

CHILD CARE AND AFTERSCHOOL LICENSING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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General

- 1. What should I do if I have questions about how to provide regulated child care and/or school age care/camp services while the Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 guidelines continue to be in effect?**

Vermont Department of Health maintains a [webpage](#) with information and resources regarding how to provide services in a safe and healthy way.

The Vermont Department of Health also has public health nurses available to answer health related child care and/or school age care/camp questions from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM Monday through Friday.

- Call: (802) 863-7240, select the option for “Child care Programs”
- After hours there is a child care question mailbox to leave a message and Vermont Department of Health staff will return your call the following business day.

In addition, you may call and/or email the Licensor on Duty. Licensing Field Specialists are available to provide technical assistance, explore options that may assist you, and to share information about resources.

- Call: (800) 649-2642 option 3
- Email: AHS.DCFCDDChildcarelicensing@vermont.gov

- 2. Can I assess my own individual needs and choose not to reopen my program or Family Child Care Home (FCCH)?**

Yes, you may make your own decisions based on your needs and individual situation. You will find it helpful to learn more about how to reopen your program in a safe and healthy way by reading the Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#).

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3. Am I expected to complete my upcoming program license renewal application?

Yes, license renewal application extensions have ended. CDD has resumed sending a license renewal notice through BFIS to programs and Family Child Care Homes (FCCH). These license renewal reminders are sent 60-days before the license expiration date. Please be sure to submit a complete license renewal application prior to your license expiration date. Programs and FCCHs who do not submit a complete license renewal application prior to the license expiration date will be expired.

4. Are licenser's conducting visits?

It depends. The Child Development Division (Division) is working with Vermont Department of Health and other colleagues who work in the field to determine when it is appropriate for licensers to be conducting licensing visits. At times, the Division is limiting licensers' visits to complaint visits. As Vermont continues to restart, the Division will have licensers resume licensing visits more regularly. To learn more, read the "[What to Expect from a Child Care Licensing Visit During the COVID Crisis.](#)"

Ability to Operate

5. I am 65 years old or older and/or I have a listed health condition that is at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Does this mean I cannot work, return to work, or reopen my program?

Your health and safety come first. The Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#) is to protect you from COVID-19. If you are a healthy 65-year-old or older person and/or have a listed health condition that is well managed, you may feel well enough to care for children. When making the decision to return to caring for children, you should consult with your physician to determine if it is safe for you to do so. If you do not have a physician and/or health insurance, you may:

- Call 2-1-1 for assistance with finding a physician.
- Contact [Vermont Health Connect](#) for information about affordable insurance options.

There are additional financial options you can explore if you make the decision to remain home longer:

- DCF's [Economic Services Division](#) may have benefits for which you qualify.
- Call 2-1-1 to learn about other possible financial options.

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6. What should I do if I have a staff member who is 65-years-old or older and/or has a listed health condition that is at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19?

The Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#) outlines practices that protect staff from COVID-19. Labor laws may prevent you from requiring these staff to return to work. You may want to consult with a lawyer and/or your liability insurance carrier about how best to handle this situation as it relates to your program or Family Child Care Home.

If a staff member who is a healthy 65-year-old or older person and/or has a listed health condition that is well managed, the staff member may feel well enough to care for children. When making the decision to return to caring for children, the staff member should consult with his/her physician to determine if it is safe for them to do so. If they do not have a physician and/or health insurance, they may:

- Call 2-1-1 for assistance with finding a physician.
- Contact [Vermont Health Connect](#) for information about affordable insurance options.

There are additional financial options they can explore if they make the decision to remain home longer:

- DCF's [Economic Services Division](#) may have benefits for which they qualify.
- Call 2-1-1 to learn about other possible financial options.

7. I have multiple staff who are not yet comfortable and/or who have circumstances that prevent them from returning to work. How will we/I reopen or stay open if we/I do not have staff?

You may reopen and/or remain open to care for and serve children based on available staff. You may also hire substitute staff to cover for staff who are not available to work. If substitutes are needed for more than 30-days, and they do not meet the qualifications for the position for which they are covering; you may request a variance to ASP rule 5.6, CBCCPP rule 6.2.4.6, or licensed FCCH rule 7.6.12. (Note: A registered FCCH is not expected to have a substitute meet additional qualifications after 30-days of employment.)

In addition, you may call and/or email the Licensor on Duty. Licensing Field Specialists can discuss with you whether other options exist based on your situation.

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8. How can we support our staff who may be hesitant to return to work, because they are concerned that they may contract COVID-19?

Staff should be encouraged to review the [health guidance](#) and information created by the Vermont Department of Health which is based on the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) information and guidance.

It may also be helpful to speak to other programs that remained open and who provided safe and healthy care for essential persons' children. Or to watch a Let's Grow Kids sponsored [panel recording of programs](#) that were open during the closure period.

9. Expecting staff to stay home if they have any COVID-19 like symptoms may result in staffing shortages. If we identify a day where we will not have enough staff to maintain ratios, can we ask families to keep their children home?

The answer to this question depends on several factors. Staff must stay home if they are sick and/or have COVID-19 like symptoms. Programs are required to always operate in compliance with staff: child ratios. When substitutes are not available, programs will need to let families know that child care or school age programs are not available for the day. Encouraging families to have back-up plans is a helpful proactive approach for reducing strain on families if or when families need to use alternative arrangements.

10. Do I still need to have staff and/or FCCH household members complete fingerprinting?

Yes, almost all Fingerprint Identification Centers have resumed non-criminal fingerprinting services. To start, review who needs to complete the next step in the background clearance process by submitting to fingerprinting. Then have the identified staff and/or FCCH adult household members schedule an appointment to do this. If you are unsure who, on your program's BFIS Associated Parties list, still needs to do this; call your Child Care Business Technician. Your Child Care Business Technician's contact information may be located on our website: https://dcf.vermont.gov/cdd/whos_who#Licensing.

The person submitting to fingerprinting will be required to wear a facial covering and will likely be required to be the only person in the police/sheriff department. When the appointment is scheduled, ask whether the person will need to bring their own pen and whether exact cash is required or if checks are accepted. Remember that staff and/or FCCH household members may not be left alone with children until their fingerprint results are complete, and we have sent the clearance approval letter.

List of [Fingerprint Identification Centers](#) and their contact information.

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11. Should I continue to submit Record Check Authorization forms for new staff and/or FCCH household members?

Yes, Child Care Business Technicians are continuing to process background clearances. You should continue to submit Record Check Authorization forms and/or FCCH Census forms either by email or by mail.

12. I am choosing to operate at a lower capacity. This is working fine as some of my families do not need care yet. What will happen when these families are ready to send their children back, but I do not have room?

If you don't have availability, refer the family to [their local child care referral specialist](#) for assistance with finding alternative child care.

13. What should I do to get the cleaning and other supplies I need to reopen?

With assistance from the Vermont State Emergency Operations Center, the Division has secured and distributed several different types of supplies. The Division's website has the latest information and suggestions on [supply resources](#).

14. Can service providers, partner staff, and volunteers be in our program?

The Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#) clarifies who may or may not be in your program or FCCH. Service providers and/or partner staff who work with a child(ren) per an IEP or similar plan may be in your program or FCCH for the time needed to work with the identified child(ren). You may also host interns and/or other learners. All individuals in your program or FCCH are required to follow the same health and safety requirements as staff and/or yourself. These individuals also count in the total number of adults and children in a group per the Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#).

Visitors and volunteers are not allowed in your program or FCCH. The reopening of Vermont businesses and services (Restart Vermont) is an intentional process that moves at a pace that helps protect us from a resurgence of COVID-19.

15. When I have an electrician, plumber, Licensing Field Specialist, STARS Assessor, Fire Marshal, or other similar professional visit my program; do they have to count in the group size?

The Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#) clarifies that these types of professionals do not count in the group size requirement.

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16. What guidelines do I have to follow when serving children from a different state and/or when enrolled children travel out of state?

Follow the travel restrictions posted on the Agency of Commerce and Community Development's [website](#). This website posts the current directives from our Governor that are required to be followed.

17. Will all staff and children that travel outside of Vermont need to quarantine or get tested for COVID-19 before returning to the program?

Follow the travel restrictions posted on the Agency of Commerce and Community Development's [website](#). This website posts the current directives from our Governor that are required to be followed.

Professional Development

18. Will the COVID-19 VOSHA training count towards annual professional development hours?

No, this training will not count towards annual professional development hours. Staff are required to complete the VOSHA training. The training may be found on the Vermont Department of Labor's [website](#). This training is brief and only requires reading safety material. There is no interactive element, nor testing of knowledge gained.

19. Can online training opportunities count for professional development, and can they be entered into my Quality and Credential Account in the Bright Futures Information System (BFIS)?

During the COVID-19 response period, if an online training opportunity is offered by an approved Northern Lights at CCV sponsor and is offered "in real time," the Division has temporarily approved these trainings to count towards annual professional development. Information about the criteria is available on the Northern Lights at CCV's [website](#).

"Online Anytime" trainings are trainings completed on your own at a time you choose. These trainings are also available. Only specific Online Anytime trainings offered by organizations pre-approved by Northern Lights at CCV can count toward annual professional development requirements. For a complete list of Online Anytime trainings approved in Vermont, visit Northern Lights at CCV's [website](#).

Watching recordings of online real time trainings cannot count toward annual professional development requirements.

20. What if my CPR and Pediatric First Aid training expires, and I need to take it?

Note: The exception period has been extended to December 31, 2020.

The regulatory requirement for you and/or staff to complete this training and to remain certified continues, because it is critical during this time for you and/or staff to be trained in the life saving techniques of CPR and Pediatric First Aid. However, in-person options may not be available due to public health guidelines. You and/or staff may always choose to attend an in-person training or a hybrid training (online training with an in-person skills assessment) offered by an approved training organization.

From March 1 through December 31, 2020, you may also choose a fully online CPR and Pediatric First Aid training offered by an approved training organization and documentation will be accepted, entered, and verified in your BFIS Quality and Credential Account by Northern Lights at CCV. This also applies to new staff (permanent and/or temporary) that do not have certification in CPR and Pediatric First Aid.

21. How will I complete the licensing regulation training required as part of the Fundamentals for Early Childhood Professionals course?

Fundamentals' trainers and Northern Lights Resource Advisors will have information for you and/or staff on how to complete the Introduction to Licensing module.

22. Will I and/or staff receive annual professional development credit for attending virtual conferences this year?

Due to COVID-19, many regional, state, and national conferences plan to offer their workshops/training sessions online. Some may count toward annual professional development hours.

- Conferences offered Online in Real-Time: If the conference organization is an approved sponsor, the conference may count toward annual professional development hours. These conferences can be found on the Northern Lights [training calendar](#) and/or in the BFIS [Course Calendar](#).
- Conferences offered using an Online Anytime format: These are conference sessions created/recorded in advance then shared with participants. To count towards annual professional development, they must meet Vermont's Online Anytime training criteria and be listed on the Northern Lights Online Anytime trainings' [page](#).
- Other: If you find a great conference that doesn't meet Vermont's online training criteria, there is still an option for an approved sponsor to include conference sessions as one part of an Online Real-Time training. Northern Lights Resource

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Advisors are available to support sponsors who wish to create these types of professional development opportunities.

23. Do my newly hired staff need to complete an orientation training and a training about child abuse and neglect?

Yes, it is more important than ever for all staff to be oriented to your program's policies and procedures, to complete a training that meets the orientation requirement (per ASP rule 5.31 and CBCCPP and FCCH rules 7.1.3), and to complete a training about child abuse and neglect.

The training on child abuse and neglect, "Protecting Vermont's Children: Reporting Abuse and Neglect", is an [online training](#). When staff have completed this training, they will need to use the Northern Lights at CCV "[Verification Cover Sheet](#)" to submit their completion certificate. Once received, Northern Lights at CCV staff will document completion of this training in the staff member's BFIS Quality and Credential Account.

The orientation training, "[Better Kid Care: Vermont Orientation](#)," is also an online training. Once a month, Better Kid Care sends documentation of who have successfully completed this training to Northern Lights at CCV who will enter the information into staff's BFIS Quality and Credential Accounts. Please be sure that staff know their BFIS Quality and Credential Account number as this is needed when they enroll in the training.

Curriculum

24. Can we operate our summer program completely outside?

Maybe, it is important to continue to comply with the Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#) including group size limits and preventing co-mingling among groups, even while outside. Being outside during any time of year provides a variety of health benefits for children. We encourage outside time to be used as much as possible. Each group of children are required to be separated by a barrier outside like what is required inside the building.

Some programs have access to a vast outside area in which more than one group of children may potentially be outside at the same time. These programs should consult with the Licensor on Duty to review plans for use of outside space and confirm compliance with the child care licensing health and safety requirements.

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It is also important to remember that children need a space inside to use when outside weather requires it.

Licensing Field Specialists will be able to provide technical assistance to ensure your plans meet child care licensing health and safety requirements.

- Call: (800) 649-2642 option 3
- Email: AHS.DCF.CDDChildcarelicensing@vermont.gov

25. Can we still go on field trips?

Yes, field trips can still occur when Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#) can be followed, the Governor's orders allow for it, and child care licensing regulations for field trips can be followed.

26. What requirements are there related to transportation?

The Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#) includes how to provide safe and health transportation which should be followed in combination with child care licensing transportation regulations.

The Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#) addresses group size requirements, how to space children out in the vehicle to the best of your ability, and cleaning and disinfecting requirements for the vehicle before and after transporting children.

27. Can we have children participate in swimming activities?

Yes, children may swim if they have separate towels, have an opportunity to wash their hands before and after swimming, and are able to maintain the approved group size. You will also want to review [Recreation Guidance](#) posted on Agency of Commerce and Community Development's website before using public swimming areas.

28. Our program uses outdoor wading pools and water tables during the summer, can we still do this?

Yes, you can still use these options. Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#) encourages these types options to be kept to a minimum and suggests changing the water when one group of children leaves and before another group takes a turn. Children should have separate towels and follow hand washing requirements. A safer

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option for water play this summer is using a sprinkler system and/or providing children with their own bucket of water for water play.

29. Will children need to have their own designated toys and art supplies?

Children do not need to have their own designated toys and art supplies according to the Vermont Health Department COVID-19 [health guidance](#). This guidance states that children's books, art supplies and other paper-based materials such as mail or envelopes, are not considered high risk for transmission. The health guidance does suggest to limit sharing of materials, to the best of your ability.

30. We operate multiple locations and have staff that travel between sites to teach the arts, can we continue this practice?

This practice needs to adhere to the latest Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#) requirements.

If you have questions about how to apply the guidance to your program, Vermont Department of Health has public health nurses available to answer health related child care and/or school age care questions from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM Monday through Friday.

- Call: (802) 863-7240, select the option for "Child care programs"
- After hours, there is a child care question mailbox to leave a message and Vermont Department of Health staff will return your call the following business day.

31. Will there be resources available to support children who may experience behaviors associated with stress due to increased exposure to hunger, abuse, and/or domestic violence?

The Children's Integrated Services' Child Care Coordinators and Help Me Grow are the best resources for supporting children's behaviors associated with stress due to increased exposure to hunger, abuse, and/or domestic violence. Contact your local Children's Integrated Services' [Specialized Child Care Coordinator](#) and/or Help Me Grow staff. Help Me Grow staff may be contacted by calling 2-1-1 and asking for Help Me Grow. The Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#) also provides resources to support social emotional health.

If you have concerns about a child being abused or neglected, please call Vermont's Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-649-5285. This line is available 24-hours a day, 7-days a week.

Health and Safety

32. Where can I go for health-related questions about COVID-19?

Guidance is available on the Vermont Department of Health's [website](#). This guidance is updated as needed and as we learn more about Vermont's experience with COVID-19. If you have questions that go beyond what is available in the guidance, please call 802-863-7240 to be connected to the maternal and child health nurse.

33. If I'm located in a town that requires facial coverings be worn by those over the age of 2-years in public, do I have to follow the town's requirements and Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 health guidance?

Yes, you do need to follow the requirements for where you are located. If your program is in a town who has established its own requirements, you will need to review the requirements. The requirements will tell when and under what circumstances the town's requirements apply. For example, they may only apply when you are on town land, like the town park. If you have questions about the requirements, you will want to reach to your town.

34. If I'm located in a public-school building, do I follow Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 health guidance for child care programs or for schools?

You will need to follow Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#) for both public school buildings and child care programs. Vermont Department of Health worked with a cross sector stakeholder committee that included school administrators, school nurses, superintendents, and the Agency of Education to develop COVID-19 health guidance for schools. They also worked with the Child Development Division Child Care COVID-19 Advisory Group and the Child Development Division to develop COVID-19 health guidance for child care programs. Vermont Department of Health has aligned these two health guidance documents. Where there are differences, this is due to the unique nature of the school environment.

35. What can we do to prevent COVID-19 from spreading?

Be diligent in taking the necessary safety precautions in everyday actions to help stop the spread of germs to keep each and every one of us safe and healthy. Please follow the Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#).

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36. What do I do if a child becomes sick while in care?

First, the child needs to be separated from other children and/or staff as much as possible and while maintaining supervision and providing care. Next, the child should be sent home as soon as possible. Then, follow the cleaning and disinfecting requirements in the Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#).

Vermont Department of Health has a planned strategy to respond should a case of COVID-19 be suspected or confirmed in a child care setting. Read the Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#) to learn more.

37. What personal protective equipment (PPE) am I required to have to serve children? Do we need to wear protective eye wear and facial coverings?

Yes, adults are required to wear facial coverings and, in some circumstances, protective eye wear (e.g. goggles or face shields). The Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#) provides information and links to a variety of resources regarding facial coverings, face shields, and protective eye wear.

38. Should we ask staff to remove their street clothes when they arrive and wear scrubs that can be removed and washed at the end of the day?

This practice is not required. The Vermont Department of Health does recommend staff 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. Should the staff member have contact with a child who is sent home sick and/or have bodily fluids from a child on this shirt, staff can easily remove the shirt, wash their arms, hands, and neck thoroughly; and put on a new over-large button-down, long sleeved shirt.

For more information, read the Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#).

39. How are we supposed to make children maintain and practice social distancing?

Staff and family childcare providers are responsible to set-up the environment and to adjust their practices based upon Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#). Children may or may not be able to assist with following the health guidance. Children should be encouraged and supported with following the health guidance as is developmentally appropriate.

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Wearing facial coverings, washing hands as required, and following cleaning and disinfecting requirements from Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#) are other ways to provide protection from spreading COVID-19 when social distancing is challenging to maintain.

There are many aspects to social distancing. There are physical distancing requirements that you will be able to follow including:

- Ensuring groups of children do not co-mingle (e.g. groups not sharing common space at the same time)
- Children and staff with signs and symptoms of any illness remain home.

While it is more difficult to maintain 6 feet of distancing between children, there are other aspects of Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#) that has been recommended to mitigate physical distancing when this is not possible:

- Placing children head-to-toe for sleeping or resting
- Cleaning requirements of common spaces (e.g. outside play area, bathrooms, gross motor room, cafeteria) required to be completed when one group leaves the area and before another group enters

We all need physical contact. Children need it when they are upset or hurt, when they are trying to fall asleep, and for reassurance. Your place is the “home away from home.” Children will need physical contact with you to meet some of their needs. It is okay to change children’s diapers, help a child wash their hands and/or dress themselves, console a crying child, and rub a child’s back. It is also important to remind and encourage parents to snuggle with their children at home. Especially for older children who may not get any physical touch during the day when they are away from home.

Children are hearing a lot about COVID-19, and its dangers. These messages are everywhere. Whenever possible, use healthy developmental lessons. For example, continue to promote healthy boundaries for children by teaching them to ask permission before they touch other people or other people’s belongings. National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations has a [great visual](#) for teaching children how to say "Hi" with their actions and practice social distancing at the same time.

40. How do we/I support children with wearing facial coverings?

Vermont Department of Health has created a fact sheet to assist you with supporting children with wearing facial coverings. You can find [this resource](#) in the "Useful Posters and Resources." The document is called "Face Coverings for Children." It has been translated into several languages. You may find it helpful for you, staff, and/or families. Within the fact sheet are links to other helpful resources.

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41. We want to meet families outside at pick up and drop off, are there any licensing regulations that would prohibit this practice?

No, however you should be intentional in how you operationalize this practice:

- The outdoor arrival and dismissal area must be protected from traffic and other hazards.
- Plans should be in place to address alternative options when weather conditions require it.
- Plans should be in place to ensure parents have access to their child and the program or FCCH without delay.

ASP rule 3.9 and FCCH and CBCCPP rule 4.2 requires you allow parents access to their child and the program or FCCH without delay. There are other regulations that require you post information where parents will have easy access. You will need to balance your practices to promote the health and safety of staff and children, and parents' rights to information and their children. Open channels of communication, posting information on-line, and responding appropriately to parents' concerns will help you find the right balance for your program.

42. If I have a parent who is deaf and reads lips, can I remove my facial covering when speaking to the parent?

Staff and/or you may take off their/your facial covering to communicate with a parent who is hearing impaired and reads lips to communicate. Social distancing of 6 feet must be followed during this interaction.

There are also other options. Staff and/or you may wear a facial covering with clear plastic square so your mouth can be visible. Or a facial shield could be worn. Face shields should extend below the chin, to the ears on both sides, and there should be no exposed gap between the forehead and the shield's headpiece. They should be cleaned if condensation or droplets are visible on the inside of the shield. They should also be cleaned regularly and handled like facial coverings when putting them on or removing them.

43. Are we able to continue with family style meals?

No, Vermont Health Department COVID-19 [health guidance](#) states to plate each child's meal so that multiple children are not using the same serving utensils. For more information on meal time, read Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#).

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44. Are there additional requirements when preparing food?

Yes, for information on safe preparing and handling of food read Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#).

45. If a bathroom is shared by multiple groups of children and staff, what is the proper cleaning and disinfecting procedure?

For information on shared bathroom use, read Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#). The guidance says:

- Whenever possible, assign a bathroom to each group.
- If there are fewer bathrooms than the number of groups, assign which groups will use the same bathroom. For example, bathroom A is assigned to groups 1 and 2; and bathroom B is assigned to groups 3 and 4.
- Bathroom sink areas including faucets, countertops and paper towel dispensers need to be cleaned after each group has finished.

46. How does the Governor's directive on group size change the child care licensing regulations?

The child care licensing regulations are still in effect for staff: child ratios and group sizes. For example, a room in a CBCCPP that has 2 groups of infants separated by a half wall. The groups have 1 teacher per every 4 children, and each group would be limited to 8 children by regulations. This would equal a total group count of 20 individuals which would meet a Governor's directive of a group size of 25 individuals.

If the Governor's directive for group size was 25 individuals, groups of school age children in ASPs and CBCCPPs would need to be limited to ensure the total number of individuals does not exceed the Governor's directive on group size.

Read Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#) to learn more about how adults and other professionals do or do not count in the Governor's directive on group size.

47. I am a FCCP; how do the group size limitations impact my program?

FCCHs can operate at typical ratios, if household members, child care children, and staff do not exceed the Governor's directive on group size.

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48. What do I need to know if I want to create a temporary wall between two classrooms?

Fire safety codes and regulations will determine the options you have for creating a temporary wall. This includes the use of plexiglass materials if they are to be installed and act as a protective barrier. To ensure your plans are compliant with the Vermont Division of Fire Safety requirements, you must contact your municipal office or the Division of Fire Safety. Please review the list of towns in Vermont whose [municipal offices](#) do this work. If your town is on the list, then use the contact number provided on the list to review your plans and whether they meet fire safety codes and regulations.

If your town is not on the list of municipal offices who do this work, you will need to contact your regional [Division of Fire Safety office](#) to review your plans and whether they meet fire safety codes and regulations.

49. When school age children arrive for afterschool care, do we need to keep them in the same groups as during the school day?

It depends. As much as possible, it is important to keep children in the same groups to minimize the impact of a COVID-19 positive case. For example, you have 13 first graders who can be their own group with one staff member. There will be other times when this isn't possible. For example, a small program with only one group of school age children or a FCCH.

50. Do children with seasonal allergies or mild asthma need a doctor's note to attend child care?

If the child has been enrolled in your program, you can take the parent's statement that their doctor confirmed that the allergies and/or asthma do not prevent them from attending child care. CBCCPPs and FCCHs enrolling new children do need to have documentation from a recent health examination as required in CBCCPP and FCCH rule 5.1.2.

COVID-19 Testing

51. Should child care, home, and school age providers and staff be tested before we reopen?

There is no requirement that a provider be tested. Employers may not require testing of staff as a condition of employment. Test results identify whether someone is positive or negative for COVID-19 on the day of the testing and will not be an indicator of a future

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positive or negative result. As such, all Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#) should continue to be followed regardless of a negative test result.

Any time someone has symptoms, they should remain home. This is true even if they test negative for COVID-19. Information on [testing sites](#) is updated periodically.

52. Will FCCH household members be able to be tested?

Testing is available for all Vermonters. Information on [testing sites](#) is updated periodically.

53. Will children be required to have a COVID-19 test before returning to the program?

A child's physician will decide if a child should be tested for COVID-19. Testing of children is not required before returning to a child care program. Daily health checks that follow the Vermont Department of Health COVID-19 [health guidance](#) must be followed. Children who do not feel well or have symptoms of not feeling well must stay home.

54. Will child care and/or school age providers, and staff have better and quicker access to testing like that of health care workers?

Testing is available for all Vermonters. Information on [testing sites](#) is updated periodically.