a healthcare provider and return to care when symptoms have improved and in accordance with child care licensing regulations. (Take-home tests, including antigen and LAMP tests, have not been approved for this age group.)

Children age 2 and older

If a child age 2 or older meets exclusion criteria as found in [child care licensing regulations](#), they should be sent home with two antigen tests. Depending on symptoms, the child should wear a mask to the best of their ability while waiting to be taken home. Testing is recommended but not required. They may return when their symptoms have improved and in accordance with child care licensing regulations.

- If a child age 2 or older has symptoms, but does not meet exclusion criteria as found in child care licensing regulations, child care providers may choose to use an antigen test on-site. Child cares require written consent from families to perform testing.
 - If the antigen test is positive, the child is required to be sent home. While the child is waiting to be picked up, make sure they are separated in a comfortable area away from other children (while also being able to maintain safe supervision of the child). They should also wear a mask to the best of their ability. Instruct the child's family to follow [Vermont Department of Health guidance for isolation](#).
 - If the antigen test is negative, they may remain in child care as long as they continue to not meet exclusion criteria.
 - A second antigen test should be sent home with the child so the test can be repeated before returning to child care the following day. Please note that testing is not required to return to child care.
- If a family has not consented to testing, the child should be sent home. It is recommended that the child get tested. If they test negative or do not test, the child may return when their symptoms have improved and in accordance with child care licensing regulations.

Return to Child Care After a COVID-19 Infection

Children may return to child care after isolating for five days if their symptoms have improved and they have been fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.

Return to Child Care After a non-COVID-19 Illness

A child may return to child care if their symptoms have improved and in accordance with [child care licensing regulations](#).

Additional Considerations

If a child does not attend child care due to illness, they may access two rapid antigen tests by picking them up at their child care.

If a child age 2 or older has mild symptoms before arriving, and their family has access to a LAMP test, they are allowed to attend that day as long as the child has a negative LAMP test result. To get a free take-home LAMP test, families can [make an appointment](#) to pick one up at a state test site.

Resources

- [Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 page](#)
- Call Vermont Department of Health at 802-863-7240 (toll-free 833-722-0860)
- [What to Do If You Test Positive for COVID-19](#)
- [What to Do If You Are a Close Contact](#)
- [Getting the COVID-19 Vaccine](#)
- [COVID-19 Testing](#)
- [Child Care Licensing Regulations](#)