

St. Margaret's COVID-19 Pandemic Policy

Child care is a critical part of the public health emergency response team

Introduction

The COVID-19 virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks.
- These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
- Studies have shown that COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms.

Symptoms include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

In general, symptoms appear 2 – 14 days after exposure. Knowing these facts, St. Margaret's has implemented safety measures for families, children and teachers to follow so that we are an important part of reducing the spread and keeping everyone as healthy as possible.

Social Distancing Strategies

St. Margaret's staff and families will work with the local health officials to determine a set of strategies appropriate for St. Margaret's. We will use preparedness strategies and consider the following social distancing strategies that may/may not be implemented at some point of time during the pandemic.

- When possible, child care classes will include the same group each day, and the same child care providers will remain with the same group each day. When possible, children of healthcare workers and first responders will remain in a separate classroom from other children.
- We will cancel or postpone special events such as festivals, holiday events, and special performances.
- Teachers will use discretion when deciding whether to alter or halt daily group activities that may promote transmission.
 - When possible, each group of children will be in a separate room.
 - We will do our best to limit the mixing of children, such as staggering playground times and keeping groups separate for special activities such as art, music, and exercising.

- St. Margaret's may stagger arrival and drop off times and/or have child care providers come outside the facility to pick up the children as they arrive. Our plan for curbside drop off and pick up aims to limit direct contact between parents and staff members and adhere to social distancing recommendations.
- When possible, administrative staff will be permitted to telework from their homes.

Guideline for onset of illness at St. Margaret's

Child

- If a child becomes sick during the day, a teacher's aide will remove the child from their classroom and keep the child comfortable until the family can arrive.
- The lead teacher will immediately call the child's family and request an immediate pick up.

Employee

- Employees who appear to have symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath) upon arrival at work or who become sick during the day will be immediately separated from other employees, customers, and visitors and sent home.
- If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19 infection, St. Margaret's will inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The fellow employees should then self-monitor for symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath). The employee should send proof of their positive COVID-19 test results to the director.

Guidelines for onset of illness while at home

Child

- If a child becomes sick at home with any symptoms (cough, fever, muscle aches, generally not feeling well) we ask that you notify us and keep your child at home. Follow our current Illness Policy to understand the return to school policy. If symptoms are consistent with Covid-19, please phone your child's pediatrician and ask for guidance. Please phone us and share that guidance with St. Margaret's.

Employee

- Stay home: Most people with COVID-19 have mild illness and are able to recover at home without medical care. Do not leave your home, except to get medical care. Do not visit public areas.
- Stay in touch with your doctor
- Stay away from others: You should stay in a specific "sick room" if possible, and away from other people and pets in your home. Use a separate bathroom, if available.
- If you develop emergency warning signs for COVID-19 get medical attention immediately.

Family member

- If caring for a sick household family member, follow recommended precautions and monitor your own health carefully.

- Have the person stay in one room, away from other people, including yourself, as much as possible.
 - If possible, have them use a separate bathroom.
 - Avoid sharing personal household items, like dishes, towels, and bedding
 - Have them wear a cloth face covering (that covers their nose and mouth) when they are around people, including you.
 - If the sick person can't wear a cloth face covering, you should wear one while in the same room with them.
 - If the sick person needs to be around others (within the home, in a vehicle, or doctor's office), they should wear a cloth face covering that covers their mouth and nose.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after interacting with the sick person. If soap and water are not readily available, **use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol**. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Every day, clean all surfaces that are touched often, like counters, tabletops, light switches, and doorknobs
 - Use household cleaning sprays or wipes according to the label instructions.
- Wash laundry thoroughly.
 - If laundry is soiled, wear disposable gloves and keep the soiled items away from your body while laundering. Wash your hands immediately after removing gloves.
- Avoid having any unnecessary visitors.
- For any additional questions about their care, contact their healthcare provider or state or local health department.

Keep surfaces disinfected

- Avoid sharing personal items
- Monitor for emergency signs, prevent the spread of germs, treat symptoms, and carefully consider when to end home isolation.

Children/Staff who have had close contact with a person with symptoms or diagnosed with COVID-19

- Children who have symptoms should stay home
- Employees who have symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath) should notify their supervisor/director and stay home.
- Sick employees should follow CDC-recommended steps. Employees should not return to work until the criteria to discontinue home isolation are met, in consultation with healthcare providers and state and local health departments.
- Employees who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 should notify their supervisor and follow CDC recommended precautions.
- If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19 infection, St. Margaret's should inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Fellow employees should then self-monitor for symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath).
- Employees should not return to work until the criteria to end home isolation is met as instructed in consultation with healthcare providers and state and local health departments.

Children/Staff with COVID-19 who have home isolated can stop isolation with these conditions

- If you have tested positive for COVID and a test is required to determine if person is still contagious, children or staff can return to St. Margaret's after these three things have occurred:
 - No fever (without the use medicine that reduces fevers)
AND
 - Other symptoms have improved (for example, when cough or shortness of breath have improved)
AND
 - Received two negative tests in a row, 24 hours apart. Your doctor will follow CDC guidelines.

- If you were exposed to COVID and/or are exhibiting symptoms, children or staff can return to St. Margaret's after these three things have occurred:
 - No fever (without the use medicine that reduces fevers)
AND
 - Other symptoms have improved (for example, when cough or shortness of breath have improved)
AND
 - Received a negative test. Your doctor will follow CDC guidelines.

- If children or staff have been exposed, but have no symptoms, and are willing to be tested:
 - Monitor yourself for a full 14 days. Infection can develop through day 14.
 - Get tested. If the test is negative, and you do not develop symptoms, you can leave in-home quarantine after 7 full days (which is on Day 8).
 - If you have not received the results of your test on Day 8, you should remain in-home quarantine until you get your results.

- If children or staff have been exposed, but have no symptoms and do not wish to be tested:
 - Monitor yourself for symptoms for a full 14 days. Infection can develop through Day 14.
 - If you have no symptoms during the first 10 days, you can be released from quarantine without a test on Day 11.
 - If you decide to be tested and do not have symptoms, the Health Department recommends that you wait until Day 6 or 7 of quarantine to ensure that the level of virus in your body would be detectable.
 - If you test positive, even if you have no symptoms, you can spread the virus and should remain at home in isolation for 10 days from the date you were tested.

If St. Margaret's has a case of Covid-19, St. Margaret's will:

- Notify families and staff of the exposure
- Report the confirmed case to the local health department and follow their specific guidelines

- Report the confirmed case to the state Department of Public Health
- Determine the date of symptom onset for the child/staff member
- Determine if the child/staff member attended/worked at the program while symptomatic or during the 2 days before symptoms began
- Identify what days the child/staff member attended/worked during that time
- Determine who had close contact with the child/staff member at the program during those days.
- Close off areas used by the individuals with COVID-19 (when possible)
- Exclude the children and staff members who are determined to have had close contact with the affected/child/staff member for 14 days after the last day they had contact with the affected/child/staff member
- Wait as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection to minimize potential for exposure to respiratory droplets (when possible)
 - o Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
 - o If possible, wait up to 24 hours before beginning cleaning and disinfection. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
 - o Clean and disinfect all areas used by the sick person, such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment like tablets, touch screens, keyboards, and remote controls.
 - o If more than 7 days has passed since the sick person visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary. –
 - o Continue routine cleaning and disinfection

When cleaning, St. Margaret's staff will:

- Wear disposable gloves and masks for all tasks in the cleaning process, including handling trash.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) based on the cleaning/disinfectant products being used and whether there is a risk of splash.
- Remove and dispose of gloves and gowns carefully to avoid contamination of the wearer and the surrounding area.
- Wash their hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds. Always wash immediately after removing gloves and after contact with a sick person.

Dismiss students and most staff for 2-5 days

This initial short-term dismissal allows time for the local health officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation impacting St. Margaret's. This allows the local health officials to help St. Margaret's determine appropriate next steps, including whether an extended dismissal duration is needed to stop or slow further spread of COVID-19.

- We will assess based on local health officials' recommendations for the scope (e.g., a single school, multiple schools, the full district) and duration of school dismissals will be made on a case-by-case basis using the most up-to-date information about COVID-19 and the specific cases in the community.

- During school dismissals, we will also cancel extracurricular group activities, care-based afterschool programs, and special events.
- St. Margaret's will discourage staff, students, and their families from gathering or socializing anywhere. This includes group child care arrangements, as well as gathering at places like a friend's house, a favorite restaurant, or the local shopping mall.

Health Screening Of Children/Staff

All children and staff are required to be screened before entering the facility for any observable illness, including cough or respiratory distress, and to confirm a temperature below 100 degrees fahrenheit.

Child

- Staff will wear a mask and gloves while checking child's temperature
- Staff will check each child's temperature upon arrival.
- Thermometer must be disinfected before and after use of checking child's temperature
- If performing a temperature check on multiple individuals, ensure that a clean pair of gloves is used for each individual and that the thermometer has been thoroughly cleaned in between each check.
- Staff can protect themselves by wearing an over-large button-down, long sleeved shirt and by wearing long hair up off the collar in a ponytail or other updo.
- Staff should wash their hands, neck, and anywhere touched by a child's secretions.
- Staff should change the child's clothes if secretions are on the child's clothes. They should change the button-down shirt, if there are secretions on it, and wash their hands again.
- Contaminated clothes should be placed in a plastic bag or washed in a washing machine. Infants, toddlers, and their providers should have multiple changes of clothes on hand in the child care center or home-based child care.
- Show the temperature to the parent, and have the parent write in the correct column the child's temperature.
- Staff should sign off on the Student/Staff Arrival Questionnaire

Staff member

- Staff should expect to arrive at least 5-10 minutes early than their scheduled shift
- Staff should either have their own thermometer from home, or use St. Margaret's thermometer, depending on supply and demand issues
- Staff should answer the questions on Student/Staff Questionnaire, record their temperature, and have the director or designee witness temperature reading
- Return thermometer to staff assigned area and disinfect

During the day prevention of Covid-19:

Arrival of children

- When possible, St. Margaret's will stagger arrival/drop-off times

- Parents should plan for curb side drop off and pick up as this limits direct contact between parents and staff members. All should adhere to social distancing recommendations.
 - If possible, the same parent or designated person should drop off and pick up the child every day
 - If possible, older people such as grandparents or those with serious underlying medical conditions should not pick up children, because they are more at risk for severe illness from COVID-19
- Sign in procedures will include staff disinfecting the stations between each use
 - Parents should use the Hand hygiene station set up at the entrance of the facility, so that children can clean their hands before they enter. Staff will take child's temperature and assist them with hand washing upon arrival.
 - Staff will take child's lunch from family and put into the refrigerator
 - Assure that the family has completed the sign in/check in sheet and that the area has been disinfected

Arrival of Staff

- Bring in to the center as little as you possibly will need for the day.
- Staff must wear a mask all day excluding meal times and/or break time
- Place your items down and wash hands
- Take temperature and have director or designee witness
- Spray your lunch bag down with bleach and water and place in refrigerator
- Put other items away
- Spray the area that you left your belongings on
- Sign/Clock in
- Wash hands and put on your mask
- Put on your "center shoes"

Departure of children

- o Staggered pickup will be implemented when possible
- o Upon arrival into the driveway and parking area, the family will phone the center of their arrival
- o The staff member will gather the child's things
- o The staff member will have child wash his/her hands
- o Staff member will take child, belongings, and clipboard to the family who will complete the pickup time in the parking lot. Staff will disinfect items and return inside.

Departure of Staff

Once all children have departed and the center is cleaned:

- Use a glove to remove any more garbage to the dumpster
- Wash mask in soap and water and disinfect in bleach and water, hang to dry
- Wash hands
- Take off "center shoes"
- Take all belongings home

Various times of the day

- All children's blankets, slippers or inside shoes/extra clothes are to stay at the center to reduce the transmission of Covid-19 from home to school

- At nap time, we will ensure that children's cots (or cribs) are spaced out as much as possible, ideally 6 feet apart. We will continue to practice head to toe cot placement in order to further reduce the potential for viral spread.
- Children's books, like other paper-based materials such as mail or envelopes, are not considered as a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfection procedures. We do encourage a light spray down of bleach throughout the day.
- The break room/area will have a bleach spray bottle for staff to use before and after use of table if employee needs to eat lunch.
- No touch trash cans for use in classrooms instead of cans that require a hand to touch
- Use of cloth face covering for each staff person at all times while in the workplace is mandatory as of April 21, 2020. Instructions for use of cloth face covering are available from the CDC.
 - o Exemptions to anyone for whom doing so would be contrary to his or her health or safety because of a medical condition (doctor's note is required in these cases)
 - o A child in a child care setting
 - o A child under the age of 2

Soft surface Cleaning

For soft surfaces such as carpeted floor, rugs, and drapes, we will:

- Clean the surface using soap and water or with cleaners appropriate for use on these surfaces.
- Launder items (if possible) according to the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely or
- Disinfect with an EPA-registered household disinfectant. These disinfectants meet EPA's criteria for use against COVID-19.

Electronics

For electronics, such as tablets, computers, touch screens, keyboards, and remote controls, we will:

- Consider putting a wipeable cover on electronics.
- Follow manufacturer's instruction for cleaning and disinfecting.
- If no guidance is provided, use alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol. Dry surface thoroughly.

Laundry

For clothing, towels, linens and other items, St. Margaret's will:

- Launder items according to the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely.
- Wear disposable gloves when handling dirty laundry from a person who is sick.
- Dirty laundry from a person who is sick can be washed with other people's items.
- Do not shake dirty laundry.
- Clean and disinfect clothes hampers according to guidance above for surfaces.
- Remove gloves, and wash hands right away.

Clean and Sanitize Toys

For the cleaning of toys, St. Margaret's will:

- Exclude the use of toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized or promptly laundered after use

- Appropriately clean toys that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretions or excretions by hand by a person wearing gloves. We will clean with water and detergent, rinse, sanitize with an EPA-registered disinfectant, rinse again, and air-dry. We may also clean in a mechanical dishwasher.
- Be mindful of items more likely to be placed in a child’s mouth, like play food, dishes, and utensils.
- Prevent the sharing of toys with other groups of infants or toddlers, unless they are washed and sanitized before being moved from one group to the other.
 - Set aside toys that need to be cleaned. Place in a dish pan with soapy water or put in a separate container marked for “soiled toys.” Keep dish pan and water out of reach from children to prevent risk of drowning. Washing with soapy water is the ideal method for cleaning.
- Children’s books, like other paper-based materials such as mail or envelopes, are not considered a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfection procedures.

Washing, Feeding, or Holding a Child

It is important to comfort crying, sad, and/or anxious infants and toddlers, and they often need to be held. To the extent possible, when washing, feeding, or holding very young children, staff can protect themselves by:

- Wearing an over-large button-down, long sleeved shirt and by wearing long hair up off the collar in a ponytail or other updo.
- Washing their hands, neck, and anywhere touched by a child’s secretions.
- Changing the child’s clothes if secretions are on the child’s clothes. They should change the button-down shirt, if there are secretions on it, and wash their hands again.
- Contaminated clothes should be placed in a plastic bag or washed in a washing machine.
- Having multiple changes of clothes on hand.
- Washing their hands before and after handling infant bottles prepared at home or prepared in the facility. Bottles, bottle caps, nipples, and other equipment used for bottle-feeding should be thoroughly cleaned after each use by washing in a dishwasher or by washing with a bottlebrush, soap, and water.

Group Size

Group size will be limited and monitored appropriately, following CDC recommendations, whenever possible.

Hand washing

All children, staff, and volunteers should engage in hand hygiene at the following times:

- Before and after eating or handling food, or feeding children
- Arrival to the facility and after breaks
- Before and after preparing food or drinks

- Before and after administering medication or medical ointment
- After diapering
- After using the toilet or helping a child use the bathroom
- After coming in contact with bodily fluid
- After handling animals or cleaning up animal waste
- After playing outdoors or in sand
- After handling garbage
- After blowing one's nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After using the restroom
- Before coming in contact with any child
- After touching or cleaning surfaces that may be contaminated
- After using shared equipment like toys, computer keyboards, mouse, scissors, pens. etc
- All staff and children must adhere to regular hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, using the following method:
 - Turn water on and wet hands, remove from water
 - Add soap to hands and create friction to make bubbles
 - Scrub for 20 seconds, sing Happy Birthday or ABC's
 - Staff member should use a scrub brush under nails
 - Rinse hands under running water
 - Dry hands with single use paper towels
 - Turn off faucet with paper towels

Alcohol based sanitizers

Use of an alcohol based hand sanitizer should only be practiced when the soap and water method is not available. If a child needs to use alcohol based sanitizer, an adult/staff member must be physically present to observe and guide the child in proper use.

Respiratory Hygiene

- All staff should cough and sneeze within tissues or the corner of the elbow
- Encourage children when appropriate to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or the corner of the elbow
- Dispose of soiled tissues immediately after use

Eliminating transmission points

In order to eliminate transmission points, St. Margaret's staff will:

- Reduce common touch points by opening internal doors where possible.
- Install all no-touch disposal receptacles or remove lids that require contact to open for non-hazardous waste containers unless doing so creates an unsanitary environment.
- Engage in frequent cleaning of all touch points.
- Secure all secondary doors and access points to minimize incidental contact.
- Provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces (for example, doorknobs, keyboards, remote controls, desks, other work tools and equipment) can be wiped down.
 - Staff should not share phones, desks, or other work tools and equipment, when possible. If shared, clean and disinfect equipment before and after use.

- Employees should clean their personal workspace at the beginning and the end of every shift.
- If a sick employee is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, follow the CDC cleaning and disinfection recommendations.

Meetings, Continued Education

These events and meetings will follow social distancing guidelines.

Essential functions and reliance that the community may need us for our services

- St. Margaret's is prepared to change our business practice to maintain critical operations. This may include the enrollment (on a temporary basis) of children of various ages of essential personal
- St. Margaret's will identify alternate supply chains for critical goods and services. Some goods and services may be in higher demand or unavailable. If for some reason there is not adequate PPE for a child care center, cleaning supplies, paper supplies, the director will close the center until proper materials have been secured.
 - Currently, the best defense to Covid-19 is hand washing therefore, using gloves all day everyday could become the false security. Therefore, gloved hands will be reserved for the following times:
 - Universal Precautions
 - Diaper changing
 - Nose blowing
 - Garbage removal
- The Director will communicate often with companies that enter the building about the importance of sick employees staying home.
 - St. Margaret's procedure for these persons to enter the building include:
 - Visitors conducting business must wear a mask
 - Director or her designee will take visitors temperature
 - The visitor will complete a questionnaire form prior to entrance

Center Family/Staff Communication Plan

- Communication is important for all center staff and families. Regular communication will continue through email by the director as well as face to face from teachers.

Determination of how St. Margaret's will operate if absenteeism spikes amongst staff

While assuring that the same staff person is to remain with the same children over the course of the day, it is understandable that absenteeism may increase in employees. Those who stay home to care for sick family members, and those who must stay home to watch their children if dismissed from childcare programs and K-12 schools could impact absenteeism.

- St. Margaret's will plan to monitor and respond to absenteeism in the workplace to provide consistency for families and children
- St. Margaret's will prepare to institute flexible workplace and leave policies.
- We will also cross-train staff to perform essential functions so the workplace can operate even if key employees are absent.

