

# Monarch Montessori School

COVID-19 Policies and Procedures

Formulated with input from the CDC, MDH, Maria Null and MN  
Child Care Health Consultants, Inc.

# Vulnerable/High Risk Individuals

- Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for severe illness from Covid-19.
- Staff members age 65 or older or with serious underlying health conditions will talk to their healthcare provider to assess their risk and to determine if they may work during this time.
- Before enrollment, a discussion will be had with family if a child has underlying health conditions that put them at risk AND information will be provided on the risk of the child enrolling if there is a household member with underlying conditions.

# Social Distancing

- We will follow the current recommendations from the CDC and MDH. We will monitor both agencies for changes.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html>
- We will limit the class size to 10 children at all times.
- We will have one staff member in the classroom with the children, with the exception of overlaps in shifts. The staff should be as consistent as possible to limit the number of new people entering the environment.
- We will cancel or postpone all special events including, fundraising events, special gatherings, field trips, graduations, picnics, and prospective tours. All tours will be conducted virtually or before/after the school day.
- At nap time, children's cots will be spaced out six feet or more apart.
- No outside visitors or volunteers should be allowed into the building during the pandemic. An exception to this would be contracted service providers providing essential special education or supportive services, health professionals, and staff or substitutes receiving training. Those individuals will be screened and told to wear a mask and perform hand hygiene.

# If the Monarch Community Has a Confirmed COVID-19 Case

Families are REQUIRED to inform Monarch staff if someone in their household had a confirmed case of COVID-19 or was in direct contact with someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19. In that case, the child cannot return to Monarch until either 14 days have passed or they test negative for COVID-19.

If Covid-19 is confirmed in a child or staff member, we will contact MDH and follow all direction from MDH.

If a child, staff, or family member contracts COVID-19, their identity must be kept private and may not be publicly shared with anyone.

If a child or staff member has a confirmed case

- a. All staff will self-isolate for 14 days, and families will be encouraged to isolate their children and themselves in the home for 14 days.
- b. Families will be notified that the school will be closed for the next 14 calendar days.
- c. Families will have access to distance learning during this time.
- d. Staff will clean the facility before children return.

# Snack and Meal Times

- Meals will not be served family-style. We will plate each child's meal so that multiple children are not handling the same serving utensils.
- All table space should be utilized to keep as much distance between children as possible.

# Drop Off and Pick Up Protocols

- Whereas we ordinarily love to welcome families into our environment, families will not enter the building for the duration of the pandemic.
- When the weather is 32 degrees F or higher and sunny: Families will park and walk their children to the gate. Staff will take the children's temperatures and offer hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. The hand sanitizer will be kept out of children's reach. The children will wash their hands with soap and water after entering the building at the culmination of outdoor learning time.
- When the weather is rainy or below 32 degrees F with windchill: We will have curbside drop off and pick up. Children will be offered hand sanitizer and wash their hands upon entering the classroom.
- Families should stay in their car until another family leaves. Families should wait to approach the entrance until another family has left and maintain a minimum of a 6 foot distance between other people.
- Staff will sign children in and out to avoid extra shared items such as pens and paper.
- In an effort to limit the amount of items coming from home, children should wear only their coat/jacket and not bring extra belongings other than lunch boxes.

# Exclusionary Guideline/Screening

## Temperature

- Families are encouraged to take sublingual temperature at home each morning before school. Monarch will distribute thermometers for this purpose to each family.
- The staff member present in the morning will take each child's temperature upon arrival. The staff member will use an infrared thermometer and wear a mask. The thermometer will be cleaned with an alcohol wipe after each use. Families will wait to depart until after the temperature has been taken and logged. If the child's temperature is 100 degrees F or above, the family will immediately take him or her home.

## Other Symptoms

- Families will also be asked about symptoms. Symptoms consistent with COVID-19 include: new onset or worsening cough OR shortness of breath OR at least two of the following symptoms: fever (100.4 degrees F or higher); chills; muscle pain; headache; sore throat; new loss of taste or smell.
- If children demonstrate these symptoms, they will immediately go home with their families.

# Exclusionary Guidelines/Screening Continued

- We will use the decision tree from the Minnesota Department of Health. (\*Note\* This document says that children with fevers of 100.4 degrees F or higher will be sent home. To comply with Rule 3 licensing exclusion 9503.0080, our program will send home children with fevers of 100 degrees F or higher.)
- COVID-19 Exclusion Guidance Decision Tree from the Minnesota Department of Health:  
<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/exguide.pdf>
- Children who have a fever of 100 degrees F or above as a stand alone symptom will be excluded due to the Rule 3 licensing exclusion 9503.0080. For example, if a child has a fever of 101 degrees F and they have no other symptoms, they can return to child care after they have been fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.



# If a Child Becomes Sick While at Childcare

When a child or staff member develops any symptoms of illness consistent with Covid-19 (new onset or worsening cough OR shortness of breath OR at least two of the following symptoms: fever, chills, muscle aches, headache, sore throat, loss of taste or smell) do the following:

- See “Event Response” for more detailed instructions.
- Isolate the person in a separate room while they wait to be picked up or until they are able to leave the program on their own. Ensure that they have hygiene supplies available, including a cloth mask, facial tissues, and alcohol-based hand rub.
- Close off the space used for isolation after the ill person leaves. Open it after proper cleaning and disinfecting.
- Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces, focusing on areas where the person is known to have been and items they have touched (individual desk, cot, recently used toys, shared equipment). Wear gloves when cleaning, and wash hands after removing gloves.

# Routine Cleaning

- Use all cleaning products according to manufacturer's directions for concentration, application method, and contact time.
- Keep all cleaning products inaccessible to children.
- When surfaces are dirty, clean using soap and water prior to disinfection.
- Use a diluted household bleach solution or an EPA-registered household disinfectant. If using an EPA-registered disinfectant, make sure it is known to kill the virus that causes Covid 19 by checking here:  
<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-ndisinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2> and follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- To make a bleach solution, mix: 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) of bleach per gallon of water OR 4 teaspoons of bleach per quart of water. Note that this is a higher disinfection concentration than normal.
- Make only enough diluted bleach solution that can be used in 24 hours. Make a new solution fresh daily.

# Routine Cleaning

- Staff should wear disposable gloves when cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting and wash hands immediately after glove removal.
- Soft items that cannot be laundered should be put away and not used during this time.
- Machine washable cloth toys that are deemed necessary to be out during this time will be laundered before being used by another child. All unnecessary soft or cloth items will be removed from the classroom (such as soft toys, stuffed animals)
- Materials that cannot be cleaned and sanitized should be put away and not used.
- Materials that children have placed in their mouths should be set aside until they are cleaned and sanitized.
- Hard surfaces including toys, tables, and shelves will be cleaned using soap and water, rinsed and then sanitized or disinfected depending on the item.
- Each child's "bedding" should be kept separate. Consider storing in individually labeled bins, cubbies, or bags. Blankets should not be stacked on cots. Cots should be labeled for each child.
- Keep windows and doors open when safe and possible.

# Handwashing

The single most effective way to prevent the spread of disease is to correctly wash your hands-thoroughly and often.

Gloves are not a substitute for handwashing. Always wash your hands after glove removal!

The Proper Steps to Handwashing are:

- 1) Wet hands with running water
- 2) Use liquid soap
- 3) Wash hands for at least 20 seconds paying close attention to all areas of the hands including palms, fingers, between the fingers, underneath the fingernails and the wrists.
- 4) Rinse hands with running water
- 5) Dry hands with a single service, disposable paper towel
- 6) Turn off the water with the same paper towel used to dry the hands so you don't touch the faucet with your clean hands

# Handwashing Continued

Recommendations for times when children and staff working in a child care or school should wash their hands are:

- After arriving and before leaving for the day
- Before and after eating
- After using the toilet
- After coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose.
- After using the playground, gym, or large muscle room.
- After contact with pets.
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty

Staff should additionally wash their hands at the following times:

- After contact with bodily fluids.
- After contact with pet cages and other pet products.
- Before and after applying medication or ointment.
- Before and after dispensing oral medications.
- After assisting with toileting.
- Prior to assisting children at mealtimes.
- After touching/adjusting their face mask or removing it.

# Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Per Federal OSHA standards, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) must be provided by the program for staff to use. This PPE will include, but not be limited to, gloves, face masks, face shields and oversized shirts/ponchos. Staff will be trained on the proper usage of PPE.
- Staff will wear clean cloth face masks and/or face shield at all times except meal times. Each staff person must have at least one additional face mask or shield to use after removing theirs for eating lunch or after it becomes soiled or wet. Face masks and shields must be properly cleaned before being used again.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose, mouth while wearing to prevent potential contamination. Wash hands thoroughly before putting on a mask and after removing it.
- Gloves will be used for cleaning and event response. Ponchos will be used for event response.
- Children will not be required to wear face masks. Children age 2 through 5 years who can reliably wear a face covering or face shield in compliance with CDC guidance on [How to Wear Cloth Face Coverings](#) may do so. This means they can wear it without frequently touching or removing it. However, Monarch will keep masks for children on site for circle time and in the case of an event response. All children's masks must be removed during rest time.

# Communication of Plan

This plan will be posted on [monarchmn.org](http://monarchmn.org).

We will present this plan to parents during orientation and provide them with an electronic copy. (Paper copies available upon request.)

We will share this plan with government agencies and members of the public upon request.

# Additional Resources

- [How to talk to children about COVID-19](#), CDC
- [COVID-19 Resources for Montessori Schools and Programs](#), American Montessori Society
- [Piggy & Bunny and the Stay-At-Home Plan](#), a children's book about how play looks different during COVID-19 by UMN Pediatric Resident Holly Sedgwick Belgum, MD
- [Wash Hands For Health!](#), Allina Health- Health Powered Kids lesson ages 3-8 y.o.