

# Pandemic Policy

COVID-19 PANDEMIC  
ASPIRE EARLY LEARNING ACADEMY LLC

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## *Childcare is a critical part of the public health emergency response team*

### Introduction

Professionals have confirmed that viruses mainly spread from person-to-person as a result of the following:

- 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.
- Droplets that can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
- Some recent studies have suggested that COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms.

Knowing these facts, AELA has implemented many new 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.

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### Social Distancing Strategies

AELA employees and families will work with the local health officials to determine a set of strategies appropriate for AELA. We will use preparedness strategies and consider the following social distancing strategies that may/may not be implemented at some point of time during Covid-19:

- If possible, include the same group each day, and the same childcare providers should remain with the same group most of the day.
- Cancel or postpone all special events such as festivals, holiday events, and special performances.
- Consider whether to alter or halt daily group activities that may promote transmission.
  - Keep each group of children in a separate room.
  - Limit the mixing of children, such as staggering playground times and keeping groups separate for special activities.
- Directors and teachers will meet parents and guardians that the door for pick-up and drop-off. Children and employees are to immediately wash hands upon entering the building and immediately before leaving the building.

### Guidelines for onset of illness at Aspire Early Learning Academy

#### Child

- If a child becomes sick during the day. The first teacher will remove child to a separate room and keep child comfortable until the family can arrive.
- The second teacher will immediately call the child's family and request an immediate pick up. Parents/guardians are required to pick-up within one hour.
- Children are not allowed to return to AELA until a doctor's note confirming clearance is provided to AELA.

#### 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 should immediately be separated from other employees/children and be sent home immediately.
- If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19 infection, all families and employees will be notified immediately of their possible exposure to COVID-19 but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with

Disabilities Act (ADA). The employees should then quarantine and self-monitor for symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath).

- Employees are not allowed to return to AELA until a doctor's note confirming clearance is provided to AELA.

## 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 so that AELA will know how to proceed with our next steps of notifying the proper and required people, and/or authorities.

### Employee

- Most people with COVID-19 have mild illness and can recover at home without medical care. Do not leave your home, except to get medical care. Do not visit public areas, stay home.
- Stay in touch with your doctor
- As much as possible, you will need to 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. Emergency warning signs include\*:
  - Trouble breathing
  - Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
  - New confusion or inability to arouse
  - Bluish lips or face

### Family member

- If caring for a sick household member, follow recommended precautions and monitor your own health
- 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 cannot 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, 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/Employees 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 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, employers 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/Employees with COVID-19 who have home isolated can stop isolation with these conditions

- If a test will not be administered to determine if you are still contagious, children and employees can return to AELA after these three things have happened:
  - No fever for at least 72 hours (that is three full days of 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
  - at least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared
- If a test is required to determine if person is still contagious, children or employees can return to AELA after these three things have happened:
  - 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
- Time-since-illness-onset and time-since-recovery strategy (non-test-based strategy) April 4 guidance
  - Persons with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 who have not had any symptoms may discontinue isolation when at least 14 days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test and have had no subsequent illness provided they remain asymptomatic. For 3 days following discontinuation of isolation, these persons should continue to limit contact (stay 6 feet away from others) and limit potential of dispersal of respiratory secretions by wearing a covering for their nose and mouth whenever they are in settings where other people are present. In community settings, this covering may be a barrier mask, such as a bandana, scarf, or cloth mask. The covering does not refer to a medical mask or respirator.

## If AELA has a case of Covid-19

- AELA will notify families and employees of the exposure.
- AELA will report the confirmed case to the local health department and follow their specific guidelines.
- AELA will report the confirmed case to the state Department of Public Health.
- Determine if the child/employee's member attended/worked at the program while symptomatic or during the 2 days before symptoms began
- Identify what days the child/employee's member attended/worked during that time
- Determine who had close contact with the child/employee's member at the program during those days.
- Close off areas used by the individuals with COVID-19
- Exclude the children and employees' members who are determined to have had close contact with the affected/child/employees' member for 14 days after the last day they had contact with the affected/child/employees' member
- Wait as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection to minimize potential for exposure to respiratory droplets.
  - Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
  - 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.
  - If more than 7 days since the sick person visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary. –
  - Continue routine cleaning and disinfection
    - When cleaning
      - Wear disposable gloves for all tasks in the cleaning process, including handling trash.
      - Additional personal protective equipment (PPE) might be required based on the cleaning/disinfectant products being used and whether there is a risk of splash.
      - Gloves and gowns should be removed carefully to avoid contamination of the wearer and the surrounding area.
      - Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds.-Always wash immediately after removing gloves and after contact with a sick person.

## Dismissal students and employees for two to five days

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

- 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.
- Discourage employees, 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/Employees

All children and employees are required to be screened for any observable illness, including cough or respiratory distress, and to confirm temperature below 100 degrees

### Child

- Perform hand hygiene
- Employees will wear a mask and gloves while checking a child's temperature
- Check each child's temperature upon arrival. Currently, as of 03/15/2020, a fever is considered 100 degrees
- 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.
- Employees 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.
- Employees should wash their hands, neck, and anywhere touched by a child's secretions.
- Employees 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.
- Employees should sign off on Student/Employees Arrival Questionnaire

### Employees member

- Employees should expect to arrive at least 5-10 minutes early than their scheduled shift
- Employees should either have their own thermometer from home, or use AELA thermometer, depending on supply and demand issues
- Employees are to answer the questions on Student/Employees Questionnaire, record their temperature, and have the director or designee witness temperature reading
- Clean and sanitize thermometer and return to assigned area

## During the day- prevention of Covid-19

### Arrival of children

- Curb side drop off and pick up is mandatory and will be strictly enforced. All parties should limit direct contact between parents and employees and adhere to social distancing recommendation.
- 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
- A designated employee will sign your child in/out each day.
- We will check each child's temperature upon arrival. A fever is considered 100 degrees. Families also need to complete a weekly summary of child's exposure to COVID-19, and if child has any of the identified symptoms set by the CDC guidance, the child should not be permitted to attend. Parents must also agree to notify the Academy if there are any changes throughout the week.
- Employees will help child remove coat and get hands washed
- Employees will take child's lunch from family and put into the refrigerator (if applicable)
- Assure that the family has completed the health questionnaire

### Arrival of Employees

- Bring in to the center as little as you possibly will need for the day.
- Employees may wear a mask all day. This will be optional; however, each employee will be provided with a mask.
- Place your items down and wash hands immediately
- Take temperature and have director or designee witness
- Put your other items away
  - Spray the area that you left your belongings on
- Clock in
- Wash hands upon arrival to your classroom

### Departure of children

- During the pandemic, we will have curb side pick-up/drop-off.

- Upon arrival into the parking lot, the family will phone the center and notify the employee of arrival
- The employee will gather the child's items
- The employee will have the child wash his/her hands
- Employees will bring child and belongings to the door
- We request that only one parent patiently approach the door at a time.

## Departure of Employees

Once all children have departed, the Academy is to be cleaned and sanitized.

- 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 all belongings home each day

## Various times of the day

- All children's blankets and extra clothes are to stay at the center to reduce the transmission of Covid-19 from home to school. On Fridays, all belongs are to go home to be washed.
- Classroom sizes are to remain at 10 children or less. Children are to eat lunch in their classroom.
- At nap time, ensure that children's cots (or cribs) are spaced out as much as possible, ideally 6 feet apart. Continue to practice head to toe 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/disinfectant throughout the day
- Break room will have a bleach spray bottle for employees to use before and after use of table if employee needs to eat lunch.
- No touch trashcans in classrooms instead of cans that require a hand to touch
- Use of cloth face covering for each employee while in the workplace and child attending the Academy is optional as of May 1, 2020. Instructions for use of cloth face covering are available from the CDC.

## Midday cleaning

- Clean the area or item with soap and water or another detergent if it is dirty. Then, use disinfectant.
- Follow the instructions on the label to ensure safe and effective use of the product.
- Keeping surface wet for a period of time one minute
- Use precautions such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.

## Soft surface Cleaning

For soft surfaces such as carpeted floor, rugs, and drapes

- Clean the surface using soap and water or with cleaners appropriate for use on these surfaces when needed.
- 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 disinfectant. These disinfectants meet EPA's criteria for use against COVID-19.
- Carpets will be professionally shampooed monthly, or more frequently if needed.

## Electronics

For electronics, such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards, and remote controls

- Follow manufacturer's instruction for cleaning and disinfecting.
- Use alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol daily. Dry surface thoroughly.

## Laundry

For clothing, towels, linens and other items

- Launder items according to the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely.
- Wear disposable gloves always, especially when handling dirty laundry from a person who is sick.
- Dirty laundry from a person who is sick cannot 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

- Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized should not be used.
- Toys that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretions or excretions should be set aside until they are cleaned by hand by a person wearing gloves. Clean with water and detergent, rinse, sanitize with an EPA-registered disinfectant, rinse again, and air-dry.
- Be extra mindful of items that are more likely to be placed in a child's mouth, like play food, dishes, and utensils.
- Machine washable cloth toys are not to be used during Covid-19.
- Do not share toys with other groups of infants or toddlers.
- 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. Try to have enough toys so that the toys can be rotated through cleanings.
- 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 children. To the extent possible, when washing, feeding, or holding young children:

- Employees 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.
- Employees should wash their hands, neck, and anywhere touched by a child's secretions, including tears.
- Employees 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.
- All children and employees should have multiple changes of clothes on hand at the Academy.
- Employees should wash their hands before and after handling infant bottles. Bottles, bottle caps, nipples, and other equipment used for bottle-feeding should be thoroughly cleaned after each by washing with a bottlebrush, soap, and water. Families will need to provide a bottle brush for their infant to only be used with their infant's bottles.

## Group Size

Group size during the Covid-19 Pandemic is to limit no more than 10 children in one classroom.

## Hand washing

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

- Arrival to the facility and after breaks

- Before and after preparing food or drinks
- Before and after eating or handling food, or feeding children
- 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 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 employees and children must adhere to regular hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
  - 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
  - Employees 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 soap and water method is not available. If a child needs to use alcohol-based sanitizer, an adult/employee must be physically present to observe and guide child in proper use.

### Respiratory Hygiene

- All employees should cough and sneezes with 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

- Frequent cleaning of all touch points.
- Secure all secondary doors and access points to minimize incidental contact.
- Use disposable wipes on commonly used surfaces (for example, doorknobs, keyboards, remote controls, desks, other work tools and equipment).
- Employees 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.

### Employee meetings and continuing education

Employee in-person meetings, trainings, etc. is postponed until further notice during COVID-19. Employees may meet through virtual communication.

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

- AELA 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 request donations from enrolled family members.
  - 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 or her designee will refrain from allowing non-employed adults into the building. The only exceptions are physical therapist, DSS, DHEC, and/or fire and safety personnel.
  - AELA procedure for these persons to enter the building
    - Visitors conducting business must wear a mask
    - Director or her designee will take visitor's temperature
    - The visitor will complete a questionnaire form

## Center Family/Employees Communication Plan

- Communication is important for all center employees and families. Regular communication will continue through email by the owner or director.

## Determine how AELA will operate if absenteeism spikes amongst employees

While assuring that the same employee will remain with the same children over the course of the day it is understandable that absenteeism may occur as an employee may become sick or have to stay home to care for sick family members. AELA will monitor and respond to absenteeism at the workplace to provide consistency for families and children.

## Tuition charges and payments during COVID-19 Pandemic

If Aspire Early Learning Academy, LLC must close due to the COVID-19 pandemic, or a future pandemic, families will not be charged tuition or reservation fees during the closure. All active children at the time of closing will have a spot available upon reopening unless the family notifies the Academy in writing of removal.

All accounts with a payment credit at closing, will remain on the account, untouched, until the Academy reopens. The Academy does not issue refunds for registration fees, tuition payments, and reservation fees.

While Aspire Early Learning Academy, LLC remains open during the COVID-19 pandemic, or a future pandemic, attending families will be responsible for the normal weekly tuition fee. Tuition payments are due each Monday of the week in which you are receiving service. If payment is not received, services will be denied for the following week.

If your family will be absent an entire week, you will be responsible for the reservation fee of ½ of your normal weekly tuition rate to hold a spot for your child at the Academy. There is not a maximum number of weeks for reservation fees. If your family misses two weeks of reservation fee payments, your family will be disenrolled.

Families who withdraw or are disenrolled, will be returned to the waiting list upon request to re-enroll. A new registration fee and new enrollment paperwork will be required before returning to the Academy.

Families should refer to the Parent Handbook that is located on the website ([www.AspireEarlyLearningAcademy.com](http://www.AspireEarlyLearningAcademy.com)) for additional information on tuition charges and payments.

## Acceptance of COVID-19 policy and procedures for families and employees

### Aspire Early Learning Academy, LLC

I understand that it is my responsibility to read and fully understand the COVID-19 Pandemic Policy for Aspire Early Learning Academy, LLC. I also understand that this policy may be changed at any time. If changes occur, a revised policy will be posted on the Academy's website ([www.AspireEarlyLearningAcademy.com](http://www.AspireEarlyLearningAcademy.com)).

Parents: I understand the risk that is involved with allowing my child to attend preschool with his/her teachers and peers.

Employees: I understand the risk involved with working in an environment with young children and co-workers.

I understand that this policy will also support a future pandemic case that our country/state may face under the ordinances set by the governing agencies.

I understand that the safety, health and the well-being of children, families, and employees rely on my due diligence to adhere to the COVID-19 Pandemic Policy and ordinances set by our national, state, and local governing agencies.

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Print Name

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Parent/Employees Signature

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Date