





Quality Care Recommendations during COVID

We recognize current health and safety recommendations make it challenging to meet certain quality indicators in the Environment Rating Scales. It should be noted that health and safety is of the utmost importance and we encourage programs to take the necessary precautions to protect children, families, and staff. Below are recommendations (not requirements!) for ECE providers to continue to work toward providing quality care. The recommendations are not intended to ensure programs meet all the indicators for all the scales (ECERS-R, ECERS-3, ITERS-R, ITERS-3, FCCERS-R, FCCERS-3). They are suggestions for ways to continue to provide quality care during these challenging times.

Note: **Bolded blue** text means there is a picture example provided in the third column. The pictures below are just some examples, there are many other options/alternatives that will help providers meet these recommendations.

COVID Health Recommendation	ERS/Quality Care Recommendation	Picture Examples
<p>Hard to clean toys/materials are not used in the program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use areas of installed carpeting, small washable rugs (i.e., bathroom rugs without backing), and vinyl-covered soft pillows or furniture to create a cozy corner and soft furnishings for comfort. Use soft vinyl dolls or toys that are easy to sanitize so children are still able to play with soft toys. Use materials that are easier to clean in dramatic play such as vinyl-covered vests, hard hats, shoes, glasses, etc. <p>Having multiple vinyl soft furnishings, toys, and dress up items and putting small amounts out at a time can be beneficial to support toy rotation.</p>	

		
<p>Family-style meal discontinued (adults serve all food and beverages)</p>	<p>Continue to provide options for self-help for children. This could be getting their own dishes and utensils or disposing of their own items as they finish eating.</p>	
<p>Sensory tables are not being used</p>	<p>Provide individual sensory activities (e.g., small sand or water tubs and toys-<u>must be able to scoop, pour, and dump</u>) for each child that are not shared and are sanitized daily.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You can create your own to make these more affordable and correlate them with classroom themes/lessons. 	

		
<p>Encourage 6-foot distancing and, where possible, implement distancing systems while learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider setting up play stations indoors and outdoors to allow playing with popular toys in separate spaces. • Limit the number of children per station or center to encourage safe distances. • Encourage safe distances between staff and between children whenever possible. However, interaction between staff and children is an important part of the emotional care and development of children. 	
<p>Families drop-off and pick-up children curbside using a staggered schedule</p>	<p>Ensure strong communication between families and staff caring for children is maintained. Use technology (apps, text messaging, phone calls, etc.), or written daily updates to continue to share important information with families.</p>	



<p>Different groups of children are kept separate and physical distancing maintained. Groups are not allowed to intermingle in large common areas (i.e., gyms or playgrounds).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement primary caregiving practices by ensuring the same teachers are kept with the same children. • Ensure outdoor playground times are staggered to eliminate multiple teacher and children groups on the playground at the same time. • Ensure indoor gross motor/gym times are staggered to eliminate usage of multiple teacher and children groups at the same time. Materials and equipment need to be cleaned and disinfected between groups. If the materials can be placed in a child’s mouth, they need to be rinsed after disinfecting. 	
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Where Can I Learn More?

For more information, or to ask questions, visit the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment’s (CDPHE) website here: <https://covid19.colorado.gov/>

To find more details on what CDPHE recommends for your area, visit: <https://covid19.colorado.gov/local-public-health-partners>

To learn more about the Environment Rating Scales, visit Clayton Early Learning’s state anchor team webpage: <https://www.claytonearlylearning.org/quality-assessment-services/our-projects/inter-rater-reliability-team/>