



March 6, 2020

RE: Child Care Facilities

Information About Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Preventative Measures in Child Care Facilities

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is a new respiratory disease that can spread from person-to-person. It was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak of respiratory illness in Wuhan, China.

The virus spreads through droplets that have virus, either by close contact with people who are infected with the virus or through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It can also spread if someone touches a surface contaminated with the virus and then touches their nose, mouth, or eyes.

Symptoms can be mild to severe and show 2-14 days after exposure. Symptoms include fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

While Missoula does not currently have cases, the health department encourages child care operators to continue basic precautions that are already outlined in the Child Care Center Rules:

- Continue daily health status checks upon entry into the facility:
 - Exclude staff and children who are ill. Pay close attention to symptoms of a fever, cough, and shortness of breath.
- Frequently clean and disinfect common surfaces with bleach water solution at ¼ cup of bleach per gallon of water:
 - Target surfaces such as door knobs, faucet handles, toilet surfaces, floors, counter tops, and toys.
 - Do not use the high concentration food contact surfaces.
- Pay close attention to proper handwashing by staff and children. Wash hands often with soap and water, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds-- especially after using the restroom, before eating, and after coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose.
 - Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol only after washing hands.
- Be vigilant about keeping children's fingers out of their mouths, and remind them not to touch their eyes or nose.
- Encourage all to cover their mouths when coughing.
- Wash all bedding in hot water with a hot air dry.

There is no cause for panic, but being aware and increasing basic things like cleaning, disinfecting, and handwashing is important.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If a child travels to a country of widespread COVID-19 cases over Spring Break, encourage parents to call the Health Department at 406-258-3896 when they return. The following is a link to travel information: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>

- In particular, the Health Department is concerned about those who may have traveled to the five countries with sustained or widespread COVID-19 cases, including China, Italy, South Korea, Japan, and Iran. Please note that the countries of concern may change.

For additional information, please visit the health department's website at <http://missoula.co/cvirus> or call 406-258-INFO. For general questions about Child Care facilities, please call Emily Andrea at 406-258-3340 or eandrea@missoulacounty.us

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emily Andrea". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letters of "Emily" and "Andrea" being capitalized and prominent.

Emily Andrea
Environmental Health Specialist